

FEBRUARY 2019

Dear Curry Supervisors:

The Faculty Council and Curry Staff Advisory Committee are pleased to provide information and resources for supervisors. You will receive monthly emails that provide material addressing issues that you have indicated are important to you.

*Today's Topic is: Performance Management*

Employee Performance Management is a collaborative, ongoing process between a manager and an employee. The performance process helps develop employee potential, communicates expectations on a regular basis, and provides ongoing, timely, and descriptive feedback (formally and informally).

This gives the manager and the employee a baseline to plan for, develop, and evaluate an employee's work. UVA HR uses the [Workday](#) application to track the performance management experience for the following types of employees:

- University Staff
- Classified Staff
- A&P Faculty (Administrative & Professional) – Note: Curry A&P faculty follow the faculty review procedures instead of using Workday

**Best Practices**

So much has been written on best practices for performance management that it can be overwhelming to distill the information into practical steps. In short, you can be successful by following these simple, yet often overlooked, steps when preparing an annual review.

- Don't rely solely on memory. Base the review on accurate and factual data. Take notes during the year and reference specific metrics, when available.
- Length of service or pay band/job grade do not necessarily mean better performance. Just because someone has 10+ years of service doesn't mean they are a strong performer. Also, just because someone is a managerial or professional level doesn't mean they are an exceptional performer. Look carefully at the employee's performance for each goal and evaluate them based on the performance for the current year (not based on a combination of their contributions over many years).
- Avoid bias about an employee based on your personal feelings (positive or negative) for that individual.
- Evaluate based on current performance; not past performance. Look only at the current period being reviewed.
- Don't over-rate a poor performer as a motivational tool. This does not serve the manager or the employee in the long run. Poor performance should be dealt with by offering an improvement plan.
- Provide honest information. According to a [recent survey](#), 82% of employees appreciate receiving feedback, regardless if it's positive or negative.
- Arrange a time to meet face-to-face with the employee to discuss the evaluation. The annual performance conversation should always occur prior to finalizing a rating. You may learn something in the meeting that leads you to modify your initial rating. It is best to listen to the employee before making a final determination for each rating.

## Pitfalls

As a manager, here are some common pitfalls related to performance management that you should avoid:

- *Recency bias*  
The tendency to focus on one recent event or specific incident, either positive or negative, rather than summarize the entire performance period (i.e., rating the employee based on a project that just began and ended in December because it is fresh in my mind)
- *Halo or Horns effect*  
The tendency to rate an employee in all performance areas based on the performance in only one area (i.e., rating the employee on each goal based on their attendance)
- *Central tendency effect*  
The tendency to evaluate all performance factors as generally achieved or “competent” (i.e., everyone is rated the middle rating without acknowledgement of strengths or areas for growth)
- *Similar to me effect*  
The tendency to evaluate an employee more favorably based on their similarity to the evaluator
- *Contrast effect*  
The tendency to rate an employee’s performance by comparing or contrasting him/her with other employees (i.e., rating the employee compared to their peers instead of rating their progress toward attaining goals)
- *Leniency or strictness effect*  
The tendency to give consistently “easy ratings” or “tough ratings” (i.e., rating all employees exceptional/highly effective, or rating all employees inconsistent/unsatisfactory)

Keep in mind that the annual review is a time to summarize all the information that an employee has received during the calendar year. It is not the time to surprise an employee with information they did not have a chance to discuss in 2018.

For additional resources on performance management, view the classes available through UVA HR: <https://leadershipexcellence.virginia.edu/classes/academic> Offerings include a Goal Setting class on February 25.

***Now is the time to: Complete goal-setting for 2019 and annual evaluations for 2018!***

- ***Confirm that your supervisees have submitted goals for 2019 and self-evaluations for 2018.***
- ***Manager 2018 evaluations and approvals of 2019 goals are due by February 22.***
- **Questions?** Contact your Curry Workday Partners Joey Carls ([jcarls@virginia.edu](mailto:jcarls@virginia.edu)) or Pritpal Kochar ([psk8n@virginia.edu](mailto:psk8n@virginia.edu)).

***Tip of the Day: To Build an Inclusive Culture, Understand Who Your Employees Really Are***

When employees feel free to be themselves at work – when they don’t think they have to hide their religion or sexual orientation, for example – they’re much more likely to be happy in their jobs. One way to encourage this kind of openness is to build an inclusive culture, which starts with knowing who your employees truly are. The most powerful way to learn about your employees, is one-on-one discussions. For these conversations to be effective, you need to have an open-door policy and a “tell me anything” persona. Being honest about your thoughts and feelings will build trust and show people that you’re human, too. Adapted from “[To Retain Employees, Focus on Inclusion – Not Just Diversity](#),” by Karen Brown (from Harvard Business Review)