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Performance Management at DePaul

Introduction
The Performance Management Guide was designed to assist managers and staff members in communicating about performance. Continuous application of these guidelines will ensure that employees know what is expected of them, how they are performing and what can be done to strengthen performance. Regular feedback combined with yearly performance appraisals is an effective tool for discussing performance issues objectively and specifically with employees. In addition, performance appraisals focus upon coaching and developing employees, helping them to reach their full potential.

Mission
DePaul University
As a university, DePaul is dedicated to teaching, research and public service. In its mission, it pursues the preservation, enrichment and transmission of knowledge and culture across a broad scope of academic disciplines. It treasures its deep roots in the wisdom nourished in Catholic universities from medieval times. The principal distinguishing marks of the university are its Catholic, Vincentian and urban character. The university’s mission and its principal distinguishing marks are the connecting link between our past, present and future; the criteria against which plans are formulated, decisions made and services delivered; and the bond which unites faculty, students, staff, alumni and trustees as an academic and human community.

Human Resources
The role of the Office of Human Resources is to be a strategic business partner with DePaul University. Human Resources’ mission, therefore, is embodied in our definition of “Strategic Business Partner”.

Strategic

- HR will be a significant contributor in establishing the strategic direction of the university
- HR will take a leadership role in developing policies, procedures and programs which support the mission of DePaul University and further the implementation of the strategic plan

Business

- HR will understand DePaul’s key success factors and endeavor to recruit, retain, train and reward employees who possess the qualities necessary to realize those factors
- HR will create, by example and by policy, an atmosphere which promotes Vincentian values, advancement of learning, diversity, cost effectiveness and responsiveness to change

Partner

- HR will provide value-added service, exceeding the needs of its customers throughout the university
- HR will dedicate itself to soliciting input, open communication, proactive/ innovative solutions to problems, timely response and shared ownership of agreements.
Objectives
To realize the university’s mission, we all must strive to continually improve individual, team and university performance. The four primary objectives of performance management include: Increased Communication, Improved Performance, Employee Development and Human Resource Management.

Increased Communication

- Improving communication between managers and staff members
- Clarifying job responsibilities and standards
- Giving staff members feedback on their performance

Improved Performance

- Establishing challenging and mutually agreed-upon performance goals in support of organizational objectives
- Encouraging individuals and work teams to strive for continuous improvement and quality
- Identifying and eliminating obstacles to performance

Employee Development

- Focusing upon and addressing employee growth and career development
- Recognizing individual and team performance
- Optimizing employee skills, abilities and interests for mutual benefit

Human Resource Management

- Justifying employment actions such as promotions, transfers, increases, work assignments, training, discipline and termination
- Planning for staffing, training, resources and other issues
The Performance Management and Appraisal Process

Six Phases of the Staff Performance Management and Appraisal Process

Performance Planning
At the beginning of the appraisal period, the manager and staff member review the principal responsibilities of the job, identify university objectives and team objectives, decide upon projects and discuss standards of performance.

Goal Setting and Action Planning
After reviewing university and team objectives for the coming year, the manager and staff member work together to define performance expectations that align with team and university objectives. Based on the performance expectations, the staff member and manager create SMART goals to address the staff member’s personal and professional development. They then create a detailed action plan with interim milestones to help monitor the staff member’s progress toward achieving those goals.

Monitoring Performance
Throughout the performance year, the manager and staff member monitor the staff member’s overall performance related to the documented job responsibilities and performance expectations and use the action plan to monitor their progress toward achieving the defined performance goals. If performance expectations change throughout the year, the manager and staff member redefine expectations and update the goals and action plan to reflect that change.
Coaching and Feedback
Throughout the performance year, the manager provides ongoing feedback on the staff member’s performance and the staff member proactively solicits feedback to ensure that performance is in line with expectations. Both the staff member and manager provide objective information to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement throughout the year. Effective coaching and feedback stems from open, ongoing communication between the manager and staff member based on honesty, objectivity and continuous improvement.

Performance Appraisal and Discussion
At the end of the performance year, the staff member completes a self-appraisal of their performance related to the documented performance expectations and goals. The manager then completes the appraisal form related to the same objectives. Each assessment should be supported by specific results and objective examples of performance throughout the year. The manager and staff member then meet to discuss the staff member’s performance, identifying key areas of strength and accomplishment and areas for improvement.

Recognizing and Rewarding Performance
While monetary rewards may be tied to annual performance appraisals, recognizing and rewarding performance should occur frequently throughout the year. This can include simple verbal recognition (“Great job!”) and other forms of nonmonetary acknowledgement of good work, such as professional development and opportunities to work on challenging and interesting projects.

Advantages of DePaul’s Process

- Encourages ongoing, two-way dialogue between the manager and staff member
- Centers performance discussions around specific, measurable (i.e., SMART) performance expectations and goals agreed to by the manager and staff member
- Affords the opportunity to provide feedback in narrative form
- Gives staff members objective assessment of their overall performance
Performance Planning

Performance planning is the first step in the performance management cycle and begins at the staff member's annual performance appraisal meeting. In addition to reviewing the previous year's performance, the manager and staff member spend time planning for the coming year. However, performance planning does not end in the performance appraisal meeting. It continues until the manager and staff member gain agreement on what is expected of the staff member.

Performance planning includes a review of university and department/team objectives to ensure that the staff member's individual performance aligns with the university's objectives and needs. In addition, the staff member and manager review principal responsibilities, determine projects and milestones to be achieved in the coming year and discuss standards of performance.

If the employee is new, performance planning should take place during their first month of employment.

Principal Responsibilities

Manager and Staff Member

- Review and agree upon the principal responsibilities of the job
- Identify university objectives and team objectives
- Decide upon projects
- Discuss standards of performance

Layers of Performance

Performance within any organization starts with each individual employee. The performance of an individual contributor ripples outward and directly impacts the performance of the team, department and organization as a whole.

A major goal of performance planning is for the manager and staff member to explicitly identify the link between the staff member's job responsibilities and performance and the objectives and mission of the department/team and university. This alignment helps the manager and staff member prioritize work and establish measurements and performance standards that will be monitored throughout the performance cycle.
Core Behaviors
During the performance planning stage, the manager and staff member should also discuss core behaviors used in the assessment of performance. The core behaviors described below are closely tied to the university’s mission and strategic initiatives and signify criteria for success as a DePaul employee.

Core behavioral expectations apply to all university employees and can be found in Section II of the Performance Appraisal Form. Managerial behavioral expectations apply to those who supervise others or who manage a functional area of the business and can be found in Section III.

TIP: Not all managerial core behaviors are equally relevant in all supervisory positions. Therefore, at the beginning of the appraisal period the reviewing manager and staff member need to agree upon which managerial behaviors are applicable to the position. If some behaviors are not relevant, check the Not Applicable rating.

Core Behaviors

Communication

- Exhibits good listening and comprehension skills
- Effectively expresses oneself in written and oral communications
- Keeps others adequately informed
- Responds to others with tact, diplomacy and composure

Teamwork and Collaboration

- Cooperates with others toward achievement of common goals
- Seeks consensus and win-win solutions to problems/conflicts
- Actively contributes and fully participates in team initiatives
- Puts success of the team above one’s own interests
- Builds and maintains constructive work relationships

Responsive to Change

- Supports and adapts to changes in work activities and priorities
- Displays a proactive, problem-solving approach toward work
- Committed to lifelong learning by continuously increasing skills, knowledge and effectiveness
- Actively seeks and initiates creative and innovative solutions
- Exercises sound, accurate and informed independent judgment when needed

Quality-Driven

- Results-oriented and committed to quality through continuous process improvement
- Eliminates ineffective activities and closes performance gaps
- Anticipates and responds to customer needs
- Monitors own performance and actively seeks feedback
- Fiscally responsible, seeks opportunities to reduce costs or increase productivity without reducing effectiveness
Support of the Mission of DePaul:

- Values, supports and models institutional objectives, including: service, collaboration, quality, personalism, diversity and respect for all individuals
- Exhibits personal integrity, honesty, zeal and compassion
- Respects and supports the Catholic, Vincentian and urban identity of the university
- Recognizes the importance of research, instruction, academic freedom and lifelong learning
- Understands and supports the university’s efforts to serve all in need, especially those who are disadvantaged

Core Managerial Behaviors

Performance Management

- Provides constructive feedback when appropriate
- Conducts thorough and timely performance reviews
- Equitably recognizes and acknowledges good performance
- Acts as a coach and counselor to close performance gaps
- Develops staff members' skills and encourages professional growth

Resource Management

- Identifies, develops and retains highly talented people
- Effectively allocates funds, equipment, time and human resources for highest return
- Ensures work is completed within specified time and quality parameters
- Provides sufficient authority and resources to enable staff members to act independently

Managing/ Supporting Diversity

- Creates an environment in which people of all cultures work together in partnership
- Encourages the personal and professional growth of all staff members
- Focuses on understanding individual differences and their value to DePaul
- Seeks to develop diverse work teams to improve quality, productivity and decision making
- Encourages, respects and values contributions of all individuals

Leadership

- Articulates the mission and a clear vision
- Fosters open, honest, two-way communication
- Encourages staff involvement
- Establishes and clearly communicates priorities
- Role model for staff in both words and actions

Strategic Thinking

- Seeks and interprets competitive benchmarking data pertaining to organizational strengths and weaknesses
- Maintains long-term focus
- Develops project plans, including timelines and checkpoints
- Understands major trends affecting the profession and initiates requisite strategic response
Goal Setting and Action Planning

After the manager and staff member review the job responsibilities, establish performance standards and align the staff member’s performance objectives to the mission and objectives of the university and department/team, the next step is to establish specific, measurable performance goals.

During the Goal Setting and Action Planning step, the staff member writes performance goals that align with university and team objectives and address both their personal and professional development needs. These are then reviewed and approved by the manager. Finally, the staff member and manager work to create an action plan with specific milestones to monitor the staff member’s progress throughout the year toward achieving each documented goal.

Principal Responsibilities

Manager and Staff Member

- Review university and team objectives for the coming year
- Define performance expectations that align with team and university objectives

Staff Member

- Create SMART goals to address both personal and professional development
- Create a detailed action plan with interim milestones to help monitor progress toward achieving the goals

Manager

- Review and approve SMART goals and action plan
- Work with staff member to refine goals and action plan

Writing SMART Goals

Writing performance goals helps the staff member to think them through and take action on them. It makes the staff member accountable with the manager’s support for achieving the goals to the best of their ability. For goals to be effective, they need to be clear, specific, realistic and measurable.

Characteristics of Effective Performance Goals

Effective performance goals …

- Show clear alignment with the university’s mission and values and with university-wide and departmental goals/ objectives
- May require the performer to “stretch”, but are definitely achievable
- Further the performer’s professional and/or personal development
- Are SMART:
  - **Specific**: explicit, clear and concise
  - **Measurable**: quantifiable (quantity, quality, time or cost)
  - **Action-Oriented**: indicate desired outcome/results
  - **Realistic**: challenging, yet attainable
  - **Timely**: include milestones/checkpoints and target completion date
**Non-SMART Goals vs. SMART Goals**

SMART goals place an emphasis on the result rather than the task. This makes it easier to demonstrate effective performance and makes the performance objective clear to both you and your manager. Below is a comparison of non-SMART goals and SMART goals. The key distinction is in the explicit description of milestones and measurements tied to each goal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-SMART Goal</th>
<th>SMART Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain department website</td>
<td>Ensure accuracy of the department website by conducting a comprehensive audit of the department’s website every two weeks. Work with managers, staff and faculty in the department to edit information provided on the website. Make requested edits within two workdays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond to all email and phone inquiries</td>
<td>Improve customer service by responding to all email and phone inquiries within 24 hours. Create a quarterly report detailing the number and types of inquiries received by the department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write department handbook</td>
<td>Create a departmental orientation for new employees, introducing them to the technology, resources and policies and procedures of the department. Develop a departmental employee handbook and checklist for on-boarding new employees to our department. Present new materials to the department at the February staff meeting. Implement department orientation beginning March 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database project</td>
<td>Improve the efficiency of logging and reporting inquiries to the department by creating a tracking system using Excel spreadsheets. Complete the tracking system by August 1. Train all front desk staff in how to use the system by September 1. Monitor and maintain the system and begin using it to generate quarterly reports by December 31.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some objectives may be subject to change and should be revisited throughout the review period. Whenever there are revisions or additions to projects and objectives, they must be incorporated into the written performance appraisal.

At the end of the appraisal period, Future Projects, Performance Goals and Objectives are evaluated in Section V of the appraisal form.
Creating an Action Plan

Action planning helps ensure that the staff member and manager properly plan for the effort you will put into completing your goals. The action plan acts as a living document that you and your manager can use to monitor your performance throughout the year and assess your progress toward achieving your goals.

Elements of an Action Plan

When documenting your action plan, there are several elements that you should capture, including:

- **SMART Goal Description**: include the entire goal description in your action plan. Doing this will help ensure that you and your manager will not lose sight of the original intent of the goal, but will focus on the measures you agreed upon at the outset.

- **Measures of Success**: while these may be included in the SMART goal description, it is helpful to list the measures separately. These will ultimately determine how your performance is assessed at year end.

- **Barriers and Obstacles**: including potential barriers and obstacles to the achievement of your goals will help you and your manager to identify these and ways to overcome these early.

- **Interim Milestones and Due Dates**: all of your goals should include interim milestones of achievement so that you can strive for those dates throughout the year and work toward achieving your goal results by year end.

- **Completion Date**: list your intended completion date for each goal. This will help you and your manager to monitor your progress and will provide an additional criterion for measuring your achievement related to the goal.
## Sample Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SMART Goal</th>
<th>Measures of Success</th>
<th>Barriers/Obstacles</th>
<th>Interim Milestones &amp; Due Dates</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure accuracy of the department website by conducting a comprehensive audit of the department’s website every two weeks. Work with managers, staff and faculty in the department to edit information provided on the website. Make requested edits within two workdays.</td>
<td>• Reduction in complaints from visitors to website Monthly report of updates to manager</td>
<td>Content providers may not notify of necessary changes</td>
<td>Brief update to manager at weekly staff meeting; report on obstacles to timely updates</td>
<td>• Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve customer service by responding to all email and phone inquiries within 24 hours. Create a quarterly report detailing the number and types of inquiries received by the department.</td>
<td>• Reduction in complaints from those who contact the department Quarterly reports</td>
<td>• Some requests may require getting information from others, both inside and outside the department Time to log inquiries</td>
<td>Due dates for quarterly reports: December 31, March 31, June 30, September 30</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a departmental orientation for new employees, introducing them to the technology, resources and policies and procedures of the department. Develop a departmental employee handbook and checklist for onboarding new employees to our department. Present new materials to the department at the February staff meeting. Implement department orientation beginning March 1.</td>
<td>• Completed Employee Handbook Completed on-boarding checklist</td>
<td>Requires time commitment from managers and staff in department, may be difficult to schedule time for this</td>
<td>• Meet with department managers and staff in October • Prepare first draft of handbook for review by November 15 • Prepare first draft of on-boarding checklist by December 1 Final draft of materials due January 15</td>
<td>• Presentation of materials to staff: February staff meeting Implement department orientation: March 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the efficiency of logging and reporting inquiries to the department by creating a tracking system using Excel spreadsheets. Complete the tracking system by August 1. Train all front desk staff in how to use the system by September 1. Monitor and maintain the system and begin using it to generate quarterly reports by December 31.</td>
<td>• Completed tracking system • Accurate and consistent use of system by all front desk staff Quarterly reports</td>
<td>Requires training in how to use Excel to create tracking system</td>
<td>• Attend ITD training on Excel in July • Build database by September 1 • Train desk staff by October 1 Due dates for quarterly reports: December 31, March 31, June 30, September 30</td>
<td>• Tracking system: September 1 Monitoring, maintenance and reporting: Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Sample Action Plan Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SMART Goal</th>
<th>Measures of Success</th>
<th>Barriers/Obstacles</th>
<th>Interim Milestones &amp; Due Dates</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
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<td>5.</td>
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</table>
Monitoring Performance

Monitoring performance is an ongoing effort throughout the review period and a responsibility of both the manager and staff member. It is through effective and consistent two-way communication that performance management links the activities of planning and appraisal.

Principal Responsibilities

Manager and Staff Member

- Throughout the performance year, monitor the staff member’s overall performance related to the documented job responsibilities and performance goals
- Use the action plan to monitor the staff member’s progress toward achieving the defined performance goals
- If performance expectations change throughout the year, redefine expectations and update the goals and action plan to reflect the change

Information Management

Communication between the manager and staff member during the performance appraisal period must be open, honest and ongoing. Staff members can and should initiate the communication, particularly when any significant changes or obstacles occur that management should be aware of. Oftentimes responsibilities, projects, objectives and performance plans need to be modified as a result of changing circumstances and shifting priorities. Managers and staff members are expected to keep each other apprised and current.

Self-Monitoring

Since staff members are aware of their own responsibilities, projects, objectives and skills, they are expected to monitor their own performance. Each staff member is best able to measure their own performance against expectations and is encouraged to periodically keep their manager informed of progress and/or problems. Staff members should keep track of their performance by documenting major activities and results whenever possible.

When staff members have trouble making progress toward the achievement of objectives or responsibilities, they are responsible for taking suitable action to remedy the situation and close performance gaps. They may take action on their own or they may need assistance from their manager. It is incumbent upon each staff member to keep focused on their effectiveness.

Monitoring by Manager

Throughout the appraisal period, the manager monitors performance by reviewing and documenting work activities, milestones, costs, obstacles and results. They are aware if adjustments are necessary. Consistent and accurate documentation during the appraisal period facilitates regular feedback and annual performance appraisals.

Monitoring performance can be accomplished through formal and informal approaches. Some formal methods might include:

- Periodic written reports
- Manager-staff member meetings
- Group or team meetings
When deciding your approach, you will want to consider factors that impact effectiveness, such as frequency of meetings; quality, quantity and format of information to be shared; and the desired outcomes. Formal conversations are not the only option to monitoring performance. Some situations might make informal conversations such as hallway chats appropriate for addressing very current work tasks and performance.

Management Assistance
While self-development tends to be the most beneficial and effective, at times even superior performers need some assistance. Staff members are encouraged to seek out opportunities for discussion of their performance, including regular feedback and coaching from their managers. Development is a shared responsibility best initiated by the staff member and supported by the manager. Managers can use their experience, knowledge and skills to help track staff member performance and provide the necessary support and opportunities for development.
Coaching and Feedback
Throughout the appraisal period, both the manager and staff member monitor the staff member’s progress. Each has information regarding the performance to date. The coaching process provides a forum for the mutual exchange of this information. A manager’s role is similar to that of a coach in sports. An effective coach motivates, provides feedback, offers encouragement toward the achievement of goals and helps players to focus on the game plan.

Coaching involves two key managerial activities:

- Providing constructive feedback to change or improve performance
- Recognizing and encouraging excellence

For a staff member to improve, develop or take on more responsibility, they need regular feedback on how they are doing. In addition, when they are performing well, their efforts should be acknowledged and supported. Coaching may be either formal or informal. Formal coaching involves setting aside time to meet privately, free from interruptions. Informal coaching is usually provided on a day-to-day basis as situations arise.

Principal Responsibilities

Manager

- Throughout the performance year, provide ongoing feedback on the staff member’s performance
- Establish open, ongoing communication channels

Staff Member

- Proactively solicit feedback to ensure that performance is in line with expectations
- Recognize the value of feedback and receive it in a spirit of openness and collaboration.

Manager and Staff Member

- Provide objective information and examples of performance to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement throughout the year

Effective Coaching

Successful coaching takes place when the manager and employee:

- Are prepared and informed
- Cite specific examples
- Focus on behavior, not personality
- Listen to each other
- Ask clarifying questions
- Reach agreement
- Develop an action plan
- Follow up
## Performance Appraisal and Discussion

### General Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Weeks Prior to Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Manager and staff member schedule review meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2-3 Weeks Prior to Appraisal Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Staff member completes self-appraisal&lt;br&gt;Manager completes staff member appraisal and returns completed appraisal to staff member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Week Prior to Appraisal Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Manager and staff member plan for performance appraisal discussion:&lt;br&gt;  - Agenda&lt;br&gt;  - Key Strengths&lt;br&gt;  - Areas for Improvement&lt;br&gt;  - Specific and Objective Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Appraisal Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Manager and staff member review completed form and ratings&lt;br&gt;Manager provides specific examples of performance to highlight both strengths and areas for improvement&lt;br&gt;Staff member asks clarifying questions and provides specific examples of performance from their perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Immediately After Appraisal Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Manager submits final recommendations and signed forms to Human Resources&lt;br&gt;Staff member has the option to submit a rebuttal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2-3 Weeks After Appraisal Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Manager and staff member begin new performance cycle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Principal Responsibilities

*Staff Member*

- At the end of the performance year, complete a self-appraisal related to the documented performance expectations and goals

*Manager*

- Complete the appraisal form related to the staff member’s performance expectations and objectives

*Manager and Staff Member*

- Support each assessment with specific results and objective examples of performance throughout the year
- Meet to discuss the staff member’s performance, identifying key areas of strength and accomplishment and areas for improvement

Preparation Leads to Outcomes
Performance Appraisal Form
Among the final stages of the performance management process are the written performance appraisal and the performance appraisal discussion. Human Resources recommends that all new employees receive an introductory performance appraisal prior to the conclusion of their first six months; thereafter, written performance appraisals are required annually. The staff Performance Appraisal Form may be used for both the introductory review and the annual review.

To assist in this part of the process, Human Resources designed a comprehensive performance appraisal tool in partnership with management and staff. For simplicity, a single performance appraisal form is used for all employees. It incorporates both the manager's and staff member's assessment. The performance appraisal instrument is tailored to assess performance with respect to position requirements, performance objectives and behaviors in support of the university's mission and strategic initiatives.

TIP: The form can be downloaded from the Human Resources website. Go to http://hr.depaul.edu and click on the Performance tab.

How We Measure Performance

- Objective measurement begins with documented performance expectations and goals
- Well-written goals document the expected results of an action and the associated measures
- Effective goals answer the following questions: What action? With what result? When? How much/How many? Using what resources?
- Performance measurement should start with an assessment of the results tied to each performance goal and then include objective observation of on-the-job behavior (with specific examples and outcomes)

The Key to Measurement = Measurable Goals

Specific: explicit, clear and concise
Measurable: quantifiable (quantity, quality, time or cost)
Action-Oriented: indicate desired outcome/results
Realistic: challenging, yet attainable
Timely: include milestones/checkpoints and target completion date

Ratings
The primary goals of formal performance appraisal are improved communication, planning and employee development. The Performance Appraisal Form utilizes a simple rating scale to achieve these goals. The following definitions expand on the explanations found in the current tool to more accurately describe the rating scale:
• **Exceeds Expectations**: Employee *exceeded* all measures and expectations outlined in the job responsibilities and performance goals discussed in previous appraisal or introductory period.

• **Meets Expectations**: Employee *effectively met* the measures and expectations outlined in the job responsibilities and performance goals discussed in previous appraisal or introductory period.

• **Needs Improvement***: Employee *did not meet* the measures and expectations outlined in the job responsibilities and performance goals discussed in previous appraisal or introductory period.

* A performance improvement plan should be developed if the staff member receives an overall rating of **Needs Improvement** or when a staff member receives a rating of **Needs Improvement** in several areas. This plan should be specific and results-oriented with measurable outcomes to be achieved within a reasonable time period. Consultation with an Employee Relations representative is required when an overall rating of **Needs Improvement** is given by the supervisor.

**No Surprises**
Staff members may not always appreciate or agree with what they hear during the performance appraisal process, but if the manager and staff member have communicated consistently and continuously throughout the appraisal period, there will not be any surprises. Appraisal and discussion should simply be a culmination of previous communications. Surprises occur when there has been little or no specific communication regarding performance during the review period, a practice that is unproductive and contrary to organizational objectives.

**TIP:** The annual performance appraisal should not be the first discussion of poor performance. For training and coaching regarding performance management, contact Workplace Learning and Performance. For performance improvement planning, resources and coaching, contact Employee Relations.

**Preparation**
Toward the end of the appraisal period, the manager and staff member should carefully review their notes, reports, observations and other documentation to prepare an accurate assessment. Performance throughout the entire year must be considered rather than just recent activities.

**Self-Appraisal**
Effective and successful performance appraisal requires employee self-appraisal. The staff member is encouraged to track their own performance and to keep a list of accomplishments and/or results relating to their documented performance goals, job responsibilities, objectives and professional development goals. The staff member uses this information to rate their own performance by completing Sections I - VI of the Performance Appraisal Form as follows:

I. Performance Goals from Previous Year and Principal Responsibilities
II. Core Behaviors
III. Core Managerial Behaviors (if applicable)
IV. Technology
V. Future Projects, Performance Goals and Objectives
VI. Future Career and Development Goals
TIP: As a guideline, a written self-appraisal should be conducted at least three weeks before the scheduled review date. Managers should give the staff member sufficient time to fill out the appraisal form during regular work hours. After completing the self-appraisal, the employee gives the Performance Appraisal Form to their manager for completion.

Manager’s Appraisal of Staff Member’s Performance
After the manager has received the staff member’s self-appraisal and consolidated their own observations, notes, reports and other documentation, they evaluate the staff member’s performance by completing Sections I - VI of the Performance Appraisal Form as follows:

I. Performance Goals from Previous Year and Principal Responsibilities
II. Core Behaviors
III. Core Managerial Behaviors (if applicable)
IV. Technology
V. Future Projects, Performance Goals and Objectives
VI. Future Career and Development Goals

TIP: To conduct a thorough and meaningful performance evaluation, managers/ reviewers should set aside sufficient time to complete each staff member’s performance appraisal prior to the scheduled performance appraisal meeting.

Performance Appraisal Discussion

Stress
The performance appraisal discussion is often an anxiety-ridden event. It is a particularly anxious time when manager and staff have not engaged in two-way communication about performance throughout the review cycle. The stress leading up to performance discussions can be eased by following the guidelines set forth in this handbook. Those who actively manage performance (their own and/or others’) tend to have constructive appraisal discussions that are clear and candid – and less stressful.

Preparation
Prior to the actual performance appraisal discussion (see timeline on page 18), the manager is expected to give a copy of the completed appraisal form to the staff member. This gives the staff member an opportunity to plan for the meeting and facilitates two-way communication. For the discussion to be productive, the manager and staff member need to:

- Set aside at least an hour of uninterrupted time to meet
- Prepare a list of questions
- Anticipate possible questions
- Bring a copy of the completed Performance Appraisal Form to the meeting
- Focus on actual behaviors and skills
- Actively listen to each other
TIP: Schedule meetings at least two weeks in advance. This gives the manager and staff member time to make final preparations for the discussion. Additionally, if a manager has multiple direct reports, setting appointments in advance helps to manage the demand on everyone’s schedule.

Performance Appraisal Meeting
The performance appraisal meeting should be a two-way conversation in which a manager and staff member:

- Review and discuss responsibilities, results, progress toward objectives and core behaviors
- Identify strengths, citing specific examples
- Identify development needs, citing specific examples
- Acknowledge and discuss differences
- Reach an understanding on results
- Make any necessary adjustments to final ratings
- Develop an action plan which includes development goals, projects and objectives for the coming year

Signatures and Record Keeping
At the conclusion of the meeting, the manager and staff member sign the first page of the appraisal form, signifying discussion of the performance appraisal, and each receives a copy for their records. The original appraisal is then forwarded to the second-level reviewer (the reviewer’s manager) for approval. A second-level reviewer signature is required to:

- Ensure that annual performance appraisals are conducted in a timely manner
- Check for possible rater bias on the part of managers (harshness and/or leniency)
- “Red flag” any continued performance problems for further review
- Remain informed of progress and successes

Finally, the original Performance Appraisal Form is returned to Human Resources and placed in the employee’s personnel file.
Recognizing and Rewarding Performance

The DePaul University Staff Recognition Award Program is intended to reward specific accomplishments and/or critical contributions by staff employees. The goal of the program is to identify and reward distinctive and exceptional achievements on the part of DePaul University staff while maintaining the day-to-day duties for the department at the “meets expectations” level (i.e., achievements that go above and beyond the call of duty, actions that significantly contribute to the University’s initiatives, exceptional customer service, or improved operational efficiency).

How Is the Program Funded?
The Office of Human Resources administers a central account for the Staff Recognition Award Program. Funds are determined during the first quarter of the fiscal year and allocated to each Vice President or Dean based on the number of full-time staff in each area. Employees are eligible to receive a maximum of two awards per fiscal year, not totaling more than three thousand dollars ($3,000). The award may range from a minimum of one hundred dollars ($100) to a maximum of three thousand dollars ($3,000) depending on the scope of the activity or accomplishment. Awards should be submitted in whole dollar increments.

Who Is Eligible?
1. Any full-time employee who has a performance rating of “meets expectations” or higher.
2. Vice President and Dean level employees are not eligible to participate in this program.
3. Self-nominations are not allowed.

Who Can Nominate?
Any faculty or staff member may make recommendations to the manager of an employee identified as having made an exceptional contribution. If the nominee is not a direct report, the employee’s manager must concur with the nomination.

Manager’s Role
Managers are responsible for informing the employee of the amount and date the recognition award will be paid. The requesting manager will be provided an electronic version of an award certificate upon request. Human Resources encourages managers to request this certificate and to present it to the employee when informing the employee of the date the award will be paid. Human Resources also encourages the manager to provide the employee with a copy of the nomination which was submitted to HR in support of the award.

Principal Responsibilities

Manager

• Recognize and reward performance frequently throughout the year.
Recognition

While there are many ways to give recognition, oftentimes the most significant and appreciated is a sincere “well done”. Positive feedback for effective performance is highly motivational. Suggested steps for giving positive feedback are:

- Describe the specific performance for which the staff member is being recognized
- Explain how the performance benefits the department and the university
- Express confidence in the staff member’s ability to maintain performance
- Thank the staff member

There are many opportunities for giving recognition. Some examples are to provide recognition when an employee:

- Consistently meets or exceeds performance expectations
- Does a good job on routine tasks
- Is learning a new job or task
- Has improved their performance
- Accomplishes an especially difficult assignment or task
- Demonstrates a significant level of a particular skill
- Volunteers for a difficult or unwanted assignment
- Displays creativity in problem solving
- Discovers a way to save (or make) the organization money
- Is the object of positive feedback from someone outside the team or department
Rewards

When thinking of rewards for individuals who have performed particularly well, many managers focus solely on dollars. While this may be appropriate at times, the manager does have other options at their disposal. Some examples include:

- More autonomy
- Development opportunities
- Broadened responsibility
- Greater decision making
- Challenging and stimulating projects

These and other examples will vary by individual, department and situation.