

## **Common Questions from Supervisors NSU Performance Appraisal**

### **What is the purpose of the performance appraisal?**

The purpose of performance appraisal is to measure levels of job-related behavior. Performance appraisal is a management tool used to improve communication, improve performance, encourage employee development, and guide personnel actions.

### **Where do I start?**

Review the resource documents attached to the email notification or located on the Human Resources webpage. Review the procedure and forms. Supervisors should use the current job description as the foundation for the performance appraisal. NSU's mission, vision, values, and service excellence values should be considered when evaluating job performance factors and setting all goals and objectives. Each supervisor should identify the core job duties in the job description, and assess the employee's performance on each of those duties.

### **Do I have to do a performance appraisal on my employee(s)?**

Yes, performance appraisals must be completed on all full-time staff, and part-time staff who work at least 500 hours within a six-month period.

### **When are performance appraisals due?**

The annual performance appraisal due date is October 1 per policy.

### **Why are annual reviews so important?**

It is a good way to give feedback to employees and set performance goals for the coming year. Performance appraisals are a requirement in keeping with NSU policy. Performance appraisal forms must be completed using responsible communication. Each performance appraisal is discoverable in legal actions.

### **Why are annual reviews due on October 1?**

You actually have all year to complete the performance appraisal and may do this at any time. However, performance appraisals must be completed at least annually and be less than one year old prior to consideration of any stipend, wage or salary increase.

### **What happens if I decide not to do performance appraisals this year?**

Completing the performance appraisal process is **mandatory**. Performance appraisals for staff employees must be completed. The University is audited to ensure we comply with annual performance appraisal requirements. Since performance appraisals are part of managements' responsibility, failure to complete will be reflected negatively in the manager's personal performance appraisal.

### **How do I know if someone is Staff or Faculty?**

The Office of Human Resources staff can assist you with this.

### **What if the employee's job description is out of date?**

Job descriptions are designed to outline job responsibilities. Job descriptions are not intended to be a list of all specific job duties. NSU updated job descriptions have been prepared as an important element to the NSU grading system. Changes to any job description must be carefully evaluated and will be coordinated and completed by the Office of Human Resources. All job descriptions must be in the new format. Job descriptions should be less than two years old. If necessary, please seek to update your job description during budget season. To start the process, a new position change form must be initiated and initialed before Human Resources begins the review.

### **What should I tell the employee about the Mission, Vision, Values and Service Excellence Values?**

We hope that you have had multiple and continuous discussions with all your employees about the values and how the values are incorporated into the work in your department. Be sure you let the employee know your expectation for service in your department, and that the Service Excellence Values are part of performance appraisal. Mission, Vision, and Values are part of the performance appraisal process. Employees need to understand the connection of job duties with the University's Mission, Vision, and Values.

### **Can I just write out the performance appraisal and give to my employee to review?**

No. Every employee should have a face-to-face meeting with management to review the performance appraisal. The purpose is to open lines of communication between the two parties, clarify expectations and set goals. It is an ideal time to recognize an individual's strengths and contribution to NSU and agree on necessary improvements.

**What if my employee disagrees with the performance appraisal rating or something I write?**

Each employee is given an opportunity to make a comment on the form before it is signed and submitted to the Office of Human Resources. An employee can review the performance appraisal with higher level department management.

**Does an employee need to sign the performance appraisal form and do I need to sign the self-assessment form?**

Yes. All employees do need to sign the form even if they disagree. Signing the form simply acknowledges that the process was completed, not agreement. Yes, supervisors need to sign that they have reviewed the Employee Self-Assessment form.

**Do I need a witness in the performance appraisal meeting?**

Not necessarily. If you feel more comfortable with another management person in the meeting due to past experience, behavior or because the performance appraisal score is at Does Not Meet Expectations, a witness to the conversation will be beneficial.

**Do I give the employee a copy?**

Yes, you may give the employee a copy if requested. You should also ensure the employee has a copy of the current job description.

**How can I improve the performance appraisal process?**

You can ensure that you provide specific, written and measurable justification for ratings. This has been missing from many of the performance appraisals completed. Make the performance appraisal a positive process with continuous improvement as the goal. You should prepare in advance, keep your agreed upon meeting time, allow uninterrupted time, and hold your meeting in a private setting. Be open and honest with your description of the employee's performance while maintaining a respectful tone. If the employee's performance needs improvement, you must document this on the appraisal while including direction as to how they can improve. Generally speaking employees want to understand how they are performing on the job and how they can improve. The evaluation of their performance during the annual performance appraisal process should never be a surprise to the employee.

**What is the NSU attendance standard?**

More than six occurrences of unscheduled leave in six months may be considered abuse of leave, outside the standard, and may result in disciplinary action, up and including termination. Individual departments may establish more specific time notification schedules, and who is designated to be notified upon absence.

**What does the additional performance rating mean?**

Management should strive for a normal distribution of performance ratings. Performance appraisals at NSU have traditionally been skewed to the high side of performance. When performance appraisal ratings are skewed to one side or the other, this could represent a problem, i.e., inflated performance ratings or too many low performing employees. This type of problem must be corrected for a performance appraisal program to meet the needs of the university and its employees. Normal distribution of rating levels is critical with any performance appraisal system that is tied to a pay incentive. The additional performance rating of "meets some expectations but not all" provides the supervisor an additional measure to evaluate employee while engaging in discussion of areas for improvement.

**What if I have already completed my department performance appraisals on an old form?**

All new yearly appraisals must be completed on the new interactive forms. If you submit appraisals on the incorrect form, they will be returned to you for placement on the correct form.

**Where can I get training?**

Human Resources is available to answer any questions you may have.

**What happens to the completed form once I give it to the Office of Human Resources?**

The Human Resources staff records the performance appraisal as complete for that employee. HR will use the data to determine overall NSU rating scores. The Additional Consideration section may be reviewed by the Cabinet. Human Resources will ensure that the completed forms are permanently placed in the employees personnel file. The completed performance appraisals will also be used in any future decisions regarding promotions, transfer, disciplinary actions and/or termination.

**What if I have suggestions on the forms?**

Provide your feedback to the Office of Human Resources.