Human Resources Training

Performance Management Training Module 2:

<u>Managing Employee Performance</u>

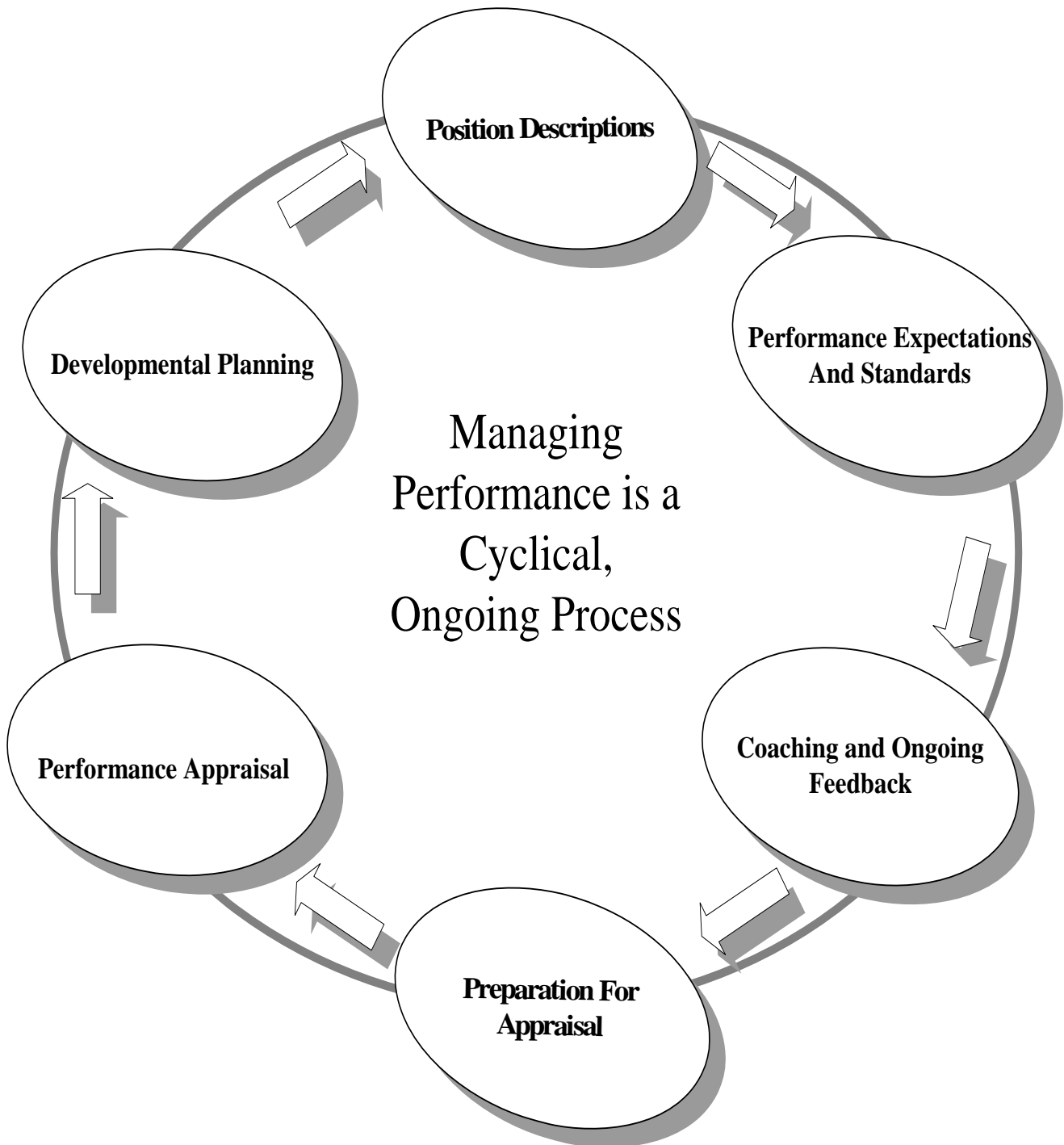# Table of Contents

Managing Employee Performance

Learning Objectives:

The focus of this training module is to:

- Describe the elements of a successful performance management system.

- Write workplace and performance expectations and standards utilizing a variety of tools.

- Utilize the Reinforcing and Redirecting feedback model for effective communication with employees.

- Describe the elements of an effective performance appraisal.

- Work with employees to define job training and career development goals.
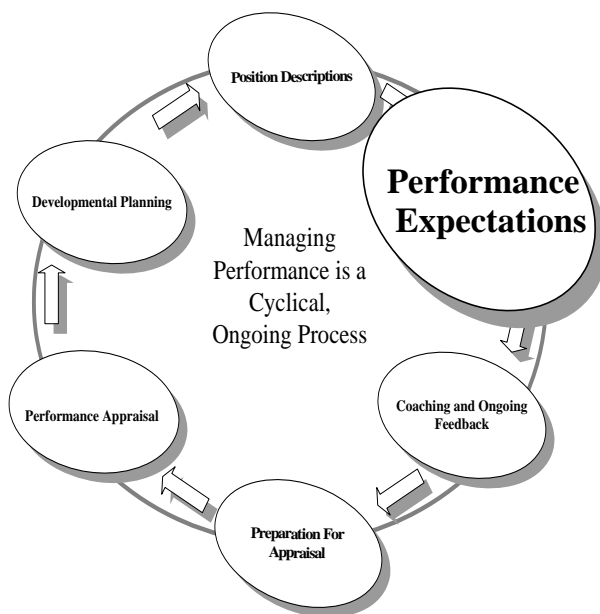
Managing Employee Performance

The following diagram shows the cyclical nature of managing employee performance and various elements of the Performance Management Cycle:

Position Descriptions

Performance Expectations And Standards

Developmental Planning

Managing Performance is a Cyclical, Ongoing Process

Coaching and Ongoing Feedback

Performance Appraisal

Preparation For Appraisal

Expectations of You as a Leader

☆ Ask for performance. You can not assume that employees know or should know what you expect.

☆ Clearly articulate workplace and performance expectations.

☆ Acknowledge good performance by reinforcing "good" behaviors/actions.

☆ Model the behaviors and actions you expect of others.
(Walk the Talk)

☆ Refuse to accept poor performance by redirecting "unacceptable" behaviors/actions.

☆ Prepare for and deliver annual performance appraisals.
(No Surprises)

☆ Assist your staff in identifying job development and career development goals.

Setting and Communicating Expectations

Position Descriptions

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Leaders drive performance and accountability by helping people understand what is expected of them and gaining their commitment to achieving it. When leaders effectively set expectations, people feel more motivated to perform well because they see how their efforts make a difference.

Enhanced employee productivity is closely related to an employee's understanding of what's expected of them. Without clear expectations employees can easily lose focus and managers will find it more difficult to manage work progress and results.

Lack of expectations can also create unnecessary surprises and misunderstandings during the annual performance appraisal.

There are two types of expectations that need to be identified and communicated with employees:

- **Workplace Expectations,** and

- **Performance Expectations**.

Workplace Expectations

Workplace Expectations are shared with all employees, typically in writing, and are directed towards behavior and conduct in the workplace.

Tools to Use When Creating *Workplace Expectations*

1. Western Oregon University Mission and Values

2. Western Oregon University policies and procedures

3. Oregon University System policies and procedures

4. Unit Guidelines and Desk Manuals

5. Employee Handbook

6. Position Descriptions

7. Current Union Contract

Frequently asked questions

1. Should I ask staff for their input when writing workplace expectations?

   Asking for staff input regarding your Workplace Expectations gives you an opportunity to see if the expectations are reasonable and flush out any potential snags that may present themselves.

2. What if I don't have/haven't shared workplace expectations with my staff?

   It's never too late. Write your expectations, put some context around them and share them at your next staff meeting.

3. What types of things should be included in workplace expectations?

   Use the University values as a guideline when writing your expectations and ask yourself what each of those look like in practice. How do you expect your staff to demonstrate the university's values?

4. Should I share expectations verbally or in writing?

   It's always a good idea to give your staff a written copy of the expectations so they can refer back to them during the course of their daily work. (You might also consider saving the expectations on your shared drive or web page so all staff can access them). However, it's equally important to share the information in person so you can ensure all staff heard and understood the expectation.

Tips to Consider

1. Actively listen – this will help to hear when the expectations may be misunderstood, not being followed, being followed, need to be re-communicated or need to be revisited.

2. Lead by example – when the management team follows the expectations, staff will more than likely do the same.

3. Recognize staff for meeting or exceeding the expectations.

4. Hold staff accountable – if staff aren't held accountable to meet the expectation…then it is not an expectation.

5. Regularly communicate the expectations – use day to day interactions with staff to refocus on the expectations.

6. Carefully choose the method of communicating expectations. (E-mail, voice mail, letter, staff meeting, one on one, stand-up meeting, etc…). Cover the expectations in person and use e-mail only as a follow-up to put what was discussed in writing.

Performance Expectations

Performance Expectations are the basis for appraising employee performance. These expectations are written specifically for the employee based on their current workload and position description.

A shared understanding about what supervisors expect from employees is essential for employee success and for good supervisor-employee relations.

Without clear expectations, employees can waste effort doing work that has to be done over, waste time doing unneeded work, and worry about not knowing if they are doing the right things.

With clear expectations, on the other hand, employees understand why they are doing their work, what exactly they should be doing, and the relative importance of different parts of their jobs.

When performance is measured, performance improves.

~ Thomas S Monson

How do I write performance expectations?

First, use the employee's Position Description and note the Essential Functions of the job.

For example:

- Interview high volume of applicants and collect detailed financial history/status information.

- Serve as a primary resource for Business Unit to resolve purchase order inconsistencies.

Second, review the terms for expressing measurement and determine how the essential function should be measured.

Terms for expressing measurement

- **Quantity**: specifies how much work must be completed within a certain period of time; e.g., writes 40 decisions per week.

- **Quality**: describes how well the work must be accomplished. Specifies accuracy, precision, appearance, or effectiveness; e.g., 95% of documents submitted are accepted without revision.

- **Timeliness**: answers the questions, By when? , How soon?, or Within what period?; e.g., all expense sheets will be logged and paid within five working days of receipt.

- **Effective Use of Resources**: used when performance can be assessed in terms of utilization of resources: money saved, waste reduced, etc.; e.g., the criminal background check project will be completed with only internal resources.

- **Effects of Effort**: addresses the ultimate effect to be obtained; expands statements of effectiveness by using phrases such as: so

- **Manner of Performance**: describes conditions in which an individual's personal behavior has an effect on performance; e.g., assists other employees in the work unit in accomplishing assignments.

- **Method of Performing Assignments**: describes requirements; used when only the officially-prescribed policy, procedure, or rule for accomplishing the work is acceptable; e.g., 100A Forms are completed in accordance with established office procedures.

Third and finally, take the Essential Function identified in the Position Description and define how the employee would "meet expectations".

For example:

Essential Function	Meets Expectations
Interview high volume of applicants and collect detailed information on financial history/status.	90% of applicant financial history/status is completed and recorded accurately.

Considerations to keep in mind:

1. Written performance expectations let you compare the employee's performance with mutually understood expectations and minimize ambiguity in providing feedback.

2. Performance expectations exist whether or not they are discussed or put in writing. When you observe an employee's performance, you usually make a judgment about whether that performance is acceptable. How do you decide what's acceptable and what's unacceptable performance?

3. Establishing a baseline for measuring performance allows the supervisor to provide specific feedback that describes the gap between expected and actual performance.

Coaching and Feedback

"When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported back, the rate of improvement accelerates."

– Thomas S. Monson

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Coaching & Ongoing Feedback

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Coaching and feedback from a supervisor provides the employee with guidance on projects or tasks, which can be strongly motivating. Coaching refers to the continuous or frequent administration of feedback in a way that optimizes employee performance. Coaching is simply investing in the ongoing development of your staff.

According to the United States Office of Performance Management, "Coaching deals with raising the performance bar – it is task-centered, linking individual effectiveness to organizational performance".
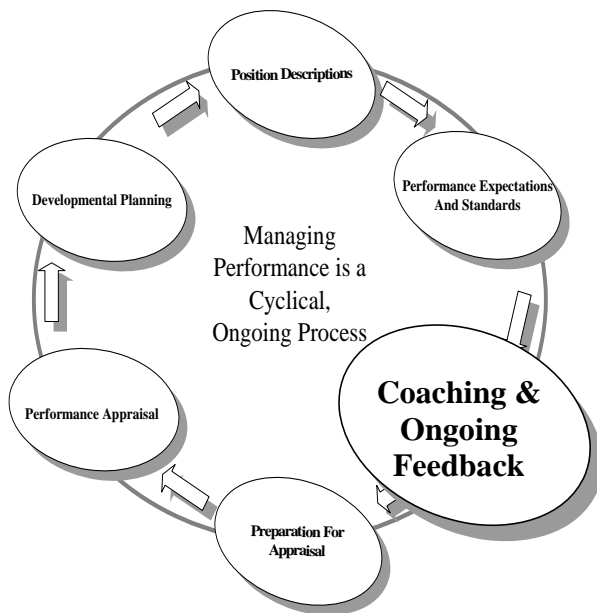
Feedback is defined as information we provide to employees about their job performance and their work-related behavior in order to help them meet individual, group and organizational expectations and goals. Feedback can reflect positive performance, competent performance, or needs improvement performance. In any of these cases, **feedback must:**

- Focus on facts, not attitude
- Be detailed
- Be accurate
- Be future oriented

- Be supportive
- Be timely
- Be continual

Coaching and Feedback have many important applications and functions:

- To improve performance
- Look for patterns in the employee's behavior. If you see a performance problem or a potential performance problem, determine if the employee understands what is expected, what obstacles might be preventing good performance, and whether there is a lack of skills, training, or motivation.

- To maintain standard performance
- Give praise to keep performance on track.
- If the person wants to expand skills, allow for appropriate training.

- To encourage employees to exceed performance standards
- Praise to keep performance on track.
- Provide training to expand skills.
- Mentor for increased responsibility.
- Assign special projects, when possible.

- To assist employees in developing new skills
- Provide training.
- Give feedback to reinforce learning.

There are _two types_ of feedback: **_Reinforcing_** and **_Redirecting_**.

1. **Reinforcing feedback** identifies job-related behaviors that contribute to individual, group and organizational goals and encourages the employee to repeat and develop them. In other words, use reinforcing feedback to tell employees what they are doing right.

2. **Redirecting feedback** identifies job-related behaviors that contribute to individual, group and organizational goals and helps the employee to develop alternative strategies. In other words, use redirecting feedback to highlight a gap between expected performance and actual performance.

The *Reinforcing Feedback Conversation (Four Steps)*

1. **Intention**
   Be clear with yourself so you can be clear with your employee. The purpose of the reinforcing conversation is to acknowledge behavior you want to see continued.

2. **Description**
   Describe specifically the actions or communication you are reinforcing. If the behavior can be seen or heard, it can be repeated:

   Do Not Generalize: e.g. "…doing a good job."

   Be Specific: e.g. "…meeting the deadline, catching the miscalculation, acknowledging others."

3. **Effect of Behavior**
   Tell the employee how their behavior contributes positively to the work or workplace. For example, "Your calm reply reduced the chance of conflict."

4. **Appreciation**
   Tell the employee you appreciate the behavior and its positive impact. Thank them, if this feels appropriate or fits your style.

The *Redirecting Feedback Conversation (Seven Steps)*

1. **Intention**
   Be clear with yourself so you can be clear with your employee. The purpose of the conversation is to redirect behavior you want to see changed.

2. **Description**
   Describe the actions or communication you are redirecting. If the behavior can be seen or heard, it can be altered.

   Do Not Be Vague or Generalize – e.g. "Mouthing off to a co-worker," or "not giving good service."

   Be Specific – e.g. "Using profanity, using a loud voice", or "repeatedly interrupting the student when they are attempting to give you information."

3. **Effect of Behavior**
   Tell the employee how their behavior negatively affects the work or workplace. For example, "The workplace expectation is to communicate in a positive manner with our customers – internal and external customers. When I hear you tell your co-worker his idea is ridiculous, it seems time to remind you of our workplace expectation."

   It's at this point that you might run into one of the **3 R's**:
   > Reluctance
   > Resentment
   > Resistance

   To address any of the **3 R's** you can use the "**Big Picture"** questions to help your feedback conversations flow better in the future. The "First Big Picture" question meets the **3 R** objections and the "Second Big Picture" question overcomes them.

   First: "Was there something that prevented you from or caused you to _____?"

Second: "Is there anything that is going to get in your way of being able to accomplish _____?"

4. **Ask the "First Big Picture" Question**
   "Was there something that prevented you from/caused you to _____?"

   Listening carefully to the response will give you details on the circumstances.

5. **Expectation**
   Tell the employee specifically what you want to hear or see them do in the future. For example, "From now on, when you have a disagreement with a co-worker, I expect you to find a place to discuss it calmly without raised voices, so that the public and other workers are not affected by the discussion."

6. **Ask the "Second Big Picture" Question**
   "Is there anything that is going to get in your way of being able to make this happen?"

   This question can give you information on the employee's point of view and ways you can help assure their success in redirecting the behavior.

7. **Appreciation**
   Tell the employee you appreciate their listening to you and look forward to seeing the new behavior and its positive impact. Thank them for their time.

Feedback Tips

- ***People who are <u>unmotivated to listen</u>:***

    Respond by 'contracting' on how to engage in feedback. Two-way agreement involves both parties.

- ***People who are <u>uncommitted to action</u>:***

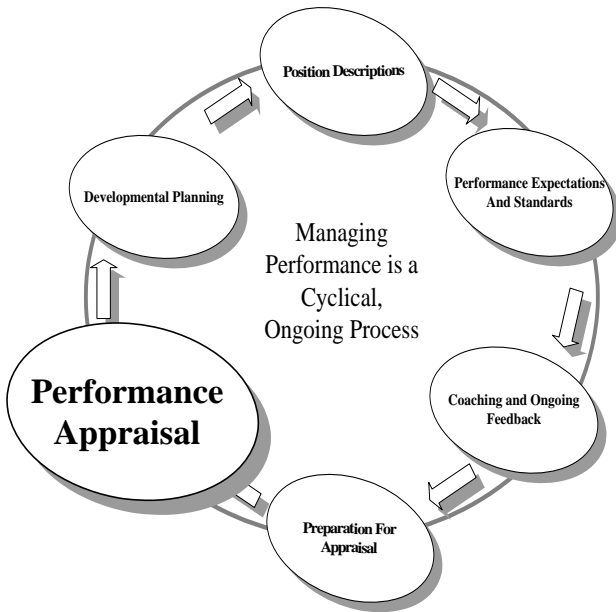   Respond by linking the feedback to the goals of the organization.

- ***People who are <u>angry or upset</u>:***

    Respond by showing empathy; acknowledge the emotion; give permission; give space and time; proceed gradually; partial acknowledgement, if appropriate.

- ***People who <u>disagree with you</u>:***

    Respond by giving facts, examples and evidence. Explain the consequences if they disagree there is a problem.

Performance Appraisals

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Performance appraisals are a vital part of giving feedback to the employee. Capturing employee performance in written form helps the employee to see where they are doing well and where they can improve. Denying or delaying this form of feedback can be detrimental on many levels to you and the employee. You may lose an employee who is excelling and not receiving this feedback as they may grow frustrated and seek out other employment. For an employee having performance problems, this is another way to communicate and document the need for improvement.

The performance appraisal should be an opportunity for learning and growth. This is a collective process which gives the employee meaningful feedback on their professional growth over a 12-month period. Performance appraisals need to be honest, fair and respectful, and should summarize the employee's performance during the specific review period. **Remember, No Surprises**!

However, supervisors and managers are actually required to do Performance Appraisals for their staff:

- For Classified employees: **SEIU Contract**: Article 54, Section 2, "Position Descriptions and **Performance Evaluations**", states:

  "Every employee shall receive a performance evaluation annually by the employee's eligibility date. The employee's performance shall be evaluated by the immediate supervisor. The supervisor shall discuss the performance evaluation with the employee." And…

  "Recognizing the value of a participatory performance evaluation process, supervisors are encouraged to provide an opportunity for

employees to provide input to the annual evaluation prior to the supervisor completing the evaluation."

- For Unclassified, Professional employee: **Condition of Employment Policies** for Unclassified, 12-Month Appointments; and Unclassified, Academic (9-Month) Professional Appointments, each state:

  "Evaluation
  Performance of assigned duties by administrators or administrative staff shall be subject to evaluation by the appropriate vice president and/or relevant supervisor, and performance shall be considered in decisions relating to compensation, retention or termination, or a decision not to reappoint."

Every Performance Appraisal should…

- Reflect the appraisal period including
  - ⇒ Goals reached
  - ⇒ Work production
  - ⇒ Innovations or new ideas that worked
- Reflect performance issues – do not reiterate the discipline but address it in the appraisal, through a paragraph or a few sentences
- Use measurable items – if you can measure the performance/behavior, show the employee's progress or decline

Before you write the performance appraisal you should:

- Get information from previous supervisors if you were not the only supervisor for the entire appraisal period

- Get input from the employee prior to writing the appraisal about their accomplishments, barriers and goals.

- Gather your own information about the employee, both positive areas and areas which need improvement.

- Note the accomplishments, and barriers that you have observed for the employee.

- Note progress on any goals or objectives you might have for them.

When writing the performance appraisal you should:

- Put all of the information you have collected into some type of order.

- Consider various categories you may want to evaluate such as production, team involvement and participation, meeting competencies of the unit, attendance and punctuality, completing paper work, customer response time, customer satisfaction, etc.

- State information in objective terms.

- Include both positive and areas for improvement in the appraisal.

- Address any discipline the employee may have been in during the reporting period. (If you haven't told the employee you are dissatisfied with their performance before now—this is not the time to introduce discipline.)   **Remember: No surprises!**

- Avoid any reference or inference to any disability the employee may have.

- Avoid any reference to employee absence due to medical, Worker's Comp, or protected FMLA/OFLA leave.

- Avoid making subjective observations. For example, "Dooley could do better if he put his mind to it."   "Ethel is a really sweet person who means well."

- Avoid the use of generalities. For example, "people person", "a real trooper", "a complainer/whiner", "goes above and beyond", "can't cut the mustard".

After writing the appraisal:

- Discuss the appraisal with your supervisor. They will need to sign it as the "Reviewer" before you give it to the employee. Call HR if you need guidance.

- Schedule a meeting with the employee to discuss their performance evaluation. (A union steward is **not** included)

When meeting with the employee to deliver the appraisal:

- Discuss the employee's performance as noted in the performance appraisal form.

- Present a copy of the performance appraisal to the employee. Give them a few minutes to read it. Answer any additional questions they may have.

- Have the employee sign the appraisal form and provide them with a copy.

- Send the signed appraisal form to HR to be placed in the employee's personnel file.

If the employee disagrees with the appraisal, do not make agreements to change their performance appraisal. By contract, they may provide written comments within 60 days that will be placed with their appraisal in their personnel file.

If the employee refuses to sign, write on the signature line, "employee refused to sign". Put your initials or signature and the date. Have a second manager do the same.

If the employee submits written comments, review the statements to assess it for merit. Should you change the performance appraisal call HR first to discuss the changes. Follow the same procedure for presenting the evaluation to the employee if you make changes.
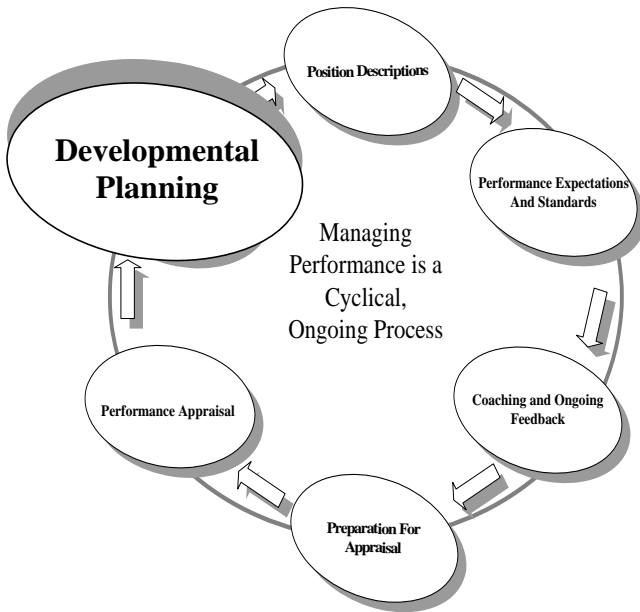
> # When in doubt call your HR Office

Making the performance appraisal complete

The performance appraisal is **<u>not complete</u>** until the following items have been reviewed with the employee and their personnel file updated**:**

- ☐   Position description (Revised the PD if needed)
- ☐   Home address and telephone number
- ☐   Emergency contact information
- ☐   Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- ☐   Consensual Relationships Policy
- ☐   Information Security Policy
- ☐   Acceptable Use of Computing Resources Policy

Employee Development

Managing
Performance is a
Cyclical,
Ongoing Process

- Position Descriptions
- Performance Expectations And Standards
- Coaching and Ongoing Feedback
- Preparation For Appraisal
- Performance Appraisal
- Developmental Planning

Developmental planning draws on the rest of the performance management cycle to support performance expectations by identifying training and skills necessary for employees to excel at their jobs.

Supervisors and managers should work with employees in developmental planning throughout the year, and help them use the resources available for this purpose. The formal performance appraisal provides a regular opportunity to review whether employees have the current training and skills necessary, and to develop a training plan.

At the same time, supervisors and managers should help employees plan and meet their own career and personal development goals, within resources available, and within the context of the University's mission, needs, and priorities.

The challenges associated with the changing nature of work and the workplace environments are as real for the Western Oregon University as elsewhere. Rapid change requires a skilled, knowledgeable workforce with employees who are adaptive, flexible, and focused on the future.

As a manager or supervisor, one of your key responsibilities is to develop your staff. The University recognizes that **Employee Development requires a <u>shared responsibility</u>** between the University, the manager, and the employee. In this partnership:

The University – ensures that policies and programs facilitate the continuing development of staff.

The Manager – will work with staff to:

- Assess and provide feedback on their skills and interests;

- Select training and development activities that match their career development objectives and job needs;

- Use the Employee Development website as a tool to tell employees about training and development opportunities and to create an annual development plan;

- Stay informed of current policies and practices that support employee development; and

- Follow up with employees after a learning activity or event to integrate new skills and knowledge into their responsibilities.

The Employee – will take the initiative to assess skills and interests and seek development activities that match their needs and work with their manager to identify training and development objectives.

A manager's support of training and development creates a win-win situation for the employee, their work section and the organization.

When organizations invest in the development of their employees:

- Employees have upgraded skills;

- Employees are more likely to work to their full potential and are equipped to deal with the changing demands of the workplace;

- Productivity and responsiveness in meeting organizational objectives increases;

- Employees feel valued and have higher morale, career satisfaction, trust and creativity.