Conducting Effective Performance Appraisals in a Nonprofit
A Risk Management Webinar

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INTRODUCTION

You probably don't need to be reminded that performance evaluations can be a valuable asset or your worst enemy. The use of favorable or neutral performance evaluations by plaintiffs' attorneys in employment cases is well documented. More often than not, these reviews contradict the agency's purported reason for demoting, terminating or reassigning an employee. Why are they so hard to do right?

Performance counseling and appraisal are inherently adversarial proceedings. The employee brings a high degree of apprehension to the meeting with his or her supervisor. Most employees have wide ranging and sometimes illogical thoughts, from "am I about to get the promotion of a lifetime?" to "maybe she's going to fire me for those two mistakes I made this year." Some employees have grandiose views of their performance, while others think the worst and are overly self-critical. Yet while supervisors in social services agencies may be somewhat familiar with the adversarial process, it's a very different situation when you square off against someone who is your "partner" in fulfilling the mission of the agency on a day-to-day basis. Making the performance appraisal process something that improves the "health" of your agency and strengthens your management of human resources is no easy task. Here are a few suggestions for doing so.

Improving the Process

First, you need to work to reduce the adversarial undercurrent of the process, by making it as collaborative as possible. Second, you need to personalize the process to make certain that you aren't using outdated tools and measures to evaluate the performance of your staff. Third, you need to interject risk taking and risk management skills and expectations into your process in order to fully integrate these goals into the everyday operations of your agency. And fourth, you need to maintain your leadership position and role during the process and not allow it to disintegrate into simply recording the good deeds of your staff.

1. **Collaborate** — Consider a variety of ways to make the review process one in which you are working hand in hand with the employee being evaluated. For example, review the criteria that will be used in advance of the actual "review" meeting. Another step might be to ask the employee to rate his or her own performance goals for the prior year, using the same form you intend to use. In addition, you might ask that the employee develop goals for the coming year. These will be discussed during the review meeting. You'll need to provide direction to employees about the types of goals you want. One common mistake is to craft goals that lack ambition and simply mirror the individual's job description. For example, a case manager might list "complete all assigned projects on time" as a goal for the upcoming year. Or a social worker or counselor might write "provide effective assistance to all clients." In both cases, these "goals" are actually lifted from a job description or the mission statement of the agency. Another common pitfall is to list goals that are immeasurable, such as "increasing client access to services offered by ABC Agency." While typical of agency-wide mission or vision statements, individual performance goals should be measurable; otherwise the

eventual rating will be overly subjective. You'll need to be descriptive in encouraging staff to set ambitious goals, reminding them that there are no automatic penalties for failing to meet ambitious goals.

2. **Use Appropriate Tools** — Many employers continue to use outdated performance evaluation "instruments," many of which have been in place for 20 years or more. Since it's time consuming to update these forms, it makes little sense to constantly reinvent them. However, if you haven't updated your appraisal form in several years, it may be a good time to take another look at these critical tools. One of the common weaknesses with performance appraisal forms is the inherent difficulty in assigning scores based on the form's numeric grading system. A typical grading system — 1 = unacceptable; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; and 5 = excellent — is hard to use. Supervisors have a difficult time assigning a score to an employee's "communications skills." Perhaps his skills are far better than the typical employee in the agency and excellent when compared to the general population, but when compared to other staff holding similar positions, he may only be a fair communicator. To further complicate matters, the employee may be a skilled communicator working one-on-one with clients, but less so when communicating with a group of parents or caregivers or at a public hearing.

   One of the trends in performance appraisal processes that is gaining steam and support is to update the rating system with one that is highly descriptive of the skill being evaluated. For example, for Communications, the system might be as follows:

   1 = Exhibits poor oral and verbal communications skills. 2 = Communication skills are uneven, and lack the consistency required to be an effective advocate. The employee's written and oral communication lacks clarity. 3 = Generally exhibits good writing and verbal communication skills, although there may be times when the staff member doesn't use the level of care required to communicate effectively. 4 = The staff member is a skilled communicator, both in writing and verbally. These skills contribute positively to his or her overall success as a case manager. 5 = Highly effective, polished communicator who clearly conveys information in a professional, understandable fashion.

   Developing a rating system like the one described in the example above takes time. Each trait or skill that is being evaluated has a different scale. However, taking the time to do this actually improves the efficiency of the review process. Supervisors using a scale like the one described find it easier to rate employees — the descriptive language enables them to assign a score much quicker than a "good, very good, excellent" scale.

3. **Integrate Risk Taking** — Many performance appraisal processes subtly discourage risk taking. They seem to reward employees who simply keep their noses to the grindstone and meet the requirements set forth in a job description. An employee who can tic off each item on the job description receives a perfect score. Yet he or she may not be taking the risks necessary to help the agency improve its performance and standing in the community. One

way to integrate risk-taking into the process is to use the goal-setting exercise as part of the process. Another way is to include one or more rating categories that evaluate risk taking.

4. **Align Appraisal With Office Leadership** — As a supervisor in a social services agency, you're working to focus the attention of your direct reports on the organization's goals, articulate and enforce standards, and inspire and support efficient operations. Your performance appraisal system should support, not impair, these goals. A delicate balance is required. In this context, you've got to strike a balance between helping staff align their own goals, ambitions and practices with those of the agency, and providing discipline and directing corrective action, as necessary. The former national commander of The Salvation Army, Robert A. Watson, believes that during the performance appraisal process, many managers put all of their energy into "identifying shortcomings instead of nurturing strengths." He describes a scenario whereby a manager tells a direct report that "These are the three things you need to improve to be more effective." Yet what the employee hears is "These are the three things I think are most wrong with you." (source: *The Most Effective Organization in the U.S: The Leadership Secrets of The Salvation Army*, by Robert A. Watson and Ben Brown). He describes this process as shifting the blame for poor performance to the employee. He suggests the following approach to broaching the topic of improving performance:

   "When you took this assignment, we all agreed on goals, strategies and timelines. At the moment, we're not getting what we expected. What do we need to do to get on track?"

   Of course, using this approach requires that the hiring process integrate goal setting.

5. **Include Action Plans** —When the review or counseling process identifies performance or disciplinary problems, an action plan for the employee is required. How might this be accomplished? One traditional approach is for the supervisor to identify the issues and then discuss the problems with the employee as they occur, suggesting a course of action to improve performance (or correct problems) on an as needed basis. Important issues that haven't been addressed by the time of the annual review should be addressed at that time (if not sooner). A suitable action plan provides details on the nature of the problem. For example, a social worker whose case management record keeping is inadequate might be told that:

   > "For the past three months, your case management notes have failed to meet the agency standard requiring that the date and time of contact, nature of the conversation and action steps taken are detailed in a written form that will be easily understood by supervisory staff."

   The action plan continues with the steps that both the employee and the supervisor will take to address the problem or concern. The action plan concludes with the timeline for implementing the behavioral or task-related changes and the consequences of failing to improve.

6. **Remember the Big Picture** — The annual performance appraisal should provide a big picture view of the employee's performance. One-time matters and concern that arise from time to time should be discussed and resolved when they arise, rather than during the review process. The annual review process is a time to revisit the employee's goals for the year and evaluate whether they have failed to meet, met or exceeded these goals.

A Supervisor's Fundamental Obligation: Evaluating Performance

It is quite clear due to recent court cases where "negligent supervision" was charged that supervisors have a legal duty to adequately supervise staff. It is simply not acceptable for supervisors to permit employees to perform in a sub-standard manner, because doing so creates a risk of liability for negligent supervision. For this reason, all supervisors, from senior administrators on down to staff assistants, must take the obligation to monitor and evaluate the performance of their subordinates seriously.

A growing number of cases have reached the courts in which the performance appraisal process was the principal determining factor in a judgment for damages against an employer. Typically the litigation is brought by someone fired or denied a promotion, who then claims to be the victim of race, sex or age discrimination. The employer defends itself by claiming that the plaintiff simply wasn't doing his or her job. The plaintiff easily rebuts the employer's case by showing that his performance appraisals never mentioned any concerns or disappointments with performance. Employers that can present strong performance appraisal documentation are in a good position to defend their actions, whereas those that do not have written support for their position most often face liability. Consequently, evaluating the performance of staff and documenting the process carefully is "where the rubber meets the road" in employment-related risk management. Most often if there is a smoking gun in an employment action, performance appraisals (or the lack thereof) are the weapons of choice.

Evaluating performance is sound management and critical for the long-term health and prosperity of the nonprofit. In most cases the nonprofit's staff members are among the organization's most valuable assets. Staff influence the public's perception of the nonprofit, provide services to clients, and may be responsible for the welfare of vulnerable individuals on a daily basis. When staff can see how their own work successfully supports the achievement of the nonprofit's goals a more effective organization will result. Boards of directors should insist that supervisors are trained in effective performance counseling techniques, that the appraisal forms are regularly reviewed for ease of use and effectiveness, and that prudent personnel practices relating to supervision are followed.

What is Performance Counseling?

Performance counseling is critical to the success of the nonprofit's operations, yet it is a task which most supervisors approach with insecurity or too frequently ignore completely.

Supervisors often have the misleading impression that counseling is always negative. In fact, performance counseling should be seen as "job coaching." The bottom line is that supervisors must be held accountable in their performance evaluations for their skills as job coaches in motivating and counseling their subordinates. To do their jobs well, they need guidance in the art of performance counseling.

Supervisors must clearly communicate expectations of performance to their subordinates. Rarely are the concrete expectations of an employee's performance adequately expressed in written form. Job descriptions and employee handbooks address some aspects of performance expectations, but it is up to supervisors to fill in the blanks and to do so clearly and up front, as well as on a continuing basis when specific problems arise. Notice involves more than handing an employee a manual at orientation. It requires regular communication throughout the work relationship. Counseling should take the form of immediate recognition of positive or negative performance, periodic informal coaching, more formal "performance counseling" discussions, as well as the formal annual appraisal, often called an annual review.

Why Conduct Formal Performance Evaluations?

In addition to day-to-day performance monitoring, every staff member expects and deserves a formal annual or six-month written evaluation that reflects the employee's achievements and acknowledges those achievements in the context of the organization's goals and objectives. The formal evaluation should include three steps:
1) a self-evaluation, completed by the employee, reflecting on whether the employee's performance in the past has fallen below, met, or exceeded expectations,
2) the supervisor's assessment of whether the employee's performance expectations fell below, met or exceeded expectations, and
3) a statement of goals for the employee's performance, jointly developed by the employee and his or her supervisor. Performance appraisals that are primarily forward looking, rather than reflective, are most effective in motivating employees towards stronger performance.

Developing an Effective Appraisal Form

The most insightful appraisal format is pure narrative because supervisors are then forced to describe the employee's performance and can't make the mistake of checking a box that doesn't apply. However, narrative responses are also legally risky because a supervisor's comments might go off on a tangent that is irrelevant and subjective, or fail to support the rest of the appraisal. Most successful appraisal forms use a combination: narrative responses to pre-selected performance criteria. Often there is a summary statement or rating which is useful when a distinction based on performance is required between similarly situated employees.

Performance appraisal software and human resources consultants are available to help customize appraisal forms. Customization is always preferable and recommended over simply borrowing a format from another workplace! However, many nonprofits successfully borrow

forms developed for another organization, and then customize those forms as they discover what works and what doesn't.

The best insurance against any pitfall in the performance appraisal process is a key final step. Third party objective review requires that each supervisor's supervisor review the evaluations before they are finalized. An objective review by an administrator one tier above the actual supervisory relationship can expose subjective comments or inconsistent rankings. The objective review is also an opportunity to evaluate how well the supervisors are conducting their roles as job coaches. In order for the objective third-party review to be effective, the nonprofit needs to work out a schedule for annual or six-month reviews which permits an extra period of time for the objective reviews. The objective reviews should occur prior to the employee's receipt of the formal review, in order to allow time in the event the reviewer challenges what is written and the appraisal needs to be revised.

Trends In Performance Evaluations

More and more nonprofits are moving to a "merit raise" system that rewards strong performance with the possibility of a higher salary adjustment. This system provides an incentive for employees to improve performance. A merit raise system also rewards strong performers, helping with the nonprofit's ability to retain the most effective employees. A common way to structure a merit raise system is to create a salary scale which assigns a certain percentage or range of percentages for salary increases in each of several categories. Each employee is eligible for whatever percentage raise is appropriate given the range for the ranking assigned to that employee. For example, "Unacceptable" would merit no increase. "Meets expectations" would merit a 1-3% increase, "Exceeds expectations" would earn a 3.5%-4.5% increase, and "Greatly exceeds expectations" would be awarded a 5%+ increase. In this way, the finance committee can determine the budget for salary and compensation for the coming year by looking at historic data on the number of employees in each salary and performance range.

360 Degree Evaluations

One of the trends in performance evaluations is the use of a multi-source assessment, also known as the "360 degree" evaluation. In this system each employee's performance is assessed by several, rather than only one, appraiser. Typically the supervisor reviews the subordinate, who may also be reviewed by the employee himself, and by clients, peers and vendors. In turn, the supervisees provide comments on their supervisors' performance. An estimated 90 percent of Fortune 1000 companies use some form of multi-source assessment. Usually the data on each supervisor is collected anonymously and bypasses the supervisor, going directly to the supervisor's supervisor for evaluation, in order to provide insurance against real, or perceived, retaliation.

As supervisors and subordinates become more comfortable with the process, supervisors can directly review feedback from their own subordinates. While the potential for helpful information using a multi-source appraisal system is great, there can be problems with the credibility of the feedback if staff are cynical and concerned that the feedback is an opportunity

for retribution against an unpopular supervisor. Alternately, such a system could be seen as an opportunity for "deal-making: "I'll give you a favorable rating if you give me one…". In theory the idea of a multi-source system is supposed to provide the highest level of management with a good sense of the effectiveness of the organization's supervisory staff. In practice, collecting such data as part of the formal appraisal system may not yield the most reliable results. Nonprofits must first have a culture of trust and honesty in order for 360-degree evaluations to be taken seriously. Many nonprofits find that facilitating roundtable discussions with staff about effective supervision and in extreme cases, arranging an internal arbitration between supervisors and supervisees is as effective as a formal system of multi-source evaluations.

If you're anxious about making your performance appraisal system any more complicated than it already is, you may not be ready for the 360-degree review.

Some of the perceived benefits of this style of review are providing:
- a multi-dimensional assessment of performance and impact,
- feedback and constructive criticism that can help the employee improve their performance in the context of the organization's mission and goals, and
- information that can target weaknesses in team building or team playing.

Some of the weaknesses of this approach are:
- A 360-degree assessment can foster resentment on the part of the person being reviewed and negatively impact camaraderie in a work group.
- Some participants in the process may be unwilling to provide negative feedback on their supervisor, due to fear about repercussions.
- These reviews are far more time consuming and costly than a traditional top down or collaborative performance appraisal process, and may require use of an independent consultant to implement.

Rating Versus Ranking: Which Approach Works for Your Nonprofit?

When a supervisor who consistently awards all of his or her employees very good to excellent ratings, one of two things is true: either

(1) the supervisor has a high-performing team that includes no poor performers; or
(2) the supervisor isn't accurately rating employees.

The reasons for the latter practice may include:

- Concern that poor or critical performance reviews reflect negatively on the management ability of the supervisor;
- Concern that poor performing employees (who may be likeable or struggling financially) won't receive raises;
- Disagreement with or apathy about the performance appraisal process; or
- Discomfort with or the inability to provide critical feedback concerning performance.

In a *ranking* system, supervisors compare employees to one another, and assign a score that indicates whether they are better than, about the same, or less effective than their colleagues. In some organizations ranking may be used to determine who will receive pay raises from a limited pool of money. Some professions or positions may be easier to rank than others. For example, it may be possible to rank sales persons based on the total sales they generate in a given year. It may be very difficult, however, to rank social workers, case managers and administrative personnel staffing your agency.

Some of the arguments in favor of a ranking system include:

- Use of a ranking system forces supervisors to draw distinctions between their direct reports, removing the possibility that every employee will receive essentially the same review.
- Ranking may inspire competition among staff, which could result in improving the overall productivity of the organization.
- Ranking may encourage risk taking in furtherance of the organization's goals.
- Ranking is a way to identify top performers and distribute merit raises according to actual performance.

Opponents of ranking systems argue that:

- Ranking may harm morale in an organization by creating a competitive environment among professionals who need to work collaboratively.
- When a group of employees is all performing at a high level, some of these strong performers will be ranked low and are likely to be resentful about the results of the appraisal process. The organization may subsequently lose some of these top performers.

Every agency will need to determine whether ranking is a technique that should be incorporated into its performance appraisal system.

Benefits of a Performance Appraisal System

Communicating problem areas. Let's face it, no one wants to reach the conclusion that an employee can't do the job and must be removed from the workplace. This is particularly true after countless hours and sums have been spent screening prospective hires and training the person selected. An effective performance appraisal system can help both identify deficiencies and provide a roadmap for correcting problems. Try to avoid the cynic's take on performance appraisal and poor performance: employees can be rehabilitated and learn to "fly right."

Minimizing legal risk. An employee who is dismissed without being given an opportunity to improve is likely to perceive the dismissal as unfair. While lack of fairness does not necessarily mean the nonprofit acted unlawfully, the perception of unfairness can send your former employee running to the offices of an under-employed attorney. And you don't want to see a claim of unfair treatment turned into a viable discrimination or wrongful discharge, discrimination or harassment claim.

Distinguishing among employees. As an experienced supervisor you may have concluded that from time to time selecting candidates for internal promotion or other recognition is a difficult task. Equally difficult is selecting persons who will be laid off. An effective performance appraisal system can be an invaluable tool in either situation. A carefully managed process can help supervisors identify the strongest and weakest performers in a nonprofit, and serve as "back-up" should these decisions ever be challenged in court.

Recognizing top performers. When employees are surveyed about their frustrations in the workplace, many point to the lack of appreciation and recognition for their efforts. This is equally true in the nonprofit sector. Your performance appraisal process is a way to let your most effective staff know in clear terms that they are valued by your nonprofit. This can go a long way in your efforts to retain key personnel. Employees often indicate that recognition is more important than even compensation when it comes to deciding whether they will stay at a nonprofit.

Communicating the vision and mission of your nonprofit. The mission and vision statements for your nonprofit are vital to your success. No doubt a great deal of time has been spent crafting these statements. Yet many nonprofits forget the importance of tying these "organization-wide" statements into individual employee goal statements. The performance appraisal process is an opportune time to establish or reinforce that link.

Performance Appraisal Do's and Don'ts

Keep the following considerations in mind when conducting performance appraisals or training others to do so.

1. *Don't fill in a box if it doesn't apply to the job or employee being reviewed.* Write "not applicable" instead.

2. *Avoid subjective comments that are not job-related.* The number one mistake made by supervisors is to make a comment on the appraisal form that is not job-related. Every remark, example or criticism must be job-related. Ensuring that evaluations are objective, rather than subjective, is the job of the third-party reviewer but the format of the appraisal can help remind supervisors by prompting them to provide for specific job-related examples to support their conclusions.

3. *Never award undeserved high marks. It is a major mistake to overrate marginal performers.* Some supervisors that don't have control over salary adjustments may be concerned that if they give a subordinate a bad review the employee will not get a very good raise. In other cases, a supervisor may be fearful that poor marks will cause an employee's performance to worsen. Consequently the agency ends up with numerous cases of "grade inflation," which is legally dangerous and deflates the employee's incentives for improving performance.

4. *Never give an employee whose performance is problematic a good raise or check a "satisfactory" or higher rating when in fact the comments reflect performance concerns.* A positive ranking or a salary increase is logically inconsistent with the nonprofit's dissatisfaction with the employee's performance. Sometimes salary adjustments are given to weaker performers in an attempt to be equitable, such as when cost-of-living salary adjustments are given to all staff. However, this is a mistake. An employee who isn't pulling his weight is a burden on the rest of the staff and shouldn't be rewarded. What message does it send other employees when a poor performer gets the same raise as they? Employees don't necessarily have to receive a salary increase at the same time. When an employee's performance is poor, freeze his salary.

5. *Make sure the person completing the appraisal has personal experience supervising the employee, so that the comments on the appraisal reflect personal observation rather than rumor, reputation or hearsay.*

6. *It is not advisable to make comments that give an excuse for the employee's failure to meet expectations.* Supplying excuses is like giving a plaintiff's lawyer a hand grenade. Don't do it.

7. *Focus on employee behavior and actions, not on the employee's intent.* It is virtually impossible to prove that an employee "is not trying" or "has a poor attitude." However,

you can state that an employee didn't succeed in meeting goals, or wasn't present at important meetings, or didn't contribute to the team's efforts to the same extent that other employees did.

8. *Remember that a change of supervisors may spell trouble or turmoil*. Frequently employees feel unfairly treated when a previous supervisor was tolerant of certain conduct that a new supervisor believes is unacceptable. Culture shock results. This is where the Fundamental Fairness Formula (notice of expectations, performance counseling, and an opportunity to correct the performance failing in a reasonable timeframe) is especially important. The new supervisor has changed the expectations. The employee needs to know what the new expectations are and what the consequences will be.

Train to Avoid the Eight "Deadly Sins" of Evaluations

Training managers to perform effective and consistent evaluations is essential, since both managers and employees often are uncomfortable discussing performance. The training should include warning supervisors to refrain from the following eight common errors that can distort and even invalidate the evaluation process:

1. Basing the evaluation on the employee's most recent behavior, instead of evaluating the whole performance period;

2. Allowing irrelevant or non-job-related factors to influence the evaluation, such as physical appearance, social standing, participation in employee assistance programs, or excused time off for leaves of absence;

3. Failing to include unfavorable comments on the evaluation, even when justified;

4. Rating all subordinates at about the same point on a ranking scale, usually in the middle;

5. Allowing one characteristic of the employee or aspect of the job performance to distort the rest of the rating process;

6. Judging all employees too leniently or too strictly;

7. Allowing one very good or very bad rating to affect all the other ratings of the employee (the "halo effect"); and

8. Permitting personal feelings to bias the evaluation process.

<u>A Light-hearted Look at "What Not to Do"</u>

The comments listed below are great examples of statements that should never appear on your nonprofit's performance reviews! The source for these humorous comments is www.warrenpages.com, a humor web site.

Quotes from Actual Performance Reviews

➢ 'Since my last report, this employee has reached rock bottom and shows signs of starting to dig.'

➢ 'His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of morbid curiosity.'

➢ 'I would not allow this employee to breed.'

➢ 'This associate is really not so much of a has-been, but more of a definitely won't be.'

➢ 'Works well when under constant supervision and cornered like a rat in a trap.'

➢ 'When she opens her mouth, it seems that this is only to change whichever foot was previously in there.'

➢ 'He would be out of his depth in a parking lot puddle.'

➢ 'This young lady has delusions of adequacy.'

➢ 'He sets low personal standards and then consistently fails to achieve them.'

➢ 'This employee should go far -- and the sooner he starts, the better.'

➢ 'This employee is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot.'

Lines from Actual Military Performance Appraisals

1. Got into the gene pool while the lifeguard wasn't watching.
2. A room temperature IQ.
3. Got a full 6-pack, but lacks the plastic thingy to hold it all together.
4. A gross ignoramus—144 times worse than an ordinary ignoramus.
5. A photographic memory but with the lens cover glued on.
6. As bright as Alaska in December.
7. Gates are down, the lights are flashing, but the train isn't coming.
8. He's so dense, light bends around him.
9. If he were any more stupid, he'd have to be watered twice a week.
10. Takes him 2 hours to watch 60 minutes.

11. Wheel is turning, but the hamster is dead.

Web Sites Offering Potentially Useful Information

Society for Human Resource Management —the Web site of the national association of HR professionals offers volumes of useful information on the topic of performance appraisal. Some resources are available to members only.
www.shrm.org/

Archer North & Associates is a company that describes its personnel as "specialists in the fields of performance appraisal, performance management and corporate evaluation." The company's web site is:
www.performance-appraisal.com

The following web site page providing an introduction to the topic, history of performance appraisals, and the topic of linking performance appraisal to rewards:
http://www.performance-appraisal.com/intro.htm

SAMPLE

Performance Appraisal Form

Name _____

Appraisal Period: From _____ To _____

Position/Title _____   Supervisor _____

1.   Responsibilities/Goals (to what extent did the employee fulfill his or her responsibilities and achieve mutually agreed upon goals for the review period?)

   A.   Accomplishments During Review Period
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

   B.   Goals Not Achieved and Reasons _____

2.   Methods Used to Achieve Results.

[Nonprofit] must produce and deliver high quality products and services to achieve our mission. Also important, however, is the way that work is accomplished. To determine a rating in each category, consider the example behaviors listed below that are critical to success in the current job. Behaviors not critical to a particular position need not be considered. Observations of strengths as well as areas where improvement is needed should be noted.

EE   =   Exceeds Expectations

AE   =   Achieves Expectations

PAE   =   Partially Achieves Expectations

DNA=   Does Not Achieve Expectations

N/A   =   Category Not Applicable

Communication

➢ Displays effective oral communications skills in relating to individuals and groups
➢ Presents information clearly and concisely in written form
➢ Listens as well as provides useful information
➢ Communicates in a positive, constructive way
➢ Shares information with others to make the organization more productive
➢ Deals with people face-to-face when resolving conflicts rather than by memo if possible
➢ Acts as a positive role model by asking questions, participating in discussions, etc.
➢ Welcomes and seeks constructive feedback on own performance

Rating: _____ Observations: _____

_____

Efficiency/Effectiveness/Focus

➢ Emphasizes results rather than the minute details of process, technicality or conformity for its own sake
➢ Values balance in work and personal life
➢ Focuses on efforts that bring the greatest benefits and results to the organization
➢ Demonstrates willingness to refocus efforts when new directions better enable the accomplishment of the organization's mission
➢ Looks for more efficient and cost effective ways of doing business
➢ Gathers background information, identifies priorities and establishes realistic deadlines
➢ Monitors plans, meets deadlines, and operates within budget
➢ Gives work the time, effort and focus it deserves

Rating: _____ Observations: _____

_____

Initiative/Responsibility

➢ Demonstrates a sense of urgency about work
➢ Is prudent with the organization's resources
➢ Is willing to assist other staff members that require help
➢ Looks for ways to meet challenges, rather than focusing on the reasons why it can't be done
➢ Demonstrates commitment to the entire organization
➢ Models service to the nonprofit sector as an overriding value
➢ Maintains state-of-the-art knowledge in field of expertise
➢ Volunteers for tasks and responsibilities
➢ Actively seeks ways to contribute to the organization

➢ Accepts responsibility for job duties, new challenges and problems encountered
➢ Takes thoughtful risks

Rating: _____ Observations: _____

_____

Problem Solving

➢ Seeks win-win solutions to every problem
➢ Includes in decision making those who are most closely involved and affected
➢ Projects and forecasts events that will impact the organization
➢ Shares resources and information, and helps to identify potential problems
➢ Uses relevant information for decision-making and for anticipating, analyzing and problem solving

Rating: _____ Observations: _____

_____

Relationships/Customer Service

➢ Develops and maintains effective relationships
➢ Seeks to make everyone in the organization successful
➢ Treats every staff member, volunteer, and service recipient with dignity and respect
➢ Accepts responsibility for and constructively resolves conflicts
➢ Invites others' ideas and gives them thoughtful consideration
➢ Strives to provide high quality service to all consumers of the organization's products and services

Rating: _____ Observations: _____

_____

3.   Strengths

_____
_____
_____

4.   Knowledge, Skills, Methods Needing Improvement

_____
_____
_____

5. Developmental Goals

_____

_____

_____

6. Overall Appraisal Summary

The summary rating is based on performance during period as compared to individual and organization goals as well as methods used to achieve results.

_____ Exceeds Expectations _____ Partially Achieves Expectations

_____ Achieves Expectations   _____ Does Not Achieve Expectations

7. Employee's Comments (optional)

_____

_____

8. Supervisor's Comments

_____

_____

9. Compensation Adjustments _____

10. Signatures

The employee's signature confirms receipt of this appraisal, and not necessarily agreement with its contents.

_____   _____

Employee   Date

_____   _____

Executive Director   Date

A copy of this document will be retained in the employee's personnel file.