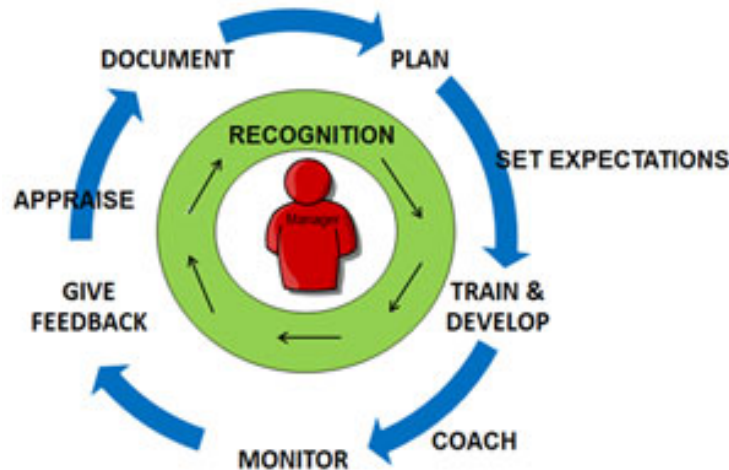


## Guide to Effective Performance Management

Penn's global eminence in teaching, research, and community service is achieved because of the diligent, innovative efforts of our outstanding faculty, staff and students. Effectively managing Penn's staff is a top priority for our managers. Research has shown that effective management enhances staff engagement, improves productivity, and promotes staff development. As shown in the illustration below, effective management is an ongoing process that requires constant and consistent effort.



### Keys to Effective Performance Management

There are essential steps managers should undertake in managing staff. These include:

- Establish and communicate (verbally and in writing) clear, detailed goals and performance expectations
- Provide coaching, training, support, time, resources to help the staff member succeed
- Monitor and observe staff member's performance
- Provide regular, specific, timely feedback to the staff member on his/her progress at meeting established performance goals and expectations
- Provide professional development feedback and opportunities
- Assess and document staff member's performance
- Address issues in a timely manner when expectations are not being met
- Provide staff member with regular recognition on achievements and accomplishments
- Watch the [Effective Performance Management video](#) for more ideas.

#### Set Performance Expectations

Managers should establish and communicate (verbally and in writing) clear, detailed goals and performance expectations to their staff. Performance goals and expectations are different from the duties and responsibilities included in the job description or Position Information Questionnaire. Performance expectations describe how the assigned duties and responsibilities should be performed. Performance expectations focus on the end results desired and help the staff member understand the level of achievement expected.

#### **Goals with S-M-A-R-T-S**

When writing goals and expectations remember to use the SMARTS criteria. Goals and expectations should be:

**Specific** – give details on the end results expected

**Measurable** – outline measures that will be used to determine when goal is met

**Achievable** – must be a realistic expectation

**Results Oriented** – goals and expectations should focus on the end results desired

**Time Bound** – identify deadlines and milestones

**Stretch** – some, but not all goals, may present a challenge to support professional development

### **Example**

Job duty:	Word process documents and reports
Performance Expectation:	Accurately word-process documents by the specified deadline and in accordance with the format used by the department. All documents should be spell-checked, proofread, checked for grammatical errors and corrected prior to submitting to the requestor.

## Competencies

In addition to performance expectations, competencies can be identified to describe the major skills, abilities, and attributes that a staff member needs to be successful in a job and/or organization.

Competencies can be used in an appraisal process to describe the major skills, abilities, and attributes that a staff member needs to be successful in a job and/or organization. Supervisors can identify up to 5 competencies for a staff member to develop during the Introductory Review Period for newly hired staff, the 90 Day Evaluation Period for internal transfers and/or during the annual performance appraisal period.

Some management teams identify competencies that are required for all staff members who work in selected departments, schools, or centers. Competencies can also be identified for jobs in a certain field or category (e.g., administrative support or management staff). Managers can use the competency model to guide a staff member's professional development and assist them in becoming proficient in their role.

**Accountability:** takes responsibility for all work activities and personal actions; follows through on commitments; implements decisions that have been agreed upon; maintains confidentiality with sensitive information; acknowledges and learns from mistakes without blaming others; recognizes the impact of one's behavior on others.

**Adaptability:** responds to changing circumstances by being innovative and altering behavior to better fit different situations; consistently exhibits optimism and energy; learns new skills, performs work in different ways; successfully works with new colleagues; professionally deals with personal discomfort in a changing work environment; willing to be flexible; remains calm in stressful situations.

- Demonstrates tolerance for uncertainty
- Demonstrates adaptability through adopting a plan, behavior or approach

**Clear Communication:** expresses oneself clearly and effectively when speaking and/or writing to individuals or groups; listens attentively; ensures that information is understood by all parties; shares information in a timely manner using the most appropriate method; presents well-organized information in a group setting.

- Maintains a constructive, open dialogue with others and speaks with candor
- Presentation Skills: engages audience by presenting well-organized material in an understandable format
- Speaks persuasively and in a convincing manner

- Proofreads documents to ensure proper language usage

**Initiative:** takes action to improve a situation without waiting for explicit instructions; understands how one's own actions relate to the University's and department's strategic goals; recognizes and responds to opportunities in order to reach a goal; seeks new and improved techniques, solutions, and approaches to completing assignments.

- Recognizes opportunities and uses them to reach a goal
- Seeks innovative approaches to completing assignments

**Managing Resources:** allocates time and resources efficiently and effectively; prioritizes work and delegate as appropriate; works to minimize institutional risk by acting as a responsible steward for the University.

- Manages time well
- Delegates assignments to appropriate teams and/or individuals and ensures that they have the proper power and authority to carry them out
- Uses resources efficiently and effectively to reach goals in the spirit of responsible stewardship
- Uses teams as a way of managing resources and selects team members with the necessary skills and personal characteristics required to achieve excellence

**Organization/Project Management:** organizes large amounts of information by creating and maintaining well organized systems; follows logical approaches to completing work; brings a project from inception to successful completion; translates strategies into step-by-step plans for action; monitors work progress to completion; effectively prioritizes; pays close attention to detail.

- Gets the right people involved in project planning and goal setting
- Completes projects successfully and on time
- Seeks innovative approaches to process management
- Acts quickly to implement plans/projects
- Delegates tasks appropriately

**Problem Solving:** generates creative approaches to addressing problems and opportunities; identifies and weighs options, makes sound decisions after reviewing all relevant information; anticipates and plans for potential problems; takes calculated risks; recognizes impact of solutions.

- Seeks out relevant information before making decisions
- Anticipates problems and thinks ahead about next steps
- Generates original ideas and develops creative approaches for addressing problems or opportunities

**Service Orientation:** acts professionally and calmly at all times when interacting with others; consistently demonstrates concern and courtesy towards colleagues and customers; treats all people respectfully; takes personal responsibility for correcting problems; follows up with individuals to ensure satisfaction with the level of service they have received.

- Works well with members of the University community (e.g., students, faculty, staff)
- Remains calm in stressful situations
- Demonstrates pleasant disposition that puts people at ease

**Technology/Specialized Knowledge:** demonstrates ability to use technology effectively and productively; continually updates skills and knowledge; addresses problems as they arise or seeks help as appropriate.

- Is willing to learn about technology
- Explores and regularly uses technology to perform tasks more effectively
- Troubleshoots basic technology problems and knows where to find assistance for complex problems

- Follows advances in technology that are necessary to stay current in one's field

**Valuing Diversity:** treats all individuals fairly and respectfully, works effectively with others, regardless of their background, position, or status; ensures that opportunities are equally available to all; respects different values and viewpoints.

- Consistently looks at issues from multiple perspectives, respecting the viewpoints and values of others
- Treats people with fairness, respect, and consideration without regard for their position, status or background
- Proactively minimizes barriers and ensures opportunities are equally available to all
- Understands multiple cultures (i.e. academic, administrative) and is able to work across boundaries

**Working Collaboratively:** works collegially with others, cooperating in both interpersonal and team relationships; fosters enthusiasm and maintains mutual trust, candor and respect. If applicable, manages groups effectively and builds partnerships with others.

- Fosters a sense of collegial partnership and teamwork
- Manages groups effectively by facilitating the participation and contributions of others and building shared goals
- Encourages cooperation and establishes common ground to achieve larger organization objectives
- Builds network of informal friendly relationships to get things done
- Works well as a member of a team
- Recognizes talented people and brings them together in unique ways to accomplish goals

### **Additional Competencies for Those Who Supervise Others**

The competencies below are provided as a guide to help measure management effectiveness. This includes the ability to lead, manage and develop others, articulate a vision that inspires commitment from others, all in a supportive environment.

**Leadership:** creates a vision or goal for one's work unit and communicates it in a way that motivates others to implement it; understands and leverages the organization's structure and relationships; pursues organization support and resources; develops strategies to include divergent opinions and overcome adversity; moves plans forward toward a specific course of action.

- Creates a compelling vision of the future and communicates it to others in a way that inspires their commitment
- Inspires others through energy, enthusiasm, and optimism
- Recognizes the potential impact of global, political, economic, and social changes on higher education and on the University
- Consistently demonstrates passion, enthusiasm and excitement about ideas, work, people, and/or his/her ability to succeed
- Translate visions into strategies and monitors progress

**Managing Conflict:** ensures productive resolution of conflict; recognizes different viewpoints; brings conflict into the open, and encourages those involved to find appropriate solutions.

- Recognizes and articulates differing opinions: brings conflict into the open and involves people in resolving it
- Encourages others to ask tough questions and disagree
- Recognizes the validity of opposing viewpoints and does not act defensively
- Mediates conflicts and finds solutions that are satisfactory to all parties
- Attacks the problem and not the person in conflict situations

**Managing Performance:** sets clear goals and expectations for staff; follows progress against goals; provides regular feedback; addresses performance issues promptly; fosters learning and development; provides public and private recognition of staff accomplishments.

- Ensures that staff members have clear goals and performance expectations
- Organizes assignments, tasks, and expectations in a way that fosters opportunities for learning and development
- Explicitly encourages others to achieve developmental goals and provides them with encouragement, support, time, and resources
- Deals firmly and promptly with performance problems; lets staff members know what is expected of them and when
- Provides specific performance feedback, both positive and constructive, as soon as possible after an event
- Stays informed about staff member's progress at meeting performance goals and expectations by providing regular, effective verbal and written feedback on performance, including the completion of annual written performance appraisals

## Give Feedback

Giving staff regular feedback on their performance is the number one driver of satisfactory performance. Regular feedback helps staff understand their progress at meeting expectations, provides recognition for their accomplishments and enhances staff productivity and engagement.

### **Steps to Effective Feedback**

- **Plan**
  - Review documentation and relevant information; jot down notes on items you want to cover
- **Timing**
  - Notify staff member about meeting
- **Set the Tone**
  - Establish a setting conducive to dialogue. Emphasize the positive; appraise performance; not the person. Avoid distractions during the meeting.
- **Give Specifics**
  - Identify specific actions and behaviors where expectations were and were not met. Give specific examples
- **Encourage Dialogue**
  - Engage in active listening, allow time for questions and clarification
- **Coach**
  - Offer recommendations and guidance
- **Set Goals and Plan for Follow Up**
- **Summarize and End on a Positive Note**
  - Summarize important points and action plans
- **Document Feedback**
  - Do a brief written summary of the feedback meeting which includes: the date of the meeting, where performance expectations were and were not met, topics covered, action plans and any follow up activities. Accurate documentation is a good foundation for future employment decisions.

### **More Resources on Giving Feedback**

- [Giving Effective Performance Feedback](#) (PowerPoint)
- [Providing Effective Feedback Video](#)

## Appraising Staff Performance

The University has formal programs to help managers appraise staff performance. These include:

[Introductory Review Period](#) for newly hired staff

[90 Day Evaluation Period](#) for current staff members who transfer to new Penn positions

[Performance and Staff Development Program](#), the annual performance appraisal for eligible staff members

All of these programs encompass the essential keys to effective performance management, including but not limited to, setting expectations, giving feedback on performance and establishing professional development goals.

### [Guide to the Performance Appraisal Process](#)

#### **Developing Clearly Defined Performance Expectations**

The basis of an effective performance plan is developing and communicating clearly defined performance expectations to assist the staff member in understanding how the duties and responsibilities should be performed. Performance expectations should focus on end results not just activities. Expectations for the appraisal cycle should be communicated in the performance appraisal (e.g., in the Goals/Project/Responsibility section of the appraisal)

Q. What are performance expectations and how are they different from job duties?

A. The position or job description outlines the duties and responsibilities for the position or defines what the staff member is to do. Performance expectations help the staff member understand how he or she should perform the duties and responsibilities.

Q. What are the different types of performance expectations?

A. There are both quantitative and qualitative types of expectations. Supervisors should develop both types of expectations, where appropriate. An expectation can combine quantitative and qualitative information.

Quantity or Output Expectations—Focus on results and often involve a numerical measurement.

Example: Accurately process 50 housing applications per day.

Quality or Behavioral Expectations—Focus on the means or methods for achieving a goal.

Example: When you receive a customer complaint, you should actively listen to the customer's concerns, document the complaint in writing, thoroughly investigate the complaint, take the appropriate action to resolve the complaint and communicate results to the customer within two (2) working days.

Q. What are some effective criteria and guidelines for developing performance expectations?

A. We recommend using S.M.A.R.T.S. criteria for setting effective performance expectations.

Effective expectations should be:

Specific—help the staff member understand exactly what is expected.

Measurable—measurements help the staff member and supervisor understand when the expectation is achieved.

Achievable—expectations should be realistic.

Results Oriented—expectations should focus on end results.

Time Bound—deadlines should be identified where applicable.

Stretch—some but not all expectations, should be a challenge to reach. Stretch expectations should be realistic. Stretch expectations support the development of the staff member. Achieving Stretch expectations usually equates to high, exemplary performance.

Q. What are some examples of well-written performance expectations?

A. The following are some examples of performance expectations for various duties and responsibilities.

#### Supervision/Management

Duty/Responsibility: Recruit, hire, train, supervise and appraise regular non-exempt and exempt staff.

Performance Expectation: In accordance with all applicable University, local, State and Federal policies and regulations, recruit, screen, and hire qualified and diverse staff to accomplish the missions and goals of the unit. Ensure that new staff are oriented to the University, school/center, and department in a timely and effective manner. Set clear performance expectations and goals for all staff, give them regular feedback on progress at meeting expectations and support the professional development of staff by giving them developmental assignments and providing training, where appropriate. Complete the appropriate introductory and annual performance appraisals for all staff, where applicable. Be knowledgeable of appropriate human resources and other applicable policies, laws and procedures and comply with these laws and policies when managing staff. Establish practices, policies and procedures to ensure a civil, productive and respectful work environment for all staff. Keep abreast of changes and recent developments in applicable policies and laws and effective management principles by undertaking regular training and reading professional publications.

#### Word-processing

Duty/Responsibility: Word-process complex and routine documents, reports, and correspondence.

Performance Expectation: Word-process documents by the specified deadline and in accordance with the format used by the department. All documents should be spell-checked, proofread, checked for grammatical errors and corrected prior to submitting to the requestor. Regularly learn, and use University and departmental supported computer software (e.g., Microsoft Office Suite) and maintain up- to-date computer skills and abilities on the required software at the intermediate level.

#### Budgeting

Duty/Responsibility: Assist in the development and monitoring of departmental budgets.

Performance Expectation: Assist the director in planning and developing, in accordance with University guidelines and sound accounting principles, accurate and cost-effective budgets, that support the mission and goals of the department. Budgets must be prepared and entered into Pillar in accordance with specified timeframes. All budgets should be reviewed at least once a month to ascertain if:

All transactions, including Purchasing Card charges, are accurate and in accordance with University financial guidelines. Director should immediately be informed of any inconsistencies, errors, suspected misuse of University resources, or violations of policy.

Current budget allocations will cover current and future expenses. Make appropriate changes if reallocation is warranted.

There are any current deficits or the possibility of future deficits. This information must be immediately shared with the Director.

There are any budget errors. Budget errors discovered should be investigated and resolved in a timely manner.

Submit to the Director by the 15th of each month, a monthly budget report that summarizes for the previous month the total spent in all budget categories and balances for all categories. This report should also briefly document any budget concerns and forecasts.

#### IT Support

Duty/Responsibility: Install, configure, and maintain operating systems on desktop computers. Troubleshoot and fix problems in a timely manner.

Performance Expectation: Install, configure and maintain operating systems, software and hardware in accordance with Penn computing and licensing standards/guidelines. Troubleshoot and correct problems in a timely manner, and take appropriate preventative measures (e.g., upgrading virus software) to maintain a steady state and minimize downtime. Provide timely, accurate, and easy to understand advice to end users on computer related inquiries. Keep current on software changes, technological developments and computing policies and regulations by reading professional publications, attending training and benchmarking with other computing environments.

#### Project Management

Duty/Responsibility: Coordinates and manages department wide projects.

Performance Expectation: Develop project objectives, goals and budget in accordance with departmental guidelines and communicate this information to the project team. Establish appropriate teams to work on departmental projects. Work with team to brainstorm ideas, develop tasks, activities, and timelines. Maintain a team environment that enhances effective open communication, cooperation and collaboration among team members. Consult as needed with others in the department, University and externally to gather benchmark data and information relative to the successful completion of the project. Regularly apprise director of team's progress. Complete projects successfully by meeting specified deadlines, objectives, goals and budget.

### Writing Effective Feedback

Providing specific feedback about performance results helps the staff member understand how successful s/he is at performing the duties and responsibilities of the position and where further development of skills and abilities is needed. The supervisor should accurately assess the staff member's performance against the clearly defined expectations established for the appraisal cycle. The feedback should clearly describe the performance results outlining where the staff member met and did not meet the established expectations. Including supporting examples in the feedback also helps the staff member understand your assessment of the performance results.

For example, instead of writing:

"You did a good job implementing and conducting student workshops."



Consider giving more specific feedback such as:

"The workshops you implemented addressed the needs of the students, received average overall ratings of 4.5/5.0 and were well attended. Attendance at the programs increased 25% over last year."

Some more examples of effective performance feedback are listed below.

Feedback to a staff member who meets the expectation:

Performance Expectation: Install, configure and maintain operating systems, software and hardware in accordance with Penn computing and licensing standards and guidelines. Troubleshoot and correct problems in a timely manner, and take appropriate preventative measures (e.g., upgrading virus software) to maintain a steady state and minimize downtime. Provide timely, accurate, and easy to understand advice to end users on computer related inquiries. Keep current on software changes, technological developments and computing policies and regulations by reading professional publications, attending training and benchmarking with other computing environments.

Describe performance results, including supporting examples: Susan, you successfully upgraded all of our staff's computers to Microsoft Office Suite 2013 by August 17, the established deadline for the upgrades. In addition, you placed on the shared drive easy to understand tips (in Q & A format) for using the upgraded programs. As previously discussed, I received many compliments from the staff on how you handled the upgrades with minimal downtime of the computing systems. You worked on weekends and before and after regular business hours to effect this smooth transition. In addition, even though three (3) serious viruses hit the campus this past year, you successfully managed our systems and maintained a steady state even as many of our colleagues experienced crashes and downtime. Again, the staff commended you on your ability to keep us functioning, enabling them to meet vital deadlines during the busy admissions cycle. This year you took two training courses in Implementing Microsoft Windows 2013 and received your certificate in the IT Immersion Program through IT@Penn.

Feedback to a staff member who meets and frequently exceeds the expectation:

Performance Expectation: Develop project objectives, goals and budget in accordance with departmental guidelines and communicate this information to the project team. Establish appropriate teams to work on departmental projects. Work with team to brainstorm ideas, develop tasks, activities, and timelines. Maintain a team environment that enhances effective open communication, cooperation and collaboration among team members. Consult as needed with others in the department, University and externally to gather benchmark data and information relative to the successful completion of the project. Regularly apprise director of team's progress. Complete projects successfully by meeting specified deadlines, objectives, goals and budget.

Describe performance results, including supporting examples: Roberto, this year your team successfully implemented the revised departmental peer advising program for all freshmen and sophomore students by August 1, one month prior to the established implementation deadline. Because of your outstanding planning, organizational and collaborative skills and efforts as project leader, all freshmen and sophomores were assigned their peer advisors prior to arriving on campus. Furthermore, your team provided an opportunity for all assigned students to talk to their respective advisors over the summer and meet their advisors in person at the August departmental picnic. Thus, 98 of the 100 (98%) students in the program either talked to their advisor before coming to campus and/or met them at the picnic. This is a dramatic improvement over last year when only 70% of the students had been contacted by their advisors by September 30. This also exceeded the expectation for this program of having 85% of the students contacted by September 15. This helped the students develop relationships with their advisors early in the semester and was a factor in improving the average student-advisor contacts/semester from three (3) times a semester last year to six (6) times this year. Additionally, the program exceeded the expectation that the average

student-advisor contacts/semester should increase to 5. The overall student ratings for the program were 4.75/5.0 and all of this was accomplished within budget. Due to your outstanding leadership efforts the project was implemented successfully, all the objectives and expectations were met and as noted above your performance frequently exceeded expectations in some areas. I have received many compliments from the faculty as well about your continued exemplary work with the program.

Feedback to a staff member who does not meet an expectation:

Performance Expectation: Word-process documents by the specified deadline and in accordance with the format used by the department. All documents should be spell-checked, proofread, checked for grammatical errors and corrected prior to submitting to the requestor. Regularly learn and use University and department supported computer software (e.g., Microsoft Office Suite) and maintain up to date computer skills and abilities on the required software at the intermediate level.

Describe performance results, including supporting examples: David, you consistently meet deadlines in producing all requested documents. However, the quality of your documents does not consistently meet expectations. Your routine correspondence (e.g., letters, memos) is usually error-free and formatted correctly. However, there are frequently typographical and formatting areas in the monthly reports that you type. For example, 9 out of 12 of your monthly reports had basic formatting and typographical errors. For example, although the reports should be single spaced throughout the document, in three (3) of the 9 reports cited above some of the sections were single spaced and some were double spaced. As noted in a March letter to you, your reports also include numerous typographical errors even after the requestor has corrected the draft and indicated to you where corrections should be made. You must make significant improvement in this area by thoroughly proofreading and spell-checking documents before submitting them to the requestor.

## Staff Not Meeting Expectations

Do you have a staff member whose performance or workplace conduct is not meeting expectations? If so, have you:

- Given the staff member clear, detailed goals and performance expectations in writing?
- Provided the appropriate coaching, training, resources, and guidance?
- Provided regular, specific, timely and accurate feedback to the staff member on where s/he is and is not meeting expectations?
- Documented feedback given to the staff member?
- Told the staff member that his/her performance is unsatisfactory?

### Discuss Unsatisfactory Performance or Conduct with Staff Member

If you determine that a staff member's performance or conduct is unsatisfactory and is not consistently meeting expectations, it is vital that you discuss this with the staff member, giving detailed specific examples of how their performance or conduct is not meeting expectations. For example instead telling the staff member "the monthly reports are wrong" you should give the staff member specific feedback about where the reports met and do not meet expectations. For example, you can explain to the staff member that although last month's report followed the prescribed format, there was inaccurate information in the following sections; the totals on the number of participants per program were wrong, activity about the Sponsorship Program was missing from the report, in the executive summary section there were three typos in the last two paragraphs and one of the program sponsors names was misspelled.

### Performance Improvement/Discipline Process

If performance continues to be unsatisfactory or inconsistent you should determine if you want to begin disciplinary action. Disciplinary action for unsatisfactory performance or misconduct is normally

imposed on a progressive basis and in consultation with a representative of the Division of Human Resources/Staff and Labor Relations or your school/center human resources professional. The steps include oral warning, written warning, probation and termination. Steps may be omitted or repeated depending on the frequency, severity and/or nature of performance or misconduct exhibited. Progressive discipline or corrective action may not be imposed in situations involving serious misconduct. Cases of serious misconduct could result in termination of employment. The [Performance Improvement/Discipline Policy](#) provides further information on the progressive disciplinary process.

If the staff member is in the Introductory Review Period (for newly hired staff) or the 90 Day Evaluation Period (for internal transfers), you should refer to the information found on the [Performance Management Programs webpage](#).

### Consultation

Staff and Labor Relations professionals (215-898-6093) or your school/center human resources professional are available to consult with you on addressing situations where staff members are not meeting expectations. This consultation should occur prior to issuing discipline at the written warning level or higher. You must always consult with a human resources professional in cases of serious misconduct and/or before terminating the employment of a staff member.