

CIRES ASA Process

&

Performance Management Best
Practices



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



2021 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
- 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 a gift and not meant as punitive



Steps in Performance Management



On-going successful conversations

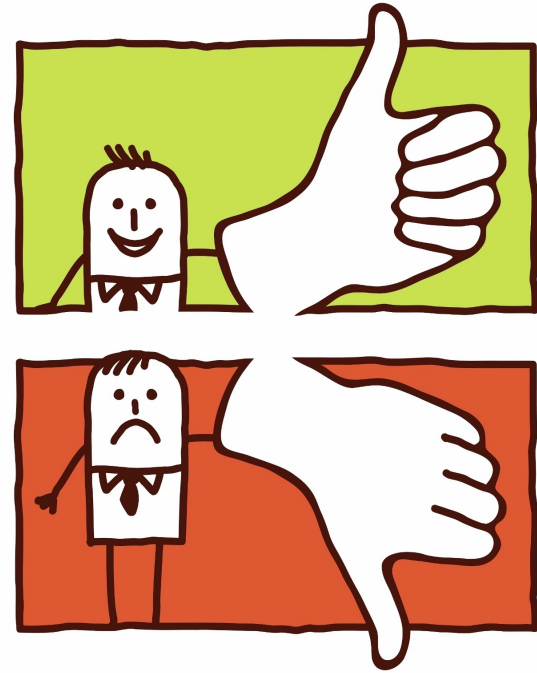
Purpose:

- 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 solving 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 EE 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.

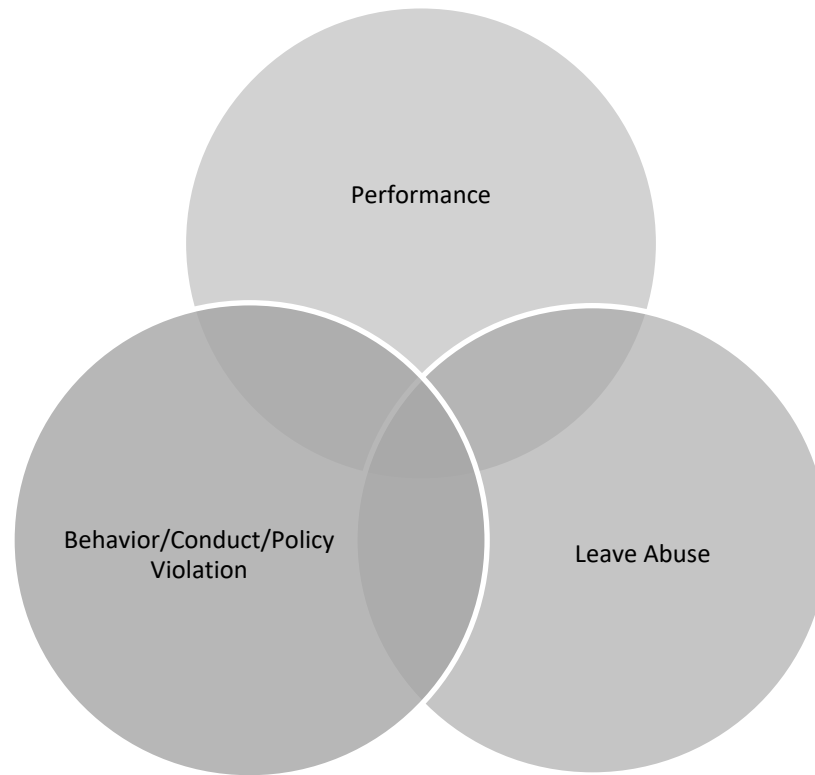


Best practices for prevention of difficult conversations:

- 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 EE 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.
- Prevents accomplishment of goals and mission of unit/lab

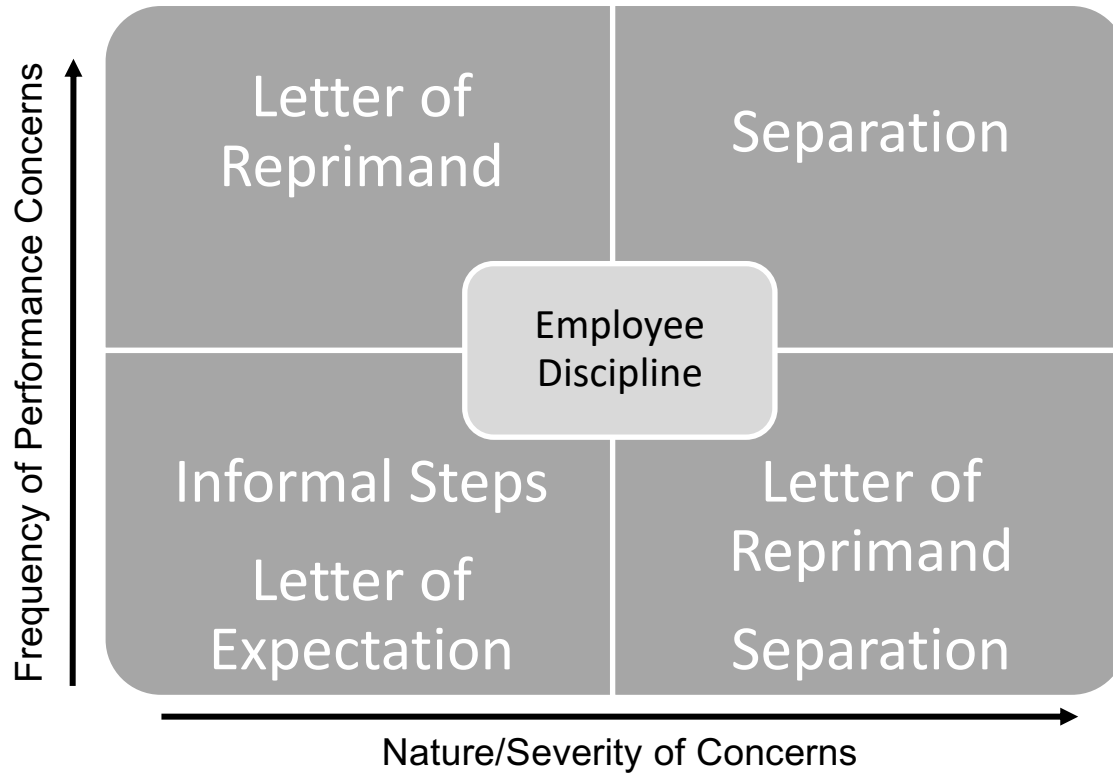


Types of Employee Discipline

- 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



Employee Discipline



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



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)



Family Medical Leave Act

- Family Medical Leave (FMLA)
- 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



Questions?

Please Contact CIRES HR or Employee Relations

