PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS
FOR EMPLOYEES IN
CLASSIFIED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POSITIONS

represented by the Oregon Public Employees Union

An Employee Guide

This guide will explain the why, what, and how of the Performance Appraisal System for employees in classified Information Technology (IT) positions that are represented by the Oregon Public Employees Union (OPEU). If you have questions after reading this guide, further information is available from your Human Resources Department.

WHY DO WE HAVE A DIFFERENT EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR EMPLOYEES IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POSITIONS?

In 1999, the Oregon University System (OUS) and the Oregon Public Employee's Union (OPEU) negotiated a new compensation program for employees in the Information Technology classifications. The purpose of this program is to support and promote organizational effectiveness through increased productivity at the individual and group level, and reward employees for their contributions.

The program includes variable salary increases based on individual job performance and the relationship of the employee's pay to the control point of the salary range. See Appendix A for a listing of salary ranges for IT positions. Appendix B outlines the options for variable pay increases.

WHAT WILL MY PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CYCLE INVOLVE?
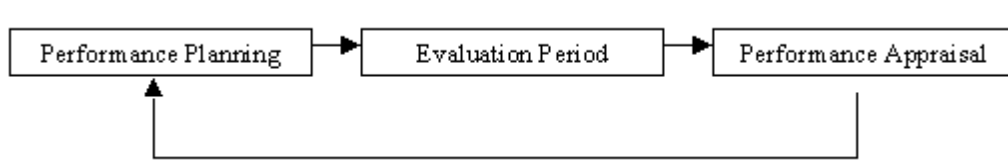
HOW DOES THE EVALUATION PROCESS WORK?

This OUS system for performance appraisal is a *process*—not just a piece of paper. This appraisal system focuses on the future, as well as the past and present. It provides a way for assessing achievements, building relationships, and incorporates the principles and strategies that encourage both individual and organizational success.

You will know how your job performance compares with expected performance standards. Communication will be enhanced because you will have a chance to discuss your work and find ways to improve it.

In conjunction with your salary eligibility date, your supervisor will complete a Performance Appraisal form (See Appendix C). This form includes space to assess your work in relationship to achievement of competencies and performance objectives. The competencies emphasize *how* things get accomplished, whereas the performance objectives focus on *what* gets accomplished.

Please refer to Appendix C as you read the narrative below.

Competencies (Section Two)

Competencies provide a road map so that you will know what it takes to do your job well and advance in your career. They include the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are known to be critical to business success of information technology employees.

The competencies are grouped into the following categories:

- Technical Knowledge
- Work Coordination
- Problem Solving/Prevention
- Communication & Service
- Accountability

A complete list of the competencies for information technology classifications is attached as Appendix D. These competencies are unique because employees of the Oregon University System who hold information technology positions provided information and assisted in developing them.

Performance Standard for Competencies

For each competency category, your supervisor will identify at least one performance standard that is directly related to your work assignment in Level 1, 2, or 3. The performance standard can either be specific skills and/or behaviors from the list of identified competencies, or another appropriate standard.

Rating for Competencies

At the end of the evaluation period, your supervisor will consider your performance in relation to each competency, and select the rating level that most accurately describes how well you typically performed in each area of responsibility. Your supervisor may request input from you. Following is a description of the rating levels.

OUTSTANDING. *Regularly makes exceptional contributions* which have a materially positive impact on the department or organization. Has mastered all job-related skills and possesses a broad range of capabilities. Provides a model for excellence.

CONSISTENTLY EXCEEDS STANDARDS. *Consistently exceeds* all performance expectations/objectives. Highly skilled in relation to technical requirements of the job. Regularly produces expected accomplishments in all areas of responsibility. Meets difficult challenges. Demonstrates sound judgment and decision-making abilities.

MEETS STANDARDS. *Consistently meets* all job standards and may occasionally exceed performance expectations or objectives. Demonstrates effective performance and is fully qualified to perform job duties with the appropriate amount of direction. Consistently performs in a reliable and professional manner.

DOES NOT FULLY MEET STANDARDS. *Has not consistently met* job requirements, and may occasionally demonstrate unsatisfactory performance. Has not successfully performed tasks of the job in all areas of major responsibility. May have the ability to complete most assignments, however, immediate improvement and further development must be demonstrated. If this level of performance continues, an Improvement Plan may be required.

Performance Objectives (Section Three)

Performance objectives are reasonable outcomes or projects for the employee to accomplish during the upcoming appraisal period. There is no restriction on the number of objectives for the evaluation period, as long as the workload is realistic. The objectives pertain only to the most important planned work activities. They are not intended to cover <u>all</u> tasks.

Good performance objectives meet the following **SMART** criteria:

S = Specific
State clearly what is to be accomplished in concrete terms that can be easily observed and mutually understood.

M = Measurable
Objectives should be quantifiable, stating exactly what the criteria for success is, how that success will be tracked and measured, and whether the measurement tools are available.

A = Attainable
Can the result be realistically achieved? (Is the process used workable and within the employee's control? Are the needed resources available? Is the time frame reasonable? Is the objective a "reachable" stretch?)

R = Realistic
Based upon the employee's knowledge of the job, the objective should be linked vertically to the organization's goals, as well as being difficult, yet feasible.

T = Time Bound
Each objective should have a clearly defined time frame.

Your supervisor may develop performance objectives through any one of the following methods:

- You and your supervisor may develop the objectives *together;* or
- You and your supervisor may develop the objectives *separately*, then meet and make modifications; or,
- Your supervisor may develop the objectives and *review* them with you.

Standards for Performance Objectives

For each performance objective, your supervisor will indicate the desired results, either as a quantity or quality, and indicate the manner in which the end results will be achieved in a satisfactory (Meets Standards) manner.

Standards are:

- Relevant to objectives
- Clearly defined and documented
- Appropriate considering existing realities
- Challenging but attainable
- Understood by and acceptable to constituencies
- Revised as appropriate

Weighting of Performance Objectives

Your supervisor will indicate the relative importance of the objective—critical, major, or secondary. Following is a general guideline for defining priorities.

CRITICAL. Must be met or exceeded in order for the unit to meet its objectives. (Planned objectives should include no more than two or three objectives that are critical in nature.)

MAJOR. Must be met or exceeded in order for an individual to be effective.

SECONDARY. Should be met, but will not preclude the individual/unit effectiveness.

Sample performance objectives, weights, and standards

EXAMPLE #1

> Objective: (Critical) Coordinate the technical aspects of the Alpha project and ensure the project is complete by February 1, within the $600,000 budget, and that the resulting system meets customer specifications.
>
> Performance Standard: "Meets Standards" performance will consist of: 1) completion by deadline, 2) costs at budget, 3) system performance meets customer requirements, and 4) customers sign off that they understand user procedures and are able to operate the system.

EXAMPLE #2

> Objective: (Major) Within the next six months, the employee will define customer requirements for an Alpha System, develop a proposed system solution to meet requirements and obtain customer approval for a mock-up, including input and output formats, computational processes, and quality assurance procedures.
>
> Performance Standard: Customer evaluation of project produces ratings of Fully Satisfactory or better on 1) responsiveness to customer needs 2) timeliness, 3) quality of work, 4) efficiency/cost control, 5) technical performance of system.

Results

At the end of the evaluation period, your supervisor will record your progress toward reaching the desired objectives and standards.

Rating for Performance Objectives

At the end of the evaluation period, your supervisor will consider your performance in relation to each competency, and select the rating level that most accurately describes how well you typically performed in each area of responsibility. Your supervisor may request input from you.

Discussion of How Work Was Performed

If *the way* you performed your work had an impact on the work of your peers, users, or the effectiveness of the unit, your supervisor will explain what knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or techniques were involved and how they affected your effectiveness.

Unplanned Accomplishments

This section is provided to record other accomplishments you achieved that you and your supervisor did not include in the original list of planned objectives.

Summary Rating (Section Four)

Your supervisor will base the summary rating on how well you performed in relation to the competencies, performance objectives, the relative weight given to each objective, and other relevant accomplishments. Your supervisor will select the rating level that most accurately describes your overall performance during the evaluation period. The focus will be on job performance—not on personality traits.

> NOTE: When new employees are progressing satisfactorily through their initial appointment to a new or promotional position, but may not yet have had the opportunity to demonstrate all of their skills, supervisors will not normally use the "Does Not Fully Meet Standards" category, as this would unduly penalize the employee for a natural and appropriate learning curve.

If you receive an evaluation of "Meets Standards" or higher, you may request an independent review by a representative from the university/college Human Resources Department (see Article 69, Section 3, E).

If you receive less than a satisfactory evaluation (Does Not Fully Meet Standards), your supervisor will meet with you within thirty (30) days of the evaluation to review, in detail, the alleged deficiencies (see Reference Article 57, Section 2, of the OUS/OPEU Collective Bargaining Agreement). In addition, if your supervisor recommends withholding the performance increase, the supervisor will give you notification in writing, including the reasons for withholding the increase, at least fifteen (15) days prior to your salary eligibility date (see Article 57, Section 4. For the initial implementation of the plan, OUS and OPEU have agreed that the date for this notice shall be November 1).

If your supervisor recommends a pay increase of 2% or less, such action shall be considered a "Denial of Performance Increase" under Article 57, Section 4 of the OUS/OPEU collective bargaining agreement. If this occurs, you may file a grievance.

Developmental Needs/Plans

Your supervisor will record any recommended training and development opportunities that will enable you to perform at the desired level. This may involve strengthening job-related skills or keeping up with changes in technology.

The Oregon University System encourages supervisors and employees to find ways of satisfying the employee's professional interests and meeting the objectives of the organization at the same time.

Signatures (Section Five)

You, your supervisor, and the appointing authority (Human Resources representative) must sign the performance appraisal. In addition, your supervisor may request that another person review the performance appraisal. If so, the reviewer will also sign the appraisal.

Your signature does not signify agreement with the review, but only that you have read the evaluation (Article 57, Section 2).

Employee Comments

This section provides an opportunity for you to record remarks about any aspect of the performance appraisal. A comment is encouraged if you do not totally agree with the evaluation results.

Your supervisor will attach to the performance evaluation any written comments that you submit within sixty (60) days (Article 57, Section 2). Once completed, the performance appraisal and your comments will be placed in your personnel file.

Evaluation Period

At least once (preferably quarterly) during the evaluation period, your supervisor will meet with you to review objectives and discuss performance-to-date. The discussion should include whether the work assignments or priorities have or should change. If so, your supervisor will record those changes and provide a copy to you.

After the evaluation meeting, it is time to start the next evaluation cycle. Throughout the evaluation period you may find it useful to keep a record of significant events or accomplishments on the Performance Tracking Record (see Appendix E).