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## **Performance Evaluations**

Training for Managers and Supervisors



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# Objectives

- Understand what performance evaluations are and what they aren't
- Know why we do them and what they are used for
- Know what to address and what to leave out
- Suggestions on "how to say it"
- Understand and recognize common errors made in writing them
- Know how to fairly and appropriately rate an employee
- How to address those "sticky situations"



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## What Are and Aren't They?

Typical Characteristics of...	
Feedback	Appraisal
Information	Judgment, Evaluation
Ongoing, Continuous	Periodic, Event-based
Daily	Semi-annually, Annually
Immediate	Retrospective
Informal	Formal
Verbal	Written
Not Linked to Rewards	Generally Linked to Rewards



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## **Major Problems with Performance Evaluations**

- Managers apply rating criteria differently
  - Lacks confidence to be honest and direct with employee
  - Rates employees at a higher level than performance warrants to avoid performance management
  - Fails to use standardized measurement as indicated by the individual bureau (or, lack of standard definition for each of the ratings)
  - Is inexperienced and/or needs training in performance management
  - Doesn't equate rating to back up documentation, (such as 360 degree review, individual improvement comments, etc.)
  - Doesn't really know how the employee is performing (i.e., not checking in)



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## **Major Problems with Performance Evaluations cont.**

- Appraisals late or missed
  - Late appraisals are not meaningful or effective, don't offer opportunity for employee to understand strengths to maintain and weaknesses needing improvement
  - Frequently occur because manager does not know how to deal with a problem – which makes the employee feel devalued
- Appraisals conducted by previous manager did not accurately reflect performance
- Appraisals are sometimes substituted for discipline to address performance issues



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"I was put on this Earth to accomplish a certain number of things. Right now I am so far behind, I will never die!"



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## Why Do We Do Them?

- Give feedback
- Justify and support merit increases and management leave awards for non-rep employees
- Required by some CBAs
- Encourage the continuation of good performance
- Discourage poor performance
- Point of reference and history for a successor supervisor
- Set goals for the employee for the upcoming review year



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## **Why Must We Do Them Well?**

- Shared and/or agreed upon document between supervisor and employee
- Discoverable record to support actions (discipline, discharge)
  - BOLI claims
  - Tort Actions
  - Grievances
  - Discipline





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*“Since my last report, this employee  
has reached rock bottom . . . and is  
starting to dig . . . ”*



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## **What to Include / Address**

- **Technical / Acumen**
  - Knowledge, training, and skills specific to the job
- **Competencies / Behavioral Skills**
  - Relationships/Attitude/Rapport
  - Attendance/Punctuality
  - Grooming/Dress
  - Productivity
  - Task-focus
  - Good judgment, decision-making



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## Individual Exercise

“This employee is really not so much of a ‘has been’, but more of a definite ‘won’t be’”.



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## How to Say It

- Customer service
- Ability to delegate
- Judgment
- Equal opportunity / Diversity
- Financial management
- Listening skills
- Supervisory effectiveness
- Prioritization



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## Group Exercise

*He certainly takes a long time to make his  
pointless...*



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## Common Errors

- ***Contrast*** – comparing to other employees, rather than what's required by the job
- ***First impression*** – favorable or unfavorable first judgment that is used as the basis for appraising future performance
- ***Recency effect*** – the last two months instead of the entire twelve
- ***Halo effect*** – generalizing from a couple of positive aspects (opposite: Devil effect!)



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## **Common Errors Cont.**

- ***Similar to me effect*** – personality, schools, golf, etc.
- ***Central tendency*** – everyone is average in all respects
- ***Negative or positive leniency*** – rating either too hard or too easy (everyone gets a “Commendable,” regardless of what they really accomplish)
- ***Appraisal doesn’t match reward***



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## Performance Rating

- Fight the natural urge to unnecessarily inflate or otherwise sanitize evaluations
- We commonly see
  - poor employees rated as marginally competent
  - marginal employees as satisfactory
  - satisfactory employees as above normal
  - good employees as god-like figures who can do no wrong





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## **Performance Rating Cont.**

- These evaluations don't do anyone any favors; they are meaningless for employees and are potentially dangerous
  - give employees a false sense of security
  - deprive employees of an opportunity to improve and the supervisor (and organization) of the benefits of top performance
- Furthermore, they can provide a discharged employee with an incentive to sue – and
- Make it very difficult to later establish an employee's marginal or poor performance



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## Performance Rating Cont.

- *Superior*
  - *Performance significantly exceeds the requirements of the job and is among the highest of the bureau*
  - *Consistently exceeds job requirements and is well above established standards*
  - *Achieves objectives at a superior level and demonstrates exceptional skills/innovation*
- *Commendable*
  - *Performance exceeds job requirements in all major areas*
  - *Performs significant work above the responsibilities of the job*
  - *Achieves performance objectives, often beyond expectations*
- *Effective*
  - *Performance meets job requirements in all important areas*
  - *Performance consistently meets job requirements*
  - *Achieves performance objectives as stated*
- *Needs Improvement*
  - *Performance is below job requirements in important areas and immediate improvement is required*
  - *Performance in one or more skill areas is less than expected and needs improvement*
  - *Additional training or learning is required in order for objectives to be achieved*
- *Unsatisfactory*
  - *Performance is significantly below job requirements in several important areas*
  - *Performance in most skill areas is substantially weak*
  - *Performance objectives are not met, even under close supervision; termination or reassignment should be considered*



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## **Rating the Employee**

- Some bureaus use overall – or cumulative – ratings in performance evaluations – does yours?
- How do you effectively combine the rating from several sections into one overall rating?



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## What If?

The employee...

- Won't sign the appraisal?
- Wants you to make changes to the appraisal?
- Wants to write on the appraisal?
- Wants their union representative present?
- Won't complete the self-evaluation form?



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## To Summarize...

- Understand what performance evaluations are and what they aren't
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"Some drink from the fountain  
of knowledge, but Pat only  
gargles."



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**QUESTIONS??**