



Bulletin

Employee Reviews

This Management Methods Bulletin was developed as a project for the 2015 Advanced Leadership Institute (ALI) class. Members of Team 7 who researched and prepared the bulletin were: Troy Aichele of Hermanson Company (Kent, WA); Jason Bleak of IPW, LLC (South Jordan, UT); Shawn Bray of Hussung Mechanical (Louisville, KY); Brian Serafin of Limbach Company (Woburn, MA); Jon Sterling (Maxair, Inc. (Marietta, GA); and Albert Youna of Youna Mechanical, Inc. (Elk Grove, IL)

INTRODUCTION

The Employee Review is a powerful tool that allows the manager to provide feedback to the employee while also allowing the employee to provide feedback to the manager.

The review process is an important component of the performance improvement process. When employees know what is expected of them and performance measures are understood, the review process can be straightforward and improvement tracked.

Since employees may perceive the evaluation process as negative, it is important that they understand that a performance review is essentially a meaningful, two-way conversation about what aspects of their work performance are going well and what needs improvement. The manager needs to create a safe environment in which the employee is comfortable and able to engage in an open and honest discussion. And, the outcome of the review process is dependent upon quality feedback.

BENEFITS OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

Employee reviews provide a number of benefits for the employee *and* the manager. It allows them to:

- Reiterate the company's mission, values, goals, objectives and defined standards;
- Re-cap positive and negative events, interactions, attitudes and productivity;
- Assess the employee's strengths, limitations and obstacles;
- Identify opportunities for the employee's achievement and growth;
- Explore strategies for moving forward;
- Create measurable and achievable goals for the next six to 12 months

It is common practice for employee reviews to be held annually or semi-annually. However, the company's procedures may require more frequent evaluations (i.e. monthly).

PREPARING FOR THE REVIEW

A productive and beneficial employee review does require some preparation to ensure all parties involved understand each other's perspective.

Personality Assessments

One possible step is to have the employee take a personality assessment. Personality assessments can provide valuable insights into an employee's motivations, approach to assessing and solving problems and challenges and other important performance indicators. A personality assessment may also help the manager to communicate more effectively with the employee.

Suggested assessments include:

- DISC (<https://www.discinsights.com>),
- Myer-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (<http://www.meyersbriggs.org>) (<https://www.cpp.com>), or
- Predictive Index (PI) (<http://www.piworldwide.com>).

It may also be helpful for the manager to offer some thoughtful pre-review questions for the employee to consider, such as; "What has been your best day/project at work?"

Set the Scene

To ensure the review is most beneficial to all parties involved, plan the environment where it will take place. The room should be quiet and private with no interruptions permitted from visitors, phone calls or electronic communications. The employee should feel secure that the conversation is kept confidential.

CONDUCTING THE REVIEW

There are two types of employee reviews, the Management Driven Review and the Employee Driven Review. The type of review chosen should be determined by the desired outcomes.

Management Driven Review

The review objectives must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely (SMART). Seek to use objectives and goals in a way that aligns employee and business objectives into a cohesive system.

Review organizational mission, values, objectives and standards.

- Link organizational goals to current activities.
- Tell and listen to stories to illustrate desired goals and objectives.
- Re-cap positive and negative events, interactions, attitudes and productivity.
- Avoid being judgmental. Be objective. Use actual examples that represent and illustrate the performance issue (use the STAR model—Situation, Task, Action, Result).
- Identify issues or problems to be addressed. Be clear; do not make assumptions or generalizations. Make sure the employee acknowledges any/all issues.
- Identify and praise positive attributes, achievements and accomplishments (particular assignments and/or goals).
- Ask open-ended questions to create a dialogue. Avoid questions that result in "yes" or "no" answers. Actively listen to responses, and ask meaningful follow-up questions to thoroughly understand the issue.

Assess the individual's strengths, limitations, and obstacles. Discuss employee's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the S.W.O.T. analysis.

(<http://www.wordstemplates.org>).

Identify opportunities for achievement and growth, such as:

- What opportunities interest the employee?
- What opportunities will benefit both the employee and the company?

Explore strategies for moving forward – make a plan.

- Discuss means and methods for the employee to achieve and grow.
- What behaviors or work practices, does the employee need to stop, start, continue or prepare to accomplish?

Create measurable and achievable goals for the next six to 12 months.

- Key tasks to be completed must be defined.
- Identify areas that must be improved upon.
- Create a performance plan (it must be flexible so that changes can be made, if required).
- Goals must be measurable so that the manager and employee can determine whether they have been accomplished by the next review.
- Establish follow-up intervals to ensure progress is being made toward the goals. These can be formal or informal.

Employee Driven Review

The employee self-evaluation process promotes employee engagement in the review process. It also ensures that employees have thoughtfully prepared for their review. The self-review process will allow the manager to cover all of the

same items that the management driven review covers, provided that the self-assessment questionnaire is drafted to provide coverage of the same objectives. These should include:

- Reiteration of the organization's mission, values, goals, objectives, and defined standards;
- Re-cap of positive and negative events, interactions, attitudes and productivity;
- Assessment of the individual's strengths, limitations, and obstacles;
- Identification of opportunities for achievement and growth;
- Exploration of strategies for moving forward; and

The employee should complete and return the self-evaluation questionnaire to the manager prior to the review. This will allow the manager time to better prepare.

TIPS

To help ensure employee reviews are productive and beneficial, consider the following guidelines:.

- Turn negatives into positives. For example:
 - ❖ “Your estimates are inaccurate.” (Negative: statement is vague).
 - ❖ “Your last two estimates contained summation errors on the tally sheets.” (Positive: statement cites specifics and allows immediate correction).
- Measure intangible factors (dependability, cooperativeness, etc.). Cite examples in which the employee exhibited positive or negative behavior with respect to a specific trait.

- Help employees perform at a high level. For example:
 - ❖ Have them take part in setting goals.
 - ❖ Goals need to be realistic.
 - ❖ Avoid micromanaging.
- Keep employee performance logs (these do not have to be complicated). Do not rely on memory.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Performance appraisals are often used for evaluating an employee for promotion, termination, pay increases or job re-assignment. As such, these appraisals can be scrutinized in employee discrimination suits and breach of contract litigation. In addition to providing a written summary of the appraisal to the employee, a company should ensure the following:

- Communicate job expectations, the performance review and its impact on an employee's position.
- Ensure performance measures are related to the job being performed.
- Those providing input into the appraisal need to provide objective input.
- Give timely feedback on performance to the employee and provide sufficient time and support for the employee to improving his/her performance.
- Provide a written summary of the appraisal to the employee.

Assistance with system development is available from consultants, software, books and a variety of other sources. Additionally, it is always a good idea to have an attorney review the company's performance appraisal processes.

Samples of Open-Ended Questions

Review

- What is the most important thing we should be talking about today?
- What has become clear since we last met?
- What have you already tried?
- What will happen if you don't get a resolution on this issue?
- How is this problem affecting you?
- Why is this important to you?
- What would you decide to do if I was unable to give you direction?

Fears

- What is the most important decision you're facing?
- What is keeping you from making it happen?
- What topic are you hoping I won't bring up?
- What part of your responsibilities are you avoiding right now?
- What conversation are you avoiding right now?
- What are you really worried about?
- What are you afraid of?

Plans

- What are you trying to make happen in the next three months?
- What do you wish you had more time to do?
- What do you want to accomplish?
- What is your desired outcome?
- What can be done to make this different?
- What would make you most satisfied?
- What would you personally be willing to do to change the situation?
- What are you going to do next?

Evaluation

- What areas under your responsibility are you most satisfied with? Least satisfied?
- What is the highest leverage use of your time right now? Are you doing it?
- Is what you presented the real issue?
- Are there other explanations or causes of your issue?
- What is the worst thing about this?
- What would be the financial impact if this were resolved?
- What would be the non-financial impact if this were resolved?

Empowerment

- What things are you doing that you would like to stop doing or to delegate to someone else?
- How could this be handled or done better?
- What threatens the business? What would put you out of business?
- How would it be different if you tried that?
- What would you do if you weren't afraid?
- How much is it worth to you to resolve this?

Management Driven, Rater Review Example #1

Annual Employee Review

Name: _____ Job Title: _____

Evaluated By: _____ Date: _____

Rating: _____

Scoring: 1 = Never 2 = Seldom 3 = Sometimes 4 = Mostly 5 = Always

Indicate your rating of this employee by circling the number that indicates the rating of the employee for each individual characteristic. One rating must be selected for each characteristic. Do not allow unusual circumstances or your personal feelings to influence your ratings. Total the circled numbers and calculate the score as a percentage of the total possible score.

Performance Characteristics

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Sense of Urgency | Possesses a sense of urgency to complete work in a timely manner. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Planning | Coordinates with co-workers and department leads to arrange work so that it may be performed efficiently, effectively and in a timely manner. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Quality of Work | The quality of work performed meets the high standards required by the company and our customers (resulting in minimal rework and jobs completed on schedule). |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Quantity of Work | Maintains a high level of productivity on a daily basis. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Decision Making | Uses good judgement in the decision-making process and asks supervisors or management when necessary |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Learning | Shows the ability to learn and become productive in a timely manner. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Responsibility | Capable of accepting added responsibility when it is delegated by a supervisor or member of management. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Cross-Training | Demonstrates the ability to cross-train when deemed necessary by |

the immediate supervisor or management.

1	2	3	4	5	Safety	Works in a safe manner at all times. Follows company safety directives. Wears clothing conducive to safe operations.
1	2	3	4	5	Appearance	Maintains professional appearance required by all employees in contact with customers.
1	2	3	4	5	Neatness	Maintains a clean and professional work area, and always leaves work area in a neat and orderly fashion.
1	2	3	4	5	Work Habits	Displays strong work habits and strives to maintain them.
1	2	3	4	5	Supervision	Capable of working alone, with little or no supervision.
1	2	3	4	5	Communication	Demonstrates the ability to communicate problems or ideas to department leads as well as supervisors and management.
1	2	3	4	5	Team Work	Displays the effort necessary to become an effective team member.
1	2	3	4	5	Flexibility	Has the flexibility and the willingness to perform any duties as deemed necessary by a supervisor or management.
1	2	3	4	5	Company Tools	Shows respect for the tools assigned to them. Keeps them properly maintained and in a safe working condition.

Performance Characteristics Score = _____ (85 possible)

Personal Characteristics

1	2	3	4	5	Attitude - Internal	Maintains a good attitude with co-workers, supervisors, and management.
1	2	3	4	5	Attitude - External	Maintains a good attitude with customers, subcontractors and vendors.
1	2	3	4	5	Dependable	Is a dependable member of the work force.
1	2	3	4	5	Enthusiasm	Is enthusiastic towards work and co-workers.
1	2	3	4	5	Loyalty	Demonstrates a high level of loyalty to co-workers, job and company.
1	2	3	4	5	Patience	Maintains patience and tolerance towards co-workers, supervisors and management.

Personal Characteristics Score = _____ (30 possible)

Performance Characteristics Score = _____ (85 possible)

Personal Characteristics Score = _____ (30 possible)

Total Score =
_____ (115 possible)

Percentage Rating = Total Score (____) / Possible Score (____) = _____%

Does the employee meet the requirements listed in his/her applicable Job Description?
Detail examples of over or under performance in relation to the criteria listed in the Job Description.

Additional Supervisor Comments:

Additional Employee Comments:

Employee Goals/Metrics:

Training Needs:

This evaluation has been reviewed with the employee.

Supervisor

Date

This review has been discussed with me, however, my signature does not imply that I agree or disagree.

Employee

Date

Management Driven, Exploratory Review Example #2

Employee: _____ Date: _____

Feedback from Past Year

- 1) What are you most proud of since our last review?
- 2) How would you rate your performance since last time we met (1 to 10)? (Ask for additional comments)
- 3) Where there any goals from our last review that were unattainable?
- 4) Have you experienced any unforeseen obstacles that have prevented you from performing as well as you expected?

Current Feedback

- 1) Let's review our company mission/vision statement, along with our values.
- 2) What is the most important problem, decision, or challenge you are facing currently? How do you suggest we move forward while maintaining our mission?
- 3) What is our greatest opportunity for improvement or growth?
- 4) What are your goals for the next six to 12 months and how can we help you achieve them?
 - a) a)
 - b) b)
 - c) c)

- 5) In what area or areas do you feel you can improve? How can we help you?
- 6) In what area or areas do you feel we can improve as a company?
- 7) Do you regularly exceed customer expectations?
- 8) Should our company make any changes that could help us meet or exceed customer expectations?
- 9) What are you most passionate about (personally and professionally)?

Final Comments

- 1) Are there any other topics you would like to discuss? Personally or professionally?

NOTE: Reviewer: Please set a time and date in six months to review goals.

Employee Self Evaluation

Self-Review/Self-Evaluation Questionnaire

Date: _____

Employee: _____ Position: _____

Please attach additional sheets if necessary when answering the following questions:

1. What are your strengths? Also list any major accomplishments for the past year.

2. Are there areas of your performance in which you could improve?

3. What are the expectations of your performance for the next year? Do you have goals for professional growth or develop? Any training goals or needs? Are there ways we could help you to be more successful?

4. What do you like best about working at this company?

5. What changes should we consider to become a better mechanical contractor?

6. List any other subjects you would like to discuss during your review.