



# Performance Management Program Basics



## Participant Guide

Presented by:  
University of Wisconsin - Madison  
Office of Talent Management  
Office of Human Resources  
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**Talent Recruitment  
and Engagement**

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



## Course Overview

The Performance Management Policy requires each division (including schools and colleges) to implement a performance management program. This workshop is for individuals who have been designated as the person responsible or represent a team responsible for creating, implementing, or enhancing a performance management program for their unit. This workshop will assist schools/colleges/divisions who do not currently have a performance management policy or have an informal or unstructured process. The workshop is also intended to review the performance management policy requirements to provide divisions assistance in identifying if their programs meet the necessary requirements identified in the policy.

### Learning Objectives

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

- Identify details and responsibilities of the Performance Management Policy
- Define Performance Management as well as the goals and benefits of a performance Management program
- Create the basic framework for a performance management program in their unit that is aligned with policy requirements
- Define and action plan for completing and implementing a performance management program in their unit.

Personal Objectives / Expectations

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# Performance Management Overview

## Why performance management?

The UW-Madison has committed to maintain an effective workforce with engaged and highly skilled employees. To fulfill that commitment, a performance management policy has been developed that guides the creation and upkeep of performance management programs. This policy is written to help guide the activities at the University, to support and enhance healthy, inclusive and engaging relationships with employees and their managers / supervisors.



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## What is performance management?

Performance management is an ongoing process where supervisors and employees work together to plan, monitor, and review an employee’s work objectives, goals, and professional development. A key element of performance management is communication between a supervisor and an employee throughout the year. Part of the performance management process includes frequent informal conversations. These include coaching and feedback discussions related to the duties and expectations of the employee’s position.

A performance management program is also an opportunity for us to ensure our division aligns with organizational goals and objectives. Activities such as clarifying expectations and providing feedback help drive improved employee performance. Our division is best served when we support our employees to meet their career and professional goals. Employees are best served when they receive ongoing feedback on their performance and career growth.



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## Benefits of Performance Management

Effective performance management benefits employees, managers/supervisors, and the larger organization.



Other benefits important to highlight:

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



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## Benefits of Performance Management Continued

What are some of the primary benefits of effective performance management?

*For employees:*

- Increased clarity of expectations, increasing the employee's success
- Increased support in identifying and addressing developmental needs
- Promotes job satisfaction through a personal focus on the employee's career and development goals
- Increases visibility for high-quality work, which can lead to increased recognition and other benefits

*For managers and supervisors:*

- Through regular feedback, managers and supervisors are able to identify high-quality work
- Decreased conflict due to increased clarification of expectations
- Increased accountability for employees through clarification of goals and expectations
- Improved employee performance due to engaged and ongoing performance management

*For the organization:*

- Increased productivity of employees and supervisors
- Higher employee retention
- Increased alignment between the employee's goals and the organization's goals

### Who Must Participate In the Performance Management Policy?

- Full or part-time Academic and University Staff employees with a defined or anticipated appointment greater than one year
- Limited Appointees
- All supervisors of Academic and University Staff employees, including Faculty
- [Others? Feel free to include other appointment types beyond those listed above.]



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# Performance Management Program Overview

Our performance management program requires these five elements (greater detail on each element is provided on the following pages):

**1. Expectations and goal-setting**

Managers/supervisors should have initial expectation and goal-setting conversations with each of their new employees within **30 days of their start date, and annually after that**. These discussions should cover the major duties of the new hire’s position, work priorities, and how performance will be evaluated. Date of the conversation, goals, and expectations identified in this meeting must be documented and then provided to the employee.

**2. Informal conversations**

Managers/supervisors should **regularly engage** in informal conversations with their employees about the duties, expectations and performance. These meetings should include feedback, coaching and support about work, needs and accomplishments.

**3. Mid-point conversation**

Managers/supervisors should conduct a feedback and coaching conversation approximately midway through a new employee’s probationary period and midway through each performance year after that. Documented mid-point conversations must identify whether the employee’s performance is meeting expectations.



When does your performance management cycle determine that mid-point conversations must be held by?

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## Performance Management Program Overview Continued

### 4. Summary evaluation

All managers/supervisors should conduct summary performance evaluations with their employees at the conclusion of each new employee's probationary period and at the end of each performance year after that.

 When does your performance management cycle determine that summary evaluations must be held by?

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At a minimum, supervisors will discuss:

- ✓ Whether the employee's performance met expectations
- ✓ Whether the employee achieved annual goals
- ✓ Professional development needs and opportunities
- ✓ Options to develop additional skills and knowledge to foster career growth

### 5. Documentation

The expectations and goal setting, mid-point conversation, and summary evaluation conversations require documentation. The documentation can vary by division, department, or college.

 What could your division's documentation process look like?

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# Performance Management Program Components: Breaking it down

## 1. Expectations and goal-setting

Managers/supervisors should have initial expectation and goal-setting conversations with each of their new employees within 30 days of their start date, and annually after that. This component can also be completed with the mid-point conversation and summary evaluation after the initial meeting has been held with the employee.

- **The expectations and goal setting discussion should cover:**

- ✓ The major duties of the new hire's position
- ✓ Work priorities
- ✓ How performance will be evaluated, development goals and needs, and strategies to meet those needs

- **Required documentation must include:**

- ✓ Date of the conversation
- ✓ Goals and expectations that were identified in the meeting
- ✓ A copy must be provided to the employee



The expectations and goal-setting discussion worksheet, which once completed will fulfill documentation requirements.



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## 1. Expectations and goal-setting (Continued)

- **SMART Goals:**

The creation of goals is a critical portion of the performance management process. Performance expectations set the baseline for an employee to know what is expected of them in the job. The **SMART** method is a useful guide in developing expectations and setting goals.

**Specific –**

Goals should be detailed and clear so employees understand exactly what they are trying to accomplish

**Measureable –**

There is a metric or number value attached to achieving the goal or an objective way to verify that the goal was accomplished

**Achievable –**

The goal is within a reasonable scope for the employee to achieve the goals given their skills, available resources, and time constraints

**Relevant –**

The goal is relevant to the organization mission, vision, and employee

**Time sensitive –**

Provides a timeline in which an objective is to be attained

✓ Examples of SMART goals:

- Poorly-formulated SMART Goal: Fix the financial documentation process
- Well-formulated SMART Goal: In order to serve our customers, save time, and ensure accuracy, reduce errors in the financial documentation process by 20 percent in the next three months



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## Performance Management Program Components: Breaking it down

### 2. Informal conversations

This is one of the most important elements of a well-run performance management program. A common pitfall in performance management programs is only providing feedback once or twice a year during reviews. Feedback once or twice a year is not enough support for employees engaged in difficult tasks, completing long-term goals, learning new behaviors, and fulfilling job expectations. A successful performance management system requires regular exchange of feedback between the employee and supervisor.

To meet this element of our performance management program, supervisors will regularly engage in informal conversations with their employees about the employee's duties, expectations and performance. These conversations:

- ✓ Should include feedback, coaching and support about work, needs and accomplishments
- ✓ Can be done using a wide variety of methods, for example:
  - Written (email, memo, letter, etc.)
  - Face-to-face (quick informal check-ins or scheduled meetings)
  - Audio/electronic methods (over the phone, Skype, FaceTime, etc.)

### 3. Mid-point conversation

Supervisors conduct a feedback and coaching conversation approximately midway through a new employee's probationary period and midway through each performance year after that. The mid-point conversation is the second time a formal document must be created in the UW Performance Management process. The mid-point conversation is a great time for the supervisor and the employee to review the goals set earlier in the year and ensure they are relevant. It allows for the opportunity for employees to know exactly where they stand in relation to their goals.

See below for our performance cycle. Mid-year reviews should have a shorter format than year-end conversations.

1. Where are we going?

2. Where are you going?

3. What is going well?

4. What are suggestions for improvement?

5. How can I help?

6. What suggestions do you have for me?

Marshall Goldsmith's "Six Question Process" is recommended (Horowitz, 2013)



## Performance Management Program Components: Breaking it down

### Mid-point conversation continued:

The mid-point review discussion will include:

- Goals, expectations, and needs - discussed and linked back to the expectations and goal setting document
- Is the employee is on track to achieve goals?
- Professional development needs and opportunities
- Options to develop additional skills and knowledge to foster career growth
- Did the employee meet expectations?

Required documentation must include:

- Updated goals, needs, expectations (using the expectations and goal setting document)
- Whether the employee's performance is meeting expectations
- A copy must be provided to the employee

### 4. Summary evaluation

All managers/supervisors should conduct summary performance evaluations with their employees at the conclusion of each new employee's probationary period and at the end of each performance year after that. This is the annual appraisal during which an employee's performance over the appraisal period is summarized by their supervisor. The performance discussion should be a *balanced* conversation of multiple topics; it should not focus on just one area. Performance evaluations may occur as often as necessary to acknowledge the employee for accomplishments and to plan together for improved performance. The evaluation stage then feeds back into the planning stage so as to encourage continuous performance improvement.

The summary evaluation discussion will include:

- Did the employee's performance meet expectations?
- Did the employee achieve annual goals?
  - ✓ If not meeting expectations, the supervisor must contact the divisional HR representative to determine additional steps that may need to be taken.
- Professional development needs and opportunities
- Options to develop additional skills and knowledge to foster career growth

Required documentation must include:

- Updated goals, needs, expectations (using the expectations and goal setting document)
- Whether the employee's performance is meeting expectations
  - ✓ If not meeting expectations, the supervisor must contact the divisional HR representative to determine additional steps that may need to be taken.
- A copy must be provided to the employee



# Performance Management Program Components: Breaking it down

## 5. Documentation

Document submission can vary by division, department, or college.



Do you know where your documentation should be submitted?

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When should this occur?

- Expectations and goal setting for new employees must occur within 30 days of the employee start date. Completing this within the orientation process for the employee is ideal. After the initial expectation and goal setting meeting occurs, subsequent conversations can be embedded within the mid-point and summary evaluations.

Mid-point conversations should occur [\_\_\_\_\_].

Summary evaluations should occur [\_\_\_\_\_].

- Documentation, per the prescribed submission procedures above, should be submitted depending on the timelines set within the department, division or college.



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# Let's Practice:

## OHR Performance Management Program Review Form

Division/College/School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Unless otherwise specified, the items indicated on this form are required performance management program elements.

Expectations and Goal Setting (Documentation Required)		
Required Element	Yes, included	No, Not Included
Form or template to document expectations/goal setting, provided to both employee and employer.		
Goals and expectations are indicated as ongoing items continuously present in the performance management process.		
Program includes discussion of how successful performance will be evaluated, development goals/needs, and strategies to meet those goals/needs.		
Form or template includes a place to sign/date by both employee and employer? (Recommended)		
<b>Requirements:</b>		
<b>Recommendations/Successful Practices to consider:</b>		
<b>Comments:</b>		

Informal Conversations (No Documentation Required)		
Required Element	Yes, included	No, Not Included
The program indicates that informal conversations are an important part of the performance management process.		
<b>Required:</b> The program materials define what informal conversations are; <b>Recommended:</b> Materials indicate what can be accepted as an informal conversation.		
<b>Requirements:</b>		
<b>Recommendations/Successful practices to consider:</b>		
<b>Comments:</b>		



**Mid-Point Conversation (Documentation Required)**

<b>Required Element</b>	<b>Yes, included</b>	<b>No, Not Included</b>
The program explicitly includes the mid-point as a required element of the performance management program.		
The program template may be used for mid-point, or there is a template specifically for mid-point included.		
Links back to goals/needs/expectations.		
Whether the employee’s performance met expectations?		
The template includes a place to sign/date by both the employee and employer which states that signatures are to indicate that the discussion occurred, not imply agreement.		
<b>Requirements:</b>		
<b>Recommendations/Successful practices to consider:</b>		
<b>Comments:</b>		

**Summary Evaluation (Documentation Required)**

<b>Required Element</b>	<b>Yes, included</b>	<b>No, Not Included</b>
Template includes:		
Whether the employee’s performance met expectations?		
Whether the employee achieved annual goals – linking back to goals and expectations document, as well as informal conversations held over the evaluation year.		
Professional development needs and opportunities.		
Options to develop additional skills and knowledge to foster career growth.		
A place for both supervisor and employee to sign, and a notation that the signature indicates that the evaluation has been reviewed and discussed with the employee by the employer, not necessarily that the employee agrees with the document.		
<b>Requirements:</b>		
<b>Recommendations/Successful practices to consider:</b>		
<b>Comments:</b>		



**Performance Management Workflow**

<b>Required Element</b>	<b>Yes, included</b>	<b>No, Not Included</b>
There is an indication that the supervisor will provide each employee with the copy of the evaluation after it has been reviewed and signed by both employee and supervisor. This can be indicated in the templates of documents requiring documentation or the program policy.		
<b>Requirements:</b>		
<b>Recommendations/Successful practices to consider:</b>		
<b>Comments:</b>		

**Performance Management Program Instruction/Informational Materials**

<b>Required Element</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Covers Some</b>
The instructional materials cover all required elements of the program, and give information as to how to engage in the process.			
<b>Requirements:</b>			
<b>Recommendations/Successful practices to consider:</b>			
<b>Comments:</b>			




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## Wrap Up and Debrief

Key Take Aways:



**One**

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**Two**

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**Three**

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**Four**

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**Five**

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## Learning Objective Re-cap:

### Learning Objectives

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

- Identify details and responsibilities of the Performance Management Policy
- Define Performance Management as well as the goals and benefits of a performance Management program
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- Define and action plan for completing and implementing a performance management program in their unit.

Personal Objectives / Expectations

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