

The purpose of this document is to guide supervisors in best practice with managing performance concerns of unclassified employees. It will consist of two sections: section one will outline the normal scope of performance planning and evaluation, and section two will outline the process of engaging an employee in a performance improvement plan.

An important aspect of the performance management process is that it may occur outside of the timeline if an employee is hired after January. For example, if an employee joins the organization in May, said individual would be engaged by their supervisor in the first two weeks of employment with performance planning. Their mid-point review would happen in August of that year, with their end of year review coming in December. If you have questions about the performance timeline please contact [Employee Relations and Engagement](#). All forms for engaging in the following processes can be found [via this link](#).

### **Section I**

Academic Year January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> -or- Fiscal Year July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 31<sup>st</sup>.

Performance planning Period: It is a time to set [S.M.A.R.T Objectives](#) as well as competencies. The form for engaging in this process can be found [via this link](#).

Tasks: tasks are defined as the mission critical expectation of the job that are vital for an employee's success as defined [S.M.A.R.T.](#) objectives. Examples of said objectives can be found [via this link](#).

Competencies: these determine how the employee does their job and how they accomplish their goals. K-State has subscribed to the Korn Ferry Global Competency Framework. When outlining competencies for an employee, please refer to the competency library, found [via this link](#).

As you work with your supervisees, by all means consider the scope and operation of their job, but also consider how employees grow as professionals at Kansas State University.

As you prepare to engage your employee in performance planning, it is advised to take these steps:

- Schedule time to prepare performance expectations; if you have questions, reach out to [Employee Relations and Engagement](#).
- Review any prior documentation that has been given to the employee.
- Identify S.M.A.R.T. goals and competencies.
- Seek your supervisor (Reviewer) insight or input.
- Schedule a meeting with employees to review the performance expectations.
- As you plan, remember that a good rule of thumb is to have the employee speak for fifty percent of the time.

While meeting with the employee, be sure to allow time for the individual to ask questions and give feedback.

Within two days or shortly thereafter of the planning session be sure to sign and date the performance planning document, and to have the employee sign and date the document as well.

#### Mid-Point Review

This is a chance to have a narrative conversation with the employee, focusing on successes and areas of growth; both of these areas should be documented. The form for engaging in this process can [be found here](#) or you may follow up in writing. It is advisable that all parties sign and date the document.

#### End of Review Period:

The end of year review is a chance to celebrate successes and discuss areas of growth for the individual by finalizing the performance review.

Should an employee's rating be less than "Meets Expectations" it is advisable the supervisor contact Employee Relations and Engagement for guidance. Less than meets expectations should have documentation to support the rating. See Section II for guidance.

Be sure all parties sign and date the document. However, it is not mandatory for employees to sign the form; should an employee refuse to sign the supervisor should write "refuse to sign" on the form.

## **Section II**

### **Performance Improvement Plan**

Utilizing the Performance Management process is a great way to coach toward improvement as well as document an employee's opportunities and successes. As part of the performance management process, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) may be utilized to address deficiencies in performance and/or conduct. It is advisable for supervisors to reach out to Employee Relations and Engagement for guidance prior to engaging in a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

#### Philosophy of Documentation

An important rule of thumb with this process is: if an incident **has not** been documented and that documentation **has not** been presented to the employee and discussed, it is as if the incident did not occur when it comes time to discuss any disciplinary action.

All documentation should be signed and dated by the supervisor and employee(s). If an employee refuses to sign a document, write in their signature space "refusal to sign." A signature is not indicative of agreeing with the content of the document; it is meant to signify to all parties that the document was presented to the employee.

#### Coaching

Coaching is an important aspect of supervision to help employees to be successful: not only does it demonstrate a supervisor's desire for an employee to succeed, it also shows the organization has investment in caring for an employee. A good practice is to outline and prepare a document with all your talking points: the coaching session should be a dialogue. For example, a good opening statement might be, "These are some of the issues that have been brought to my attention. What resources are you needing to be successful, and how can I support you?"

The employees' input is critical before finalizing the coaching session document. Shortly after a coaching session, [complete a coaching form](#), or follow up with written

documentation of the session. Provide the employee with a copy. Oral and Written Reminders Documentation

If the employee is not meeting expectations with performance and/or conduct, a supervisor should engage in oral and written reminders; follow the same process as with the coaching form above. Shortly after having the meeting with the employee follow up with documentation or you may utilize the employee conference form. If the issue is not egregious, the first step is to provide an oral reminder. If there is no improvement thereafter, proceed with a written reminder.

Consider Prior to Taking Disciplinary Action:

- Did the employee clearly understand the rule or policy that was violated?
- Did the employee know in advance that such conduct would be subject to disciplinary action? (dependent upon conduct)
- Was the rule violated reasonably related to the safe, efficient and orderly operation of the organization's business?
- Is there substantial evidence that the employee actually did violate the rule?
- Is the action planned reasonably related to the seriousness of the offense, the employee's record with the organization, and has disciplinary action been taken with other employees who have committed a similar offense?

Before placing the employee on a PIP, the supervisor should engage the employee with a written reminder that states the employee has thirty calendar days to improve the behavior, or they may be put on a PIP. It is advisable that prior to giving a thirty-day warning the supervisor consult with Employee Relations and Engagement.

### Engaging in a PIP

Prior to engaging in a PIP, it is advisable that a supervisor consult with Employee Relations and Engagement. A PIP should focus on targeted performance and/or conduct areas and use S.M.A.R.T. goals to address improvement. Refer to the prior documentation that was presented to the employee concerning areas needing improvement.. Please note that the Annual Review is not closed out prior to giving a PIP. For example, if an employee hired in January begins a PIP in June, the supervisor would still hold the mid-year review at the regular time, which is a discussion over the holistic performance of the employee. As a PIP is a targeted intervention, it may still be discussed as part of the mid-year review, but it shouldn't dominate said review.

The first stage of the PIP process is to decide a time frame for the PIP of 30, 60 or 90 days. During this process the supervisor should have regular, **documented** conversations with the employee. If a PIP period is for thirty days, the conversations should happen once per week. If the PIP period is sixty or ninety days, the conversation should happen on a biweekly basis.

If at the end of a PIP the employee has met expectations, then the PIP process ends. If they do not meet expectations, consider placing them on another PIP for either thirty, sixty, or ninety days. The same procedures apply with regards to documented conversations.

If employee has less than "Meet Expectations" on their annual review and/or PIP within 180 days, this documentation may be grounds for termination. These situations may have nuances; always feel free during this time period to partner with Employee Relations and Engagement to discuss the performance journey an individual is placed upon.