Employee Performance Program Resource Guide For Supervisors

Everything you need to help coach and guide employee performance and professional development activities.
The *Employee Performance Program* provides supervisors with resources to help coach and guide employee job performance and professional development throughout the year.

Program resources include a series of structured conversations, each related to a specific job performance or professional development objective. Associated development activities provide practical assignments you can use to support performance and development goals.

**Compliance with Unit, College, or Department Procedures**

The Employee Performance Program supports and supplements any program or reporting process that your unit, college, or department may have in place.

**Your Role as a Supervisor**

As a supervisor your role is to help the employees reporting to you understand their job responsibilities and achieve job performance goals while guiding and providing coaching on performance improvement and professional development activities. This begins on day one when you welcome a new employee.

You can find additional resources for new employees and the You and UIC New Employee Orientation at:

hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/start/

**Resources Online**

Visit the UIC Human Resources web site and navigate to Developing and Guiding Employees.

http://hr.uic.edu

**Questions and Support**

For questions related to the Employee Performance Program process and materials, contact:

oe@uillinois.edu

For questions related to the programs or reporting process in your unit, college, or department contact your human resources representative.

**Policy 602: Employee Performance Review**

Academic Professional and Civil Service employees should receive a Performance Review each year between May 15 and August 15.

hr.uic.edu/policies/
Making A Habit Of Conversations
Employee performance management is an integral part of day-to-day work for supervisors.

As a supervisor, it is your responsibility to facilitate the flow of information to and from the employees that report to you, provide guidance on job performance, and create a stable and productive work environment.

Having frequent performance conversations with employees will help you to:

• Communicate clearly about job responsibilities and performance expectations
• Provide and document continuous feedback about job performance
• Guide and support performance improvement efforts
• Identify and facilitate opportunities for professional development
• Provide a meaningful annual employee performance review

Preparing for Conversations
Employee performance conversations when held regularly need only take anywhere from one to 15 minutes. Proper preparation for each conversation will help you stay on track and guide your conversation to productive results.

• Identify your communication purpose
• Choose the appropriate conversation
• Use the associated conversation guide to prepare for the discussion
• Document any facts that will be discussed
• Set a meeting time with the employee

Conducting Conversations
In all conversations, it is important to follow these steps:

• Know your end goal
• Explain the purpose of the meeting
• Share what you have observed
• Explain how the behavior impacts the team
• Explore next steps
• Close the meeting by summarizing: what was decided, when will it occur, and when a follow-up will take place

Remember to acknowledge performance achievements. Praise is one of a supervisor’s most impactful performance management tools and regular conversations involving positive feedback are important to guiding performance outcomes.

Keep in mind that corrective conversations can be challenging for everyone involved. Your expectation should be to encourage appropriate behavior, not to discourage or punish the employee. The longer you wait to have these conversations the more difficult it will be, as the employee will eventually assume the behavior is acceptable since no one has addressed it.

Following-Up
Documenting agreed upon actions and follow-up meetings is an important step. Your commitment to follow up helps to reinforce expectations and encourage personal accountability. Be sure to follow up to confirm that agreed upon actions are completed.

By following-up you also create an additional opportunity to support an employee and provide coaching or guidance in a timely manner.
The Employee Performance Program

**Goals and Expectations**
A conversation to clarify job responsibilities and establish performance benchmarks.

**Annual Review**
Summarize the performance cycle and provide an annual employee performance review.

(Recommended)

**Development Conversations**
To identify performance improvement and professional development opportunities.
- Communication and Collaboration
- Continuous Improvement
- Engagement and Motivation
- Learning and Development

(Recommended)

**Feedback Conversations**
To document and provide feedback about behavior and job performance.
- Positive Feedback
- Work Status
- Constructive Feedback
- Attendance and Punctuality

(Recommended)

**Development Activities**
Practical assignments to support performance improvement and professional development.
- Coaching Assignments
- Competency Development
- Cross-Training
- Job Journaling
- Job Responsibilities
- Job Shadowing
- Meeting Participation
- Mentoring
- Setting Goals
- Team Assignments
- Technical Training
Choosing Conversations

During the course of the year, you will choose and conduct conversations on a regular basis with the employees who report to you.

★ Each year begins with setting *Goals and Expectations* and culminates in an *Annual Review*.

★ The *Development and Feedback* conversations occur as needed throughout the year. The number and frequency you have of these conversations is up to you. More frequent conversations will yield better performance results.

### Using the Conversation Guides

Each conversation includes a guide you can use to quickly prepare for, conduct, and document the conversation.

**Most conversations can be completed in less than 20 minutes.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Setting Expectations</strong></td>
<td>To clarify job responsibilities and establish performance benchmarks. To start each annual performance cycle, with a new employee, or if an employee adopts new job responsibilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Development Conversations</strong></td>
<td>To identify performance improvement and professional development opportunities. As a need or opportunity arises. Ideally, each of these conversations would occur at least once per year.</td>
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<td><strong>Feedback Conversations</strong></td>
<td>To document and provide feedback about specific behavior and job performance. On a frequent basis based on observation of the employees' behavior and job performance.</td>
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<td><strong>Performance Review</strong></td>
<td>To complete the performance cycle and provide an annual employee performance review. At the end of the annual performance cycle.</td>
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Conversation guides support your preparation for the various types of development conversations you will have with your employees throughout the year.

You may use these forms to prepare for, take notes during, and document a conversation. If you use the form as documentation be sure to provide the employee with a copy of the completed form. You may also choose to document development and feedback conversations in a “Per our conversation” email. The key is documenting the conversations for reference during the year and when preparing the Annual Review.

Finding the Conversation Guides Online

Conversation guides are also available on the UIC Human Resources web site as individual PDF documents.

hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/

Finding the Goals and Expectations and Annual Review Forms

The Goals and Expectations and Annual Review forms are available on the UIC Human Resources web site.

hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/
Support employee success by establishing a clear understanding of the tasks, behaviors, and competencies expected in the performance job duties throughout the year.

Find this conversation guide: [hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/creating_expectations/](hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/creating_expectations/)

**When to Use?**

*With current employees:*
- At the beginning of each academic year
- If job responsibilities change
- At the onset of a new work assignment

*With new employees:*
- During the first week of employment

**What to Document?**

A well-formatted performance goal defines an objective performance outcome that is relevant to the job position. The documented goals and expectations need to be clear and concise, providing details on what is to be achieved within a specific timeframe.

During this discussion, employees and supervisors also discuss perceived challenges and opportunities to develop and document objectives for learning and professional development.

**How to Follow-Up?**

Once goals and expectations are agreed upon and documented both supervisor and employee should retain a copy of the completed form for reference throughout the year.

Goals and expectations may be edited or revised during the year as the work changes and assignments or projects are completed.

**Outcomes**

*For the Supervisor*
- Clearly communicate the performance expectations associated with the job position
- Establish a written record of shared understanding
- Create an opportunity to identify and address potential challenges before they impact performance

*For the Employee*
- Establish clear criteria for success in the job position
- Identify and discuss professional development goals
A review of job performance relative to the established *Goals and Expectations*, including prior *Development* or *Feedback* conversations and progress on development activities.

Find this conversation guide: hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/conducting_annual_reviews/

**When to Use?**

Following the process outlined in UIC HR policy 602 Employee Performance Review annual employee performance review meetings take place between May 15 and August 15.

For questions related to the programs or reporting process in your unit, college, or department contact your human resources representative.

**What to Document?**

Use the form in the Annual Review conversation guide to document feedback about job performance and professional development for the prior year.

**How to Follow-Up?**

Once the Annual Review form is completed, final notes are added, and both the supervisor and employee have signed it, a copy should be provided to the employee.

The Annual Review is a confidential record that is kept separate from the employee’s personnel file with the unit, college, or department.

Completion of reviews will be reported through unit, college, or department human resources according to processes within the unit. Vice Chancellors and Deans will handle reporting compliance to UIC Human Resources.

**Outcomes**

The supervisor should schedule a meeting time with the employee in a private location. When scheduling the meeting, supervisors should encourage the employee to prepare by completing a self-review using the Annual Review form.

The employee should be encouraged to review their *Goals and Expectations* as well as any prior *Development* or *Feedback* conversations and to assess their job performance using observable behaviors and actions. The employee should also record any professional development activities they participated in throughout the past year.

Supervisors should gather and review all documentation from previously held *Development* and *Feedback* conversations and the *Goals and Expectations* set at the beginning of the year.

Indicate in the Annual Review form how the employee performed throughout the year by demonstrating job knowledge, work quality and any competencies necessary to perform their job duties. Record any comments, supporting information about job performance using observable behaviors and actions.
Development Conversations

Investigate barriers to an employee’s ability to meet job performance goals and expectations and identify performance improvement and professional development opportunities.

Find these conversation guides: hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/development/

When to Use?
As a need or opportunity arises. Ideally, each of these four conversations would occur at least once per year.
See the following page for guidance in choosing the appropriate Development Conversation.
• When an employee demonstrates readiness for new challenges, opportunities, or responsibilities
• When an employee begins to demonstrate difficulty in performing job responsibilities

What to Document?
• The observed behaviors that prompted this conversation.
• The Development Activity(s) the employee will pursue as a result of the conversation.
• The time frame, action steps, and end goals of the agreed-upon Development Activity.
• When the next follow-up will occur.

How to Follow Up?
If a Development Activity is assigned, a follow up should be scheduled at a reasonable time to allow progress to occur. Confirm during the follow up that agreed upon actions were completed and prompt the employee to share observations about the experience. The follow up is an opportunity to provide coaching and guidance.

Outcomes
For Engagement and Motivation
This conversation helps to determine what motivates performance for your employee, how they appreciate the meaningfulness of their work, and how they feel about job satisfaction and morale.

For Continuous Improvement
This conversation helps to explore performance gaps and expected standards of performance while producing insights into team effectiveness.

For Learning and Development
This conversation helps to identify learning and professional development resources that build on employee strengths and lift performance in critical areas. You can also use this conversation to learn about and support employees’ career goals.

For Communication and Collaboration
This conversation can help you to understand the effectiveness of communication within your department and the clarity of information shared. It also explores opportunities to strengthen teamwork and assess collaborations within your team.
## Choosing a Development Conversation

### Choose Engagement and Motivation when

**The difficulty is…**
- Clock-watcher, takes many breaks, frequent time off
- Skips group gatherings, meetings, makes excuses
- Unprofessional appearance
- Withdrawn from team, works alone
- Chronic complainer, always sees the negative
- Reduction in productivity
- Bad attitude, not looking for solutions

**The opportunity is…**
- Enthusiastic about work
- Contributes positively to morale of colleagues
- Expresses desire for more responsibilities
- Seems restless or unchallenged
- Is eager for career growth

### Choose Continuous Improvement when

**The difficulty is…**
- Employee missing expectations
- Work is incomplete, not accurate

**The opportunity is…**
- Shares ideas for process improvement
- Demonstrates personal initiative

### Choose Learning and Development when

**The difficulty is…**
- Struggling employee asks for help

**The opportunity is…**
- Wants to grow in organization
- Build on strengths
- Wants new responsibilities

### Choose Communication and Collaboration when

**The difficulty is…**
- Interpersonal conflicts
- Seems confused about work responsibilities and assignments

**The opportunity is…**
- Demonstrates leadership skills
- Strong task and priority management skills
Feedback Conversations

Discuss behaviors that have been observed, praise good performance, correct poor performance, or gain insight into progress on a work assignment or project.

Find these conversation guides: hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/providing_feedback/

When to Use?
As a need or opportunity arises. Regular conversations that provide feedback about employee behavior are integral to successful performance management. Generally, feedback conversations should occur as close as possible to the initial observance of a notable behavior.

- When an employee has gone above and beyond your expectations on a work assignment
- When an employee’s performance or behavior fails to meet expectations
- To gain insight into progress on a work assignment

What to Document?
- The observed behaviors that prompted this conversation.
- The Development Activity(s) the employee will pursue as a result of the conversation.
- The time frame, action steps, and end goals of the agreed-upon Development Activity.
- When the next follow-up will occur.

How to Follow Up?
If Constructive Feedback or issues regarding Attendance and Punctuality are discussed follow-up conversations should be scheduled as needed to confirm that agreed upon actions were completed. The follow-up conversation is an opportunity to provide coaching and guidance to the employee and determine if additional steps may be required.

Outcomes

For “Positive Feedback”
This conversation reinforces good behavior or performance through acknowledgement. Plan and deliver this conversation by noting the specific situation, specific actions the employee took, and the benefits or results of those actions.

For “Work Progress”
This conversation helps a supervisor stay informed about the employee work assignments. Schedule this conversation to receive updates, understand successes, and overcome obstacles.

For “Constructive Feedback”
This conversation helps address gaps in expectations and work performance by identifying steps to correct behavior, establishing a timeline, and planning for improvement.

Keep in mind the focus is on fixing the problem not discouraging or punishing the employee. Focus on facts. Encourage dialog.

For “Attendance and Punctuality”
This conversation can help you discuss discrepancies between an expected schedule and actual worked time. Have examples of time reporting. Focus on facts and how attendance is affecting the operational needs of the team or department. Encourage dialog and find solutions that meet unit operational requirements while acknowledging any legitimate challenges the employee may be experiencing.
Development Activities

Development Activities are practical assignments you can use to achieve performance improvement and professional development objectives.

Find the Development Activities Kit: [hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/development/](http://hr.uic.edu/developing_and_guiding_employees/development/)

**When to Use?**

The Development and Feedback conversations help to identify job performance gaps and professional development opportunities. Development Activities are the action items you can assign to support performance improvement and development objectives.

Your contribution to employee development encompasses learning activities that happen in the workplace on a daily basis; including strategic work assignments, opportunities for collaboration, and exposure to novel challenges and situations.

Once you have identified a performance or development objective you can select an appropriate Development Activity as a follow-up to support learning and development.

**What to Document?**

During the Development or Feedback conversation, a specific Development Activity may be assigned to an employee. Document which activity is assigned, action steps, end goals, and the timeline for completion. Include in the documentation how and when the employee should follow-up with the supervisor regarding the learning achieved.

**How to Follow Up?**

Follow-up meetings are suggested to confirm completion of the Development Activity and to discuss with the employee what was learned and how it will be applied to job performance.

**Outcomes**

There are many different types of Development Activities. Assign the activity you believe to be best suited to the employee's needs.

Each activity introduces the employee to a learning situation. By guiding the employee through the experience and subsequently reviewing what was learned the new knowledge and behaviors can be applied to achieve improved job performance.

**What’s in the Development Activities Kit?**

Development Activities support the Employee Performance Program by providing supervisors with assignments to help coach and guide employee job performance and development.

- Coaching Assignments
- Competency Development
- Cross-Training
- Job Journaling
- Job Responsibilities
- Job Shadowing
- Meeting Participation
- Mentoring
- Setting Goals
- Team Assignments
- Technical Training