

CIRES ASA Process
&
Performance Management Best Practices
by Gail Tolbert
Senior Professional Employee Relations Consultant



University of Colorado **Boulder**

What is Performance Management?

- 2 Definitions or Perspectives
 - Process
 - Timelines
 - Required tasks
 - Objectives and Planning, Check Ins, Final ASA evaluation narrative/summary
 - Required Paperwork/Signoffs
 - Synonymous with supervision
 - Supervision fundamentals
 - Rapport with direct reports
 - How to give feedback
 - Positive and areas of growth
 - Engage in two way dialogue
 - Mentoring/ succession planning



Why Is Performance Management Important?

Performance management can help organizations achieve excellence by:

- aligning work and resources to clearly defined goals and imperatives
- helping employees and supervisors set clear expectations of each other
- providing ongoing opportunities for direct and constructive feedback
- building relationships & driving collaboration
- reinforcing organizational values



Objectives for Today

- Identify general principles of effective performance management
- Understand the performance management cycle for research staff including:
 - Performance Timeline
 - Evaluation Process
 - Addressing performance concerns, Informal and Formal Disciplinary processes
 - Difficult conversations, timely performance feedback, documentation practices
 - Interplay of Family Medical Leave (FMLA) and performance management: how to partner with the FMLA service center and CIRES HR
 - Planning process, On going feedback/regular check-ins, ASA's



Employee Relations Role

- Neutral advisory office; obligation to report to OIEC
 - Connect employees and supervisors to all campus support resources:
 - OIEC, ADA, FMLA Office, OVA, FSAP, CAPS, BIT, OMBUDS
- Resource for supervisors and employees
 - Policy, performance, procedures and best practices
- Not an investigatory fact-finding office
 - We can help supervisors
- Partner with: CIRES HR and CIRES Director and legal counsel on disciplinary actions



CIRES Human Resources Role

- Encourage ongoing and open communication between CIRES HR & supervisors
- Provide training and resources
- Partner with all CIRES units to promote and exercise performance management practices effectively
- Ensure compliance with defined university requirements and partner with federal units when appropriate
- Assists CIRES Director with progressive discipline when appropriate



Performance Evaluation Guidance: Thought Points for Employees & Supervisors

- Staff have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to the wellbeing and continued success of the campuses, while continuing to advance and adapt their work, leadership, and service. Thus, please keep the following points top of mind when completing this year's staff performance evaluations
- Focus on how people stepped up and helped out
 - Ability of the employee to pivot and be agile to changing work demands
 - How did the employee contribute to chancellor/campus values?
 - How did the employee demonstrate leadership, delegation, decision making?
 - How did the employee demonstrate the department or university core competencies?
- Reviews are about feedback, learning, growth, and celebrating achievements
- Take a holistic look at employee performance
- Keep evaluations simple and don't include unnecessary change
- These evaluation conversations are meant to better prepare employees to develop as a professional and to be able to address the challenges ahead. They are for development and promoting a growth mindset. Adapt to the notion that feedback is an opportunity for growth and not meant as punitive



Steps in Performance Management



On-going successful conversations

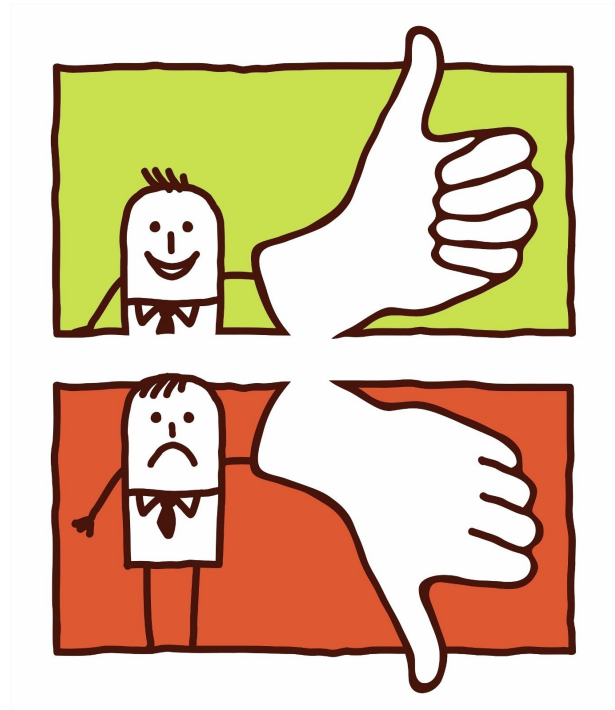
Purpose:

- To provide a dedicated time to communicate face to face with your direct reports.
- To provide a safe space for coaching, mentoring, ongoing feedback, and check in's.
- To ensure you and your team are aligned and focused on mission critical tasks and projects.
- Regular, ongoing check in's allows the manager to identify issues quicker (and solve them before they become big problems) and allows the employee a standard communication channel to vent, ask questions, propose ideas, etc.
- Have the employee come prepared with Agenda items
- Employ the phrase, "Tell me more" or "Help me understand" and ask the employee to suggest solutions and not just problems/concerns



Critical Steps in Providing Feedback:

- Respect privacy
- Build a bridge
- Establish and maintain rapport
- Be a strong leader
- Provide clear and consistent messages
- Be real about expectations of the job
- Don't shy away from the issue



Check In: Coaching and Review

- Go through the employee's ASA Objectives and Planning step by step
- Create two-way communication. Ask questions of the employee and give sufficient time for response.
- Discuss where expectations are being met or exceeded and where improvement is needed.
- Provide specific examples to help the employee understand your feedback.
- Encourage the employee to share opinions and self-assessments.



During a Check In, do NOT:

- Make blanket statements about the employee's performance without giving examples.
- Focus purely on how the employee is not meeting expectations. Try to incorporate some positive feedback as well.
- Discuss personality traits of the employee in regards to performance. **Instead** focus on your employee's behaviors.



Evaluating Performance

- Request that the employee completes a self-evaluation narrative.
- Review the employee's performance for the entire performance cycle, not just the last few months. (Recency bias)
- Review any notes you have kept throughout the year regarding the employee's performance.
- Speak with departments or individuals that the employee works closely with to capture feedback on the employee's performance or use a 360/peer feedback
 - Both supervisor and EE select participants/ share which questions will be asked/ supervisor discretion but should be consistent within direct report team
 - Use any metrics gathered throughout year to help gauge performance success.



Common Types of Bias

Confirmation Bias

Giving in to a natural tendency to search for or interpret information in a way that **confirms existing thoughts or beliefs**.

Recency Effect

Placing **too much emphasis on recent behavior** rather than evaluating a team member's work over the course of the entire year.

Horns Effect

Evaluating a team member as a poor performer overall because of **one thing they don't do well**.

Halo Effect

Evaluating a team member highly in all areas because of **one thing they do really well**.

Affinity Bias

Showing preference for certain team members because you are **similar to them** in values or other personality aspects.

Central Tendency

Avoiding differentiation by assessing all team members as average.

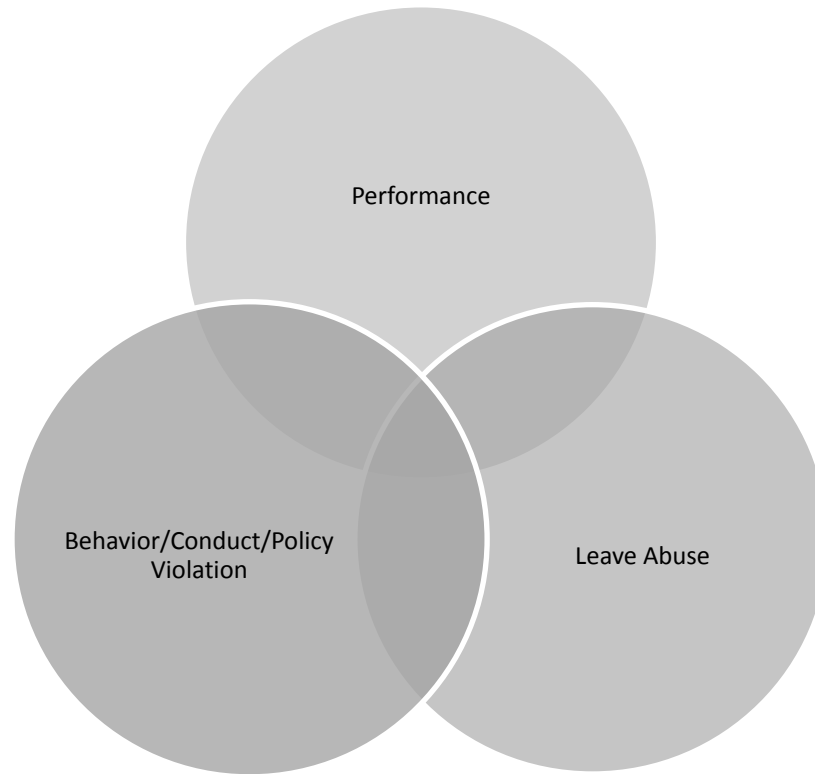


Best practices for prevention of difficult conversations:

- Be open and engage with employees using empathy.
- Understand what motivates your employee.
- Prevention makes intervention easier or unnecessary.
- Schedule time that is free of distractions to provide neutral and reflective feedback.
- Listen first, acknowledge the employee's perspective and then set clear limits and expectations.
- **Follow up with emailed synopsis of conversation for documentation and shared meaning**



Categories of Concern/Discipline



Why is it important to address performance concerns?

- Transparency, maintaining rapport, what is the behavior and why is it occurring? (Are there FMLA, ADA, training needs?)
- Balance of empathy for employee and ensuring the business needs of unit are met
- Poor behavior/performance can negatively affect *everyone* in workplace and the trust/reputation/credibility: success of the unit.
- Not doing so, prevents accomplishment of goals and mission of unit/lab



Types of Employee Discipline

- Informal coaching/ follow up email
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
 - More detailed than the Supervisor Planning section of the ASA
 - More deadlines, more specific metrics, more check ins (45/60 days recommended check in on progress)
- Letter of Expectation (LOE)
- Letter of Reprimand (LOR)
- Separation

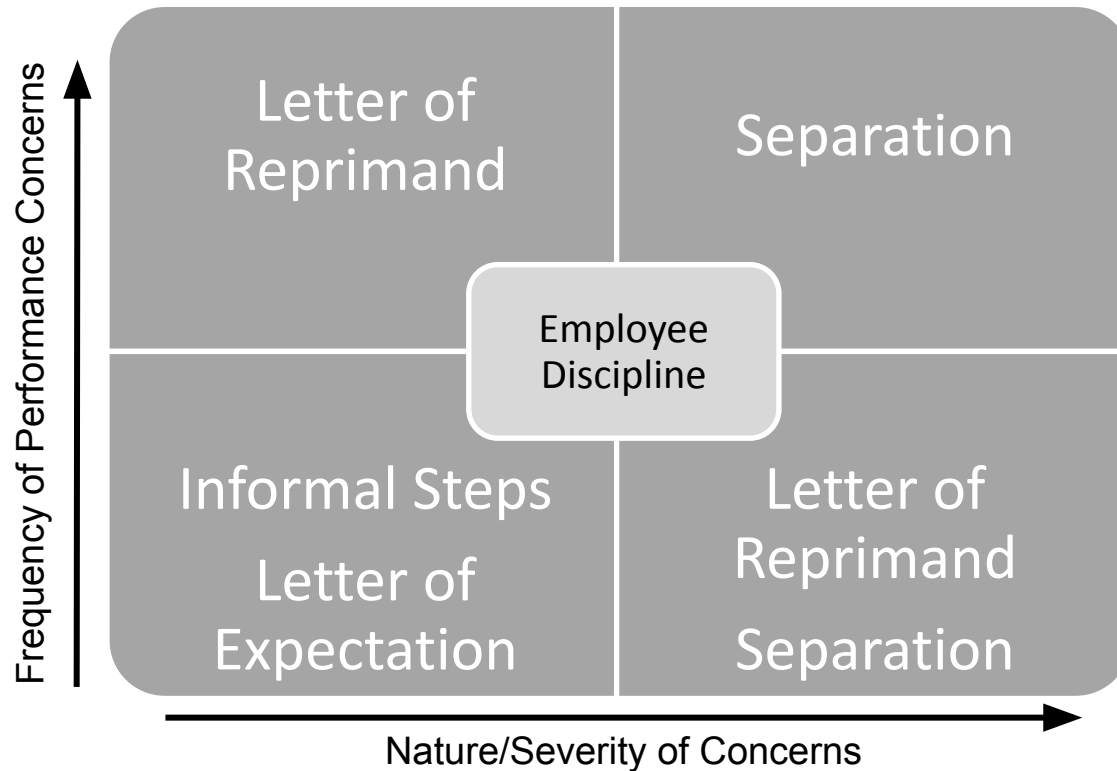


When having difficult conversations:

- Listen to what the employee has to say and paraphrase back what you hear.
- Ask for specifics with open-ended questions. For example, "Tell me more. How did you reach that conclusion? Help me understand."
- Citing SPECIFIC examples of behavior
- Ask how the employee suggests to resolve the problem or what solutions they would like to see.
- Identify and agree on next steps you each will take at the end of the discussion and **follow this up with email.**
- Refer to FSAP (Faculty and Staff Assistance Program) if the employee remains upset throughout the discussion.
- Ask employee to engage with CIRES HR regarding training resources, including Crucial Conversations



Employee Discipline



Documentation Best Practices

Things to consider when documenting performance and behavior:

- Address in a timely manner
- When did the incident occur?
 - Include dates and times
- Were there others present that may have observed the incident?
- What are the specific performance concerns that need to be addressed?
 - Think categories! (Leave, Performance, Conduct)
- Use specific and fact-based statements
 - Remove emotional, judgmental statements....specific observable behavior
- Are there extenuating circumstances?
- Keep a running list of documentation for each employee (include positive and constructive feedback!)
- Use documentation when completing performance evaluations



Documentation Best Practices

1:1 Meetings

- Supervisors should be holding meetings with all direct reports on regular basis
 - Schedule the meetings on your calendar, in a mutually conducive time and private location
 - Communicate with employees if you cannot attend the 1:1 meeting- Consider the 1:1's as sacred time, do not reschedule often
 - Reschedule ASAP
- Document 1:1 meeting's
 - Agenda (who creates the agenda?)
 - High level overview of conversation
 - Bullet points of action items to be discussed for followed up on
 - If performance is suffering, have employee document meetings and send in e-mail



Informal Steps For addressing Performance Issues

- Inform your up-line and CIRES HR about the problem early on
- Provide coaching – have informal meetings about poor performance and/or behavior
- Document meetings and conversations in your personal notes
- Give the employee tools to improve – Retraining, document workflow processes, increased 1:1 meetings, mentor and coach employee



Discipline: Factors for Consideration

- Nature, extent, seriousness and effect of issue
- Type and frequency of issue and how it has been addressed previously and/or documented
- Prior feedback, coaching, corrective action, etc.
- Period of time since last offense
- Individual goal, job, competency rating in prior and previous performance evaluations
- Information provided by the employee, others and/or mitigating circumstances
- Risk factors and compliance: FMLA/ADA/optics, other legal risks.



Best Practices: Supervisor Responsibilities

Before you call CIRES HR, make sure you have considered each of the following for the employee in question:

- ✓ Job Duties
- ✓ Goals
- ✓ Competencies
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Observation
- ✓ Informal coaching and feedback
- ✓ Informal documentation (personal notes, email follow-up)



FMLA/FAMLI

- Family Medical Leave (FMLA) and Family and Medical Leave Insurance
- Don't penalize employee for time that they are out on medical leave
 - Do not reference medical conditions in employee's review
 - Evaluate solely on actual time worked
 - Consider interim or temp reassignment of duties if employee is out for extended periods
 - Consult with Employee Relations and the American with Disability Act (ADA) Coordinator



What is a “BIT” Team?

Behavioral Intervention Team & Threat Assessment

- The University of Colorado Boulder has a strong interest in protecting students, employees and others from harm to themselves or others. In support of that interest, CU-Boulder has adopted a Campus Violence Policy and has developed two threat assessment protocols, one which focuses primarily on students and one which focuses primarily on employees, including faculty, classified staff and university staff employees. **If you have concerns about an employee’s behavior, please contact intervention@colorado.edu or if the threat is imminent, please contact the police at 303-492-6666 or 911.**
- "UCB will not tolerate violence, threats, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior on its campus, at off-campus locations administered by UCB, or in its programs, whether by students, faculty, staff or visitors. Such behavior may include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm or intimidation. Individuals who commit such acts may be subject to sanctions including, but not limited to, removal from the premises; exclusion from the premises; criminal prosecution; corrective and/or disciplinary action; suspension or expulsion."

Purpose

- The BIT provides the university community with accessible avenues for reporting concerning behavior and reviews collected information, identifying and addressing the needs of the individuals who demonstrate concerning behaviors, may be in distress, or may threaten the safety of the campus.
- BIT meets on a case by case basis to strategize about how best to handle situations posed by an employee who is making threats of violence to self or others, who has acted violently during the course of their employment or who is behaving in ways that are threatening, menacing or out of character. BIT is designed to address reasonable concerns raised by coworkers, supervisors, or others in a manner that is appropriate to the situation. BIT is also designed to protect the interests of the employee to ensure that actions taken to address a potential threat are based upon a reasonable threat assessment and not upon unreasonable fears or misinformation.



What is a “BIT” Team?

Goals

- To promote and support campus safety
- To assist individuals in mitigating sources of distress and get them back on a path towards success
- To educate the campus community about identifying concerning behaviors and the role of BIT
- To foster a culture of reporting
- To provide early intervention for individuals in crisis
- To serve as a centralized resource for collecting and evaluating information
- To balance individual privacy and civil rights with community safety



Threat Assessment: Report it!!

- If you are aware of an individual who is a threat to self or threat to others, report it!
- Resources:
 - Red Folder: <https://www.colorado.edu/redfolder/>
 - Don't Ignore It: <https://www.colorado.edu/dontignoreit/>
 - **Safe2Tell** :Concerns may be anonymously reported to [Safe2Tell](#) or at 1-877-542-7233
 - CUPD or 911

- Bring it to these teams early and start a discussion!
 - For faculty and staff - Behavioral Intervention Team (**BIT**)
 - <https://www.colorado.edu/hr/behavioral-intervention-team-threat-assessment>

 - For students - Student of Concern Team (**SOCT**)
 - <https://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/students-concern/students-concern-team>



Resources

- **Confidential Resources**
- [Basic Needs Center](#): The Basic Needs Center is your campus care collective, connecting you to essential resources when you need them most. As a virtual and physical hub of services, we collaborate with on-campus and community partners to get you the care you need. We provide education on navigating local and national resources in addition to helping support you in emergency situations. 303-735-9938
- [*Don't Ignore It](#) : For seeking confidential support, reporting concerns, referring someone for help, and learning skills for helping others
- [Faculty and Staff Assistance Program](#): Dedicated to serving the emotional and psychological needs of the campus community 303-492-3020
- [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#): OIEC implements and enforces [four university policies](#) to ensure nondiscrimination for students, staff, faculty, volunteers, affiliates, and visitors: Discrimination and Harassment; Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence and Stalking; Conflict of Interest in Cases of Amorous Relationships and Lactation Space. (303-492-2127)
- [Office of Victim Assistance](#): Provide free and confidential support, consultation, advocacy and short-term trauma counseling to all CU Boulder students, graduate students, staff and faculty who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic, disturbing or life-disrupting event. Offers support for those who are helping a friend, partner, family member or colleague through a traumatic experience. (24/7 phone support, 303-492-8855)
- [Ombuds Office](#): Assist all CU Boulder students, staff, and faculty with any university-related dispute or concern. Confidential, independent, impartial and informal, listen to concerns without judgement. Visitors to Ombuds office choose their own path of resolution. 303-492-5077
- [Raimy Clinic](#): Graduate student therapists provide therapeutic services and are supervised by licensed psychologists and other experienced mental health professionals. 303-492-5177
- [Safe2Tell](#) :Concerns may be anonymously reported to [Safe2Tell](#) or at 1-877-542-7233, which gets routed to police dispatch where the concern is located.



Resources

- **BIT is not an emergency service.** If you are experiencing an immediate safety concern or direct physical threat, please call 911. If you need an urgent mental health response, please dial 988. Please contact the University of Colorado Boulder Police Department non-emergency line at 303-492-6666 for other assistance.
- **REAL HELP HOTLINE** gives you access to professional counselors who can offer assistance finding local resources or provide immediate crisis counseling. It is a free and confidential service and it is available 24/7. This service is available to all employees. If you need help, reach out. Call 833-533-CHAT (2428).
- **24/7 SPAN-Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Non-violence** hotline and shelter: 303-444-2424.
 - (For Domestic Violence)
- **Reporting a Campus Threat:** <https://www.colorado.edu/dontignoreit/what-report/concerns-about-someone>.



Questions?

Please Contact CIRES HR or Employee Relations



Would you please help CIRES HR?

Please complete this 2-minute survey. Your feedback is always valuable!

https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3QVgeNammzr6vP0

