PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

A GUIDE FOR SUPERVISORS AND EMPLOYEES

Office of Human Resources – April 2020
Performance Management Defined

Performance Management (PM) is a process used to assess employee performance and enhance employee development. It is a partnership between the immediate supervisor and employee used to manage an employee’s contribution to the university. PM is also an evaluative and a communication tool. In most cases, this should be seen as yet another opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of your direct reports. PM includes two main steps: 1) a self-assessment offered to all employees and 2) the performance assessment conducted by the immediate supervisor.

Why is WWU using PM?

1. This is a strategic initiative voted by the WWU Cabinet. Strategic Initiative #3: Enhancing Academic Community.

“By June 2013, Walla Walla University will further enhance the quality of its community through developing, in keeping with its mission: a) an increased level of faculty, staff, and student professionalism; b) an ‘integrated network’ connecting campuses, stakeholders and communities; and c) an increased level of global awareness and engagement.”

Action Plan: Put in place for staff, a performance management system that gives incentives for optimum performance and encourages high standards of customer service and professionalism.

Jim Collins on greatness and progress...

You must ask, "What do we mean by great results?" Your goals don’t have to be quantifiable, but they do have to be describable. Some leaders try to insist, "The only acceptable goals are measurable," but that’s actually an undisciplined statement. Lots of goals—beauty, quality, life change, love—are worthy but not quantifiable. But you do have to be able to tell if you’re making progress.

2. **This is a ‘recommendation’ by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities:**

“The evaluators recommend that Walla Walla University regularly evaluate all staff and administrators using performance appraisals based on updated position descriptions.”


3. **It is a recognized “Best Practice” both in the secular as well as denominational world.**

Andrews University, Union College, Loma Linda University, Canadian University College, Southern Adventist University and Pacific Union College are just some denominational schools that already use PM.

4. **WWU has a PM system to fulfill an ethical obligation.**

Every person who works for an organization wants the answer to two questions: (1) what do you expect of me? And (2) how am I doing at meeting your expectations? We answer the first question [What do you expect of me?] at the start of employment and at the start of a new year when we talk about goals and projects and key job responsibilities. We answer the second question [How am I doing?] at performance appraisal time. We have an ethical obligation to let people know where they stand. Performance Management is the formal, structured process approved by WWU Administration that allows us to meet that responsibility.

**Who should participate in PM?**

With the exception of Faculty employees, full-time and part-time/permanent employees working 20+ hours per week average must participate. Directors, Associate Vice-Presidents and Vice-Presidents are included in this process. Employees who are new to their position (new hire, transfer, promoted, demoted) must participate.

**When is a performance assessment completed?**

WWU directs its staff employees to complete two types of Performance Assessments: *Interim and Annual.*

Starting with review period 2012-13, WWU uses People Soft to deliver PM and all assessments completed from this point forward will be available via self-service on People Soft.
Interim Performance Assessments
Interim Performance Assessments occur within the first three months of employment (non-exempt hourly employees) and within six months of employment (exempt salaried employees). A specific ‘how-to’ that includes screen shots is available; this is a general step by step guide:

1. Approximately 30-days before the due date, Supervisor and employee are notified about completing the Interim Performance Assessment (Review = Assessment) and Employee Self-Evaluation (Self-Eval).
2. Employee is offered the opportunity to complete Self-Eval electronically. This step is optional, but employee must communicate with Supervisor if he/she will opt to not complete. If employee does not complete Self-Eval by due date (typically two weeks), it will be considered self-declined.
4. Once the Review content is finalized by the Supervisor and submitted. HR will be notified.
5. HR reviews, approves and notifies Supervisor.
6. Supervisor meets privately with the employee to discuss the Review.
7. Supervisor marks Review as held (meaning that the meeting took place).
8. Employee receives e-mail notification and is asked to acknowledge Review and sign electronically. Signature is an acknowledgement and does not necessarily imply agreement.
9. Supervisor receives e-mail notification that employee has signed Review (electronically) and is also asked to acknowledge and sign electronically.
10. HR receives e-mail notification that Review has been signed by both parties and PM process is now complete.
Annual Assessments
The standard Performance Management cycle begins on July 1 and ends on June 30.

1. Within approximately (6-8) weeks of the fiscal year end (June 30), both Supervisor and employee will be notified about completing the Annual Performance Assessment and Employee Self-Evaluation (Self-Eval).
2. Employee is offered the opportunity to complete Self-Eval electronically. This step is optional, but employee must communicate with Supervisor if he/she will opt to not complete. If employee does not complete Self-Eval by due date (typically two weeks), it will be considered self-declined.
4. Once the Review content is finalized by the Supervisor and submitted, HR will be notified.
5. HR reviews, approves and notifies Supervisor.
6. Supervisor meets privately with the employee to discuss the Review.
7. Supervisor marks Review as held (meaning that meeting took place).
8. Employee receives e-mail notification and is asked to acknowledge and sign Review electronically. Signature is an acknowledgement and does not necessarily imply agreement.
9. Supervisor receives e-mail notification that employee has electronically signed review and is also asked to sign electronically.
10. HR receives e-mail notification that Review has been signed by both parties and PM process is now complete.

Note: Employees hired into a new position by January 1 or later will not receive an annual performance review until the end of the follow year. They will however, receive an interim review.
Plan Ahead!

To reduce supervisory interruption the process begins and ends during a common timeframe for all employees. As a result, advanced preparations will be required by the supervisor to ensure performance process is smooth and meaningful. The timeline and graphic listed below represents an approximate timeframe for each step of the process. A more detailed time table will be provided each year. **All performance reviews should be completed and reviewed with the employee by June 30. All planning for the new year should be completed by no later than July 31.**

- **June/July** – During this time supervisors should be completing step 1 (Planning).
- **All year** – Supervisors should be continuously fulfilling step 2 (Coaching) by having regular and timely discussions with their employees regarding performance progress.
- **May/June** – As the performance cycle comes to an end supervisors should be completing performance reviews (Assessing and Developing) that will help drive the Planning process of the new year.

> “People who are skilled at dialogue do their best to make it safe for everyone to add their meaning to the shared pool—even ideas that at first glance appear controversial, wrong, or at odds with their own beliefs. Now, obviously they don’t agree with every idea; they simply do their best to ensure that all ideas find their way into the open.” — Kerry Patterson, Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High
How to maximize the PM process

The cyclical steps in the process are *planning, coaching, assessing and developing*. Use these steps to maximize results in the PM process.

Step 1: *Planning* – This is the foundation to performance management. This involves communication between supervisor and employee to identify clear, specific performance expectations and is considered the beginning of the performance management cycle. Planning helps to encourage commitment and understanding by linking the employee’s work with departmental and organizational goals and objectives.

The planning phase also establishes expectations on how the work is to be performed (Competencies). Results rather than activities should be the focus (Goals). The supervisor and employee should mutually understand and agree to what is expected of the employee and how the work he/she does will be measured and evaluated.

Step 2: *Coaching* – Ongoing two-way communication that focuses on periodic reviews of progress by recognizing employee excellence (positive reinforcement), areas for improvement and learning (constructive feedback), and identifying barriers to performance (training and resources). The goal of this step is to keep desired performance results developed in the *Planning* stage on target.

Step 3: *Assessing* – Formal two-way discussion summarizing the outcome of the performance management cycle (actual results compared with expected results). This written documentation recaps employee performance – reinforcement of positives, goals for improvement, and development needs that have been discussed throughout the coaching cycle. The focus of this step is on the future.

Step 4: *Developing* – The supervisor and employee work together to employ strategies that allow development of skills, knowledge, and abilities that lead to improved performance. Through training and education, employee development provides opportunities for increased job satisfaction and for reaching one’s full potential within a job. In addition, it prospectively improves the employee’s possibility for taking on greater responsibility and advancement.
Step 1: Planning
This is the preparation for the start of the performance management cycle. It involves communication between supervisor and employee to establish clear, specific performance expectations.

1.1 Performance Expectations
Planning is used to define key objectives to be accomplished by the employee and decide how the results will be measured. The supervisor defines performance expectations, however, it is important for the employee to have input where possible. Performance expectations fall into two general categories: Goals (results) and Competencies (how the job is performed).

1.2 Goals
The Oxford English Dictionary definition of goal is “fig. The object to which effort or ambition is directed.” Goals are a central component in performance management – they are the desired results. Generally, they should be set with employees, not for employees.

The purpose of setting goals is to give employees targets on which to focus. Some goals are maintenance goals and others are growth goals.

Maintenance goals are those that may be routine, problem-solving or innovative.
   Examples: reconcile and submit credit card statements to Accounting by the 10th of each month; arrive promptly at start of shift each day to eliminate tardiness.

Growth goals are those that involve professional development or job enrichment.
   Examples: register for an introductory Microsoft Excel course to become more familiar with use of spreadsheets in daily work, within 3 months train with supervisor to assume responsibility for conducting new hire orientations.
For goals to be effective they should be **SMART**: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely.

Example: To implement a new performance management system with broad input from management and non-management staff, including defined competencies and goal-setting, by January 1.

| S | SPECIFIC -- the goal should be clear, not vague.  
  | Example: Implement a performance management system with broad input from management and non-management staff. |
|---|---|
| M | MEASURABLE -- The key result should be verifiable and measurable. This could be quantity, quality or time.  
  | Example: Including defined competencies and goal-setting, January 1. |
| A | ATTAINABLE -- The goal can be accomplished by the individual with little or no assistance. If the goal goes beyond the capability of the individual then only the portion they can control should be included in the goal.  
  | Example: Attend and actively participate in all performance management committee meetings. Complete all assignments on time. |
| R | RELEVANT -- The goal is relevant to their role and responsibility and provides a challenge to the employee. If accomplishing the goal will extend beyond the review period it should be broken into pieces that can be accomplished within a review period.  
  | Example: To complete phase one of the transition to a new performance management system as directed by the performance management committee. |
| T | TIMELY -- The goal should have time parameters for completion. This may be a final completion date or a series of milestone dates for pieces of a goal to be achieved.  
  | Example: To complete phase one of the transition to a new performance management system by March 1, 2014. |
### 1.3 Competencies

Competencies are fundamental knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviors that describe how a job is performed. The Oxford English Dictionary defines competency as, “Sufficiency of qualification; capacity.” Competencies help define how goals (results) will be achieved and performance is measured. Here are the competencies to use in the evaluation of WWU employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. QUALITY OF WORK</td>
<td>Maintains appropriate quality levels of accuracy, thoroughness, effectiveness, dependability and consistency of work as determined by the supervisor; ability to communicate, give and receive information in a timely and accurate fashion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. QUANTITY OF WORK</td>
<td>Produces at an appropriate volume and timeliness required.</td>
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<td>3. CUSTOMER FOCUS</td>
<td>Builds and maintains relationships with internal and external customers.</td>
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<td>4. JUDGMENT/PROBLEM SOLVING</td>
<td>Displays balanced thinking that combines sound reasoning, weighting of outcomes and experience to make decisions.</td>
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<td>5. PRIORITIZATION/TIME MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>Completes work, including goals, in an orderly, timely manner; ability to manage time by establishing priorities and making timely adjustments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. DEDICATION AND DEPENDABILITY</td>
<td>Interest and enthusiasm shown in work; promotes cooperation, collaboration and flexibility with internal and external customers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. ETHICS &amp; INTEGRITY</td>
<td>Earns trust, respect, and confidence of coworkers and customers through consistent honesty, forthrightness and professionalism in all interactions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. DIPLOMACY/CONFLICT OF INTEREST</td>
<td>Responds to difficult, stressful or sensitive interpersonal situations in ways that reduce or minimize potential conflict and maintains good working relationships among internal and external customers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. SUPERVISION</td>
<td>Provides oversight and serves as a role model to other employees. Inspires confidence and respect from staff.</td>
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<td>10. LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>Sets an example through open communication and modeling best practices.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. SAFE WORK PRACTICE</td>
<td>Takes proper measures to avoid unsafe acts; acts as safety ambassador around campus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. INSTITUTIONAL VALUES</td>
<td>Extent to which the employee advances the university’s mission and demonstrates excellence in thought, generosity in service, beauty in expression and faith in God.</td>
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1.4 Rating Performance
Ratings are used to describe the level of performance an employee is exhibiting:

**Exceeds Expectations**
- Employee consistently exceeds standards of performance. Unexpected assignments are handled with exceptional skill. May engage in mentoring others within the department. This rating requires specific justification; supervisor will have to provide an explanation. This rating can equate to an A+.

**Meets Expectations**
- Employee consistently meets standards of performance. A performance at this level is clearly above average and the employee has given extraordinary effort or excelled due to contributions that meet criteria for quality, quantity and timeliness of work. This rating can equate to a B or an A.

**Needs Improvement**
- Employee does not consistently meet standards of performance, needs to engage in learning or coaching opportunities in this area. This rating requires specific justification and the creation of a performance improvement plan (PIP) which includes a follow-up within 60 days. This rating can equate to a C- or D.
This section is designed to help supervisors know when to use each rating:

**EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS**

An employee at this level consistently meets expectations for a specific competency and **significantly exceeds expectations** for goals/objectives and job performance factors. A performance at this level is clearly unique and the employee has given extraordinary effort or excelled due to effort, expertise, and sacrifice. To be considered for a top rating, evidence of meeting any one or more of the following criteria must be provided in addition to other criteria selected by the supervisor and the staff member:

- Consistently completes tasks in his/her job description in an outstanding way.
- Consistently demonstrates levels of effort, quality of work under stress or tight deadlines, initiative, innovation, advocacy, and leadership that goes significantly beyond his/her job description.
- Consistently demonstrates types or levels of skill and knowledge that surpass his/her job description requirements relative to that responsibility or measure.

The following are additional examples of, but are not limited to criteria that can be utilized. It will be left up to the supervisor as they work with each employee in determining the additional criteria to be used in measuring the individual’s work performance.

- Consistently demonstrates a consistent willingness to accept extra work.
- Consistently helps with annual university events, i.e. graduation, CommUnity, University Days, and/or departmental programs.
- Consistently proposes new services or improved ways of performing functions within their departments.
- Consistently receives accolades from internal and external customers or co-workers for excellent work.
- Completes a degree.
- Consistently attends job related professional development activities that are directly related to the job function and demonstrates how the professional development activity is of benefit to both the employee and WWU.
- Consistently shows the ability to communicate clearly and foster communication by continuously engaging in the exchange of information and continuously encourages this activity in supervised staff.
- Is consistently viewed during the year as an “exceptional performer” and/or leader by co-workers, customers, and supervisors.
- In team assignments, consistently takes a leadership role to facilitate overall team productivity and achieved outstanding results well beyond those expected.
MEETS EXPECTATIONS
An employee at this level **consistently meets expectations** for goals/objectives and job performance factors. Performance at this level is fully satisfactory.

The following are examples of, but are not limited to criteria that can be utilized. It will be left up to the supervisor to determine the type of criteria to be used in measuring the individual’s work performance.

- Meets all commitments to complete work by an agreed-upon date (and/or within an agreed-upon budget) or brings his/her difficulties in honoring a commitment to the supervisor in a timely way that allows for alternative plans to be developed.
- Works hard, stays focused on tasks, produces a quantity and quality of work that meets expectations.
- Completes all responsibilities with a thoroughness and accuracy commensurate with what would be expected of someone in his/her job grade and/or referenced in his/her job description.
- Demonstrates the degree of initiative called for by the job description.
- Identifies existing problems, anticipates potential problems, and/or solves problems to the extent called for by the job description and/or expected of someone in his/her job grade.
- Demonstrates an ability to learn from mistakes when mastering new skills or knowledge.
- In addition to “doing things right” does the “right things” -- that is, makes appropriate judgments about the scope and nature of tasks he/she is to perform.
- In team assignments, takes an active role to facilitate overall team productivity.
- Is a good listener; provides appropriate information to others, and assists others with projects when asked.
- Demonstrates a willingness to accept extra work.
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
An employee at this level fails to meet some significant job expectations. Improvement is required to fully meet the expectations of the position. While certain job duties are performed capably, performance at this level requires additional monitoring, and will be reviewed again in 60 days. If performance does not improve, disciplinary action (up to and including termination) may be taken.

The following are examples of, but are not limited to criteria that can be utilized. It will be left up to the supervisor to determine the type of criteria to be used in measuring the individual’s work performance.

- Requires ongoing supervisory monitoring, consultation, and modification to implement goals and priorities in a timely and/or effective manner.
- Misuses telephone and/or computer resources.
- Wastes materials, damages equipment or property.
- Is unwilling to respond to crises, obstacles, and/or changes in program direction.
- Work is generally completed, however there are often inaccuracies requiring correction.
- Priorities as established by supervisor are not adhered to (time management).
- Challenges authority of Supervisor.
- Lacks initiative to complete tasks that may require urgent attention.
- Abuses WWU Leave Policies.
- Occasionally arrives late to work without notice or permission.
- Sometimes does not make sure all work is completed before leaving for the day.
- Occasionally leaves work early without notice or permission.
- Displays occasional negativity when working with others.
- Rarely offers to assist others in the office.
- Makes negative comments that affect working relationships with others.
- Gets flustered in unusual situations.
- Does not always make the best decisions to fit the situation.
- Needs to develop analytical skills necessary to weigh options and choose the best way to deal with situations.
- Time management needs improvement.
- Frequently forgets to follow through on customer requests.
Step 2: Coaching
Feedback is one of the most important ways people learn. In the workplace, employees need regular feedback to make timely adjustments to their performance. Two-way feedback is critical. Feedback comes in many forms, from subtle (informal) to obvious (more formal).

2.1 Expectations
It is expected that coaching will occur on an as-needed basis throughout the year and may be initiated by the supervisor or the employee. At a minimum, a formal meeting should occur at least once per quarter. Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to document these interactions. This documentation will be a very useful resource when assessing performance.

2.2 Employee Role
Employees are encouraged to be active participants in their own coaching by:
- Asking their supervisor for coaching when they need it
- Listening and responding to feedback from his/her supervisor
- Providing feedback to their supervisor about what they need
- Monitoring their performance against agreed-to standards and measures
- Actively participating in informal and periodic coaching discussions
- Providing constructive feedback to their supervisor regarding how and when they like to be coached

Step 3: Assessing
Performance Review (Assessment) is an extremely important component of the performance management process. It is the culminating discussion between the supervisor and staff member with a purpose of:
- Providing summary feedback on overall performance during the performance management cycle
- Identifying learning and development needed and received
- Reviewing goals that were set and achieved
- Discussing ways of improving future performance and developing skills and abilities
3.1 Expectations

Prior to sharing a completed review/assessment with an employee the results must be reviewed by Human Resources. The employee does not review or (electronically) sign the evaluation before his/her direct supervisor and Human Resources have signed off. It is expected that the supervisor and employee will each review the employee’s actual performance against expectations. The assessment will be discussed, documented, and filed using PeopleSoft. The purpose of the assessment is not to pass judgment, but rather to focus on the future by building on employee successes, identifying opportunities for improvement, and initiating development plans. In most cases, this should be seen as yet another opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of your direct reports; we strongly encourage you to maximize this opportunity.

3.2 Employee Role

- Complete self-evaluation form to provide input to the supervisor about how things went during the past performance management cycle
- Think about development opportunities in advance
- Actively participate in performance review discussion
- Work with supervisor in formulating development plans

3.3 Keys to Success

- Supervisor and employee adequately prepare
- Employee analyzes his/her performance
- Meeting time and place with no distractions and sufficient time
- Two-way communication
- Active listening by supervisor and employee
- Common understanding of strengths and weaknesses (based on prior coaching)
- Focus on performance, not personality
- Highly individualized
- Covers entire review period, not just recent performance
- Constructive; focus on how to improve, not past failures
- Positive tone
Step 4: Developing (Enrichment and Performance Improvement Planning)

Employee development initiatives should result from timely coaching and comprehensive assessment of performance over the review period. If employees are to succeed in their role they must continuously grow in their knowledge, skills, and abilities. Development and enrichment opportunities should be noted on the Summary section at the end of the Employee Assessment. A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), also known as a Performance Action Plan, is a great way to give struggling employees the opportunity to succeed while still holding them accountable for past performance. It is not always clear why an employee has poor performance. Did he or she not receive appropriate training? Does he or she not understand the expectations of the job? Are there unforeseen roadblocks in the way? Until you really allow for open dialogue and consistent feedback, you may not have provided an employee the opportunity to be successful. An employee that receives a “Needs Improvement” (NI) in a given competency will need to be placed on a PIP. A PIP can include as many competencies rated NI as required. A PIP form is available from the HR department.

4.1 Expectations
The supervisor will jointly discuss enrichment and improvement planning during annual assessment meeting and as needed throughout the year. This should include specific actions to be taken by the employee (and supervisor, if appropriate). The focus should be limited to one or two areas for enrichment and/or competencies rated as “Need Improvement” for manageability. Timelines with specific dates for follow-up should be established. Various enrichment/improvement planning opportunities include but are not limited to: pursuit of college degree or advanced degree, formal training programs, workshops or seminars, self-study and reading, special job assignments, participation in meetings or projects, and coaching from supervisor. Development plans should become part of next year’s objectives (Planning stage).

4.2 Employee Role
- Take responsibility for their performance and professional development
- View development as an opportunity to expand capabilities and contribution to the department and university
- Actively participate in planning development opportunities based on information
derived from the performance management process to realize performance potential and career goals
- If placed on PIP, take responsibility and actively work with supervisor to meet standard until taken off the PIP

Pay Changes
Authorized merit pay changes will be determined on an annual basis as part of the annual budgeting process and within defined pay parameters for each position. Merit pay changes related to performance will not occur outside of the fiscal year budgeting cycle. To be eligible for merit pay, an employee must not be in a Performance Improvement Plan during most recent review or have reached top of remuneration scale.

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