

# Handling the appraisal meeting – Tips for Supervisors

## The Evaluation Meeting

1. Schedule the meeting in advance. Make sure that you have a quiet, private room with no disruptions (a conference room is a good choice). Be sure to schedule enough time for a discussion (1 – 1.5hrs)
2. Welcome the employee; put the employee at ease.
3. Let the employee start
  - a. Listen and take notes.
  - b. Maintain good eye contact and attentive posture.
  - c. Reflect back to the employee your understanding of what the employee said.
  - d. Don't interrupt, but ask questions only for clarification.
  - e. Apply the 90/10 Rule: the employee talks 90% of the time and you talk 10% of the time.
  - f. Be non-judgmental
4. Compare the actual specific performance results and behaviors to the standards. Stay away from an attitude or personality focus.
5. Keep the appraisal open to employee input.
6. Ask the employee for ideas about how to resolve problems.
7. Focus on the future, not on the past.
8. Emphasize strengths, as well as areas that need improvement.
9. Be honest and be prepared to discuss questionable items. Support the employee's effort to improve.
10. Set goals, expectations, and standards together for the next appraisal\*.
11. Discuss development/training plans with the employee.
12. Summarize the session and end on a positive note.

\*Goals should be SMART: Specific; Measurable; Attainable; Relevant; Timely.

## Handling employee behaviors

- **If the employee becomes defensive or makes excuses:**
  - Listen to what the employee has to say and paraphrase back. Remain neutral. Maintain eye-contact.
  - Ask for specifics with open-ended questions.
  - Try to determine the cause:

"Tell me more." "How did you reach that conclusion?"

Ask how the employee will resolve the problem.
- **If the employee becomes angry:**
  - Stay calm and centered. Maintain eye-contact.
  - Listen to what the employee has to say and paraphrase back.
  - Let the employee "run down" for as long as s/he needs until the employee can listen to you.
  - Avoid arguments.
  - Bring discussion and focus back to performance and standards.
  - Say the employee's name, and ask open-ended questions.
- **If the employee is unresponsive or withdraws:**
  - Be patient and friendly.
  - Show concern.
  - Stay silent, and wait for the employee to say something.
  - Ask open-ended questions.
  - Note that the employee is unresponsive.
  - Encourage the employee that you want to hear his or her input, and this input is important to you.