Chapter 9

Performance Leadership

Overview

As organizations strive for 100 percent effectiveness they look to *performance management* as a complete system to not only set goals but also measure and evaluate the results. Performance management may be defined as the whole process impacting how well an employee performs.[1] Performance management may therefore encompass goal setting, employee selection and placement, performance appraisal, compensation, training and development, and career management—in other words, all those parts of the HR process impacting how well an employee performs.[2]

Hospitality organizations, like other businesses, establish a vision, mission, and then *goals* and *strategies*, which are the "how to meet the mission" (discussed in earlier chapters). Given that a hospitality business will likely have guest satisfaction as part of the mission statement, a goal would be to increase guest satisfaction from 87 to 94 percent by December 31.

Let's look at a real situation of how some new employees are unfortunately treated their first day on the job. Picture a scared young employee named Joe reporting to work in a big hotel kitchen on his first job. The day's work is in full swing, nobody pays any attention to him, and he has trouble even finding Chef Paul to report for duty. When he finally finds him, Joe has to follow him around to tell him he is the new cook's helper. Paul tells him to go over and help Roger.

Roger is making salads and he tells Joe to go to the cooler and get another crate of romaine. Joe doesn't know what a cooler is, or where it is, or what romaine is. He feels like heading for home. Joe doesn't know what his job is. Roger knows that Joe is supposed to be his helper, but it doesn't occur to Roger to tell Joe what that means. Even Chef Paul doesn't think to tell Joe what his duties are; he assumes that what Roger will tell him to do is all that is needed.

Many operations are as casual and disorganized as this. A supervisor can quickly go crazy trying to run such a department because things will constantly go wrong and the chief management activity will be coping with this or that crisis. Fortunately, there are ways of bringing order out of this kind of chaos by defining each job and telling people what it is and how to do it.

One of the most useful tools for sorting out this kind of confusion is a job description that incorporates performance standards. Once you start to grasp these concepts and learn how to use them, they will become some of the most useful devices in your entire supervisory repertoire.

In this chapter we explain how to develop job descriptions and performance standards and examine their use in standardizing routine jobs. It will help you to:

- **Describe how performance standards can be used to develop a system of managing employees and their work.**
- **Explain why some performance standard systems succeed and others fail.**
- **Explain the complementary relationship between ongoing day-by-day evaluation and periodic performance reviews.**
- **Enumerate the purposes and benefits of performance reviews.**
- **Outline the steps of the performance review process.**
- **Explain common hurdles to evaluating employee performance fairly and objectively.**
- **Describe how to handle an appraisal interview, and list mistakes that commonly occur during appraisal interviews.**
- **Explain how follow-up can extend the benefits of performance review.**

Performance Standards

Performance standards form the heart of the job description and they describe the whats, how-tos, and how-wells of a job. Each performance standard states three things about each unit of the job:

1. What the employee is to do
2. How it is to be done
3. To what extent it is to be done (how much, how well, how soon)

Traditionally, job descriptions have simply listed the duties and responsibilities (what the employee is to do) for each job. Although this approach is better than no approach, a job description using performance standards is much more useful, as will be discussed soon.

> **Performance standards**
> Describe the what and how of a job, and explain what an employee is to do, how it is to be done, and to what extent.

Here is an example of a performance standard for one unit of a server's job at a certain restaurant: "The server will take food and beverage orders for up to five tables with 100 percent accuracy, using standard house procedures." Figure 9-1 breaks this standard down for you to give you the structure of a performance standard. The "what" of the standard is the work unit. The tasks become the "hows" that make up the standard procedure. When you add a performance goal for each unit, you set a performance standard: how much, how many, how good, how fast, how soon, how accurate—whatever it is that is important for establishing how well that unit of work should be done in your operation.

Supporting materials explaining or illustrating the specifics of the how (in this case, "standard house procedures") are necessary to complete each performance standard. They explain the action to be taken in order to reach the goal or standard.

Anatomy of a Performance Standard

Job classification: Server (waiter/waitress)

Unit of work: Takes food and beverage orders

Performance standard:

The server will take food and beverage orders for up to five tables with 100 percent accuracy using standard house procedures.

Breakdown:

The server will:

What: take food and beverage orders

How: using standard house procedures

To what standard: for up to five tables with 100 percent accuracy

FIGURE 9-1:   Anatomy of a Performance Standard.

Ken Blanchard, the renowned management author, gives a great example of Jim, whose work performance is only "so-so" but who is the star of the Wednesday night bowling league. The story goes . . . imagine that you are Jim as he is about to bowl . . . and a curtain comes down so that he can't see where to bowl the ball. Sounds familiar—there are numerous associates who are not clear as to what they are aiming at—in other words, they have no clear goals. So Jim knocks down six skittles, but he doesn't know that because no one tells him—also sounds familiar—well, thousands of associates carry on working without any feedback on how well they did. Suppose that a supervisor stood there and said "Jim, you missed four skittles"—we would know how Jim would feel. But guess how many times this actually happens to associates? Wouldn't it be better to have certain and clear goals—to knock down all 10 skittles—but have immediate feedback and encouragement?[3]

✐ USES OF THE JOB DESCRIPTION

Job descriptions are used often in recruiting, evaluating applicants, and training. They are also useful in assigning work, evaluating performance, and deciding on disciplinary action. In the next section we discuss the uses and benefits of performance standards in more detail. Refer back to Figure 3-14 to see a sample job description.

What a Good Performance Standard System Can Do

If you develop a full set of performance standards for each job classification that you supervise, you have the basis for a management system for your people and the work they do. You can use them to describe the jobs, to define the day's work for each job,

to train employees to meet standards, to evaluate employees' performance, and to give them feedback on how they are doing. You can use performance standards as a basis for rewarding achievement and selecting people for promotion. You can use them as diagnostic tools to pinpoint ineffective performance and as a basis for corrective action. You can also use them in disciplining workers as a means of demonstrating incompetence. They provide the framework for a complete system of people management. This system operates successfully in many areas of supervisory responsibility.

Intelligent and consistent use of a performance standard system reduces or eliminates those five major reasons for low productivity and high turnover. Employees are told clearly what to do. They are taught how to do it. They know how well they are doing because there is an objective standard of measurement. The supervisor helps and supports them with additional training or coaching when standards are not being met. All this makes for much better relationships between workers and supervisor.

Performance standards improve individual performance. When people are not given explicit instructions but are left to work out their own ways of getting their work done, they usually choose the easiest methods they can find. If this meets your standards, well and good, but often it does not. People also begin to find certain parts of their job more to their liking than other parts and will slack off on the parts they like least. The procedures and standards put all these things into the right perspective.

Once workers know what to do and how to do it, they can concentrate on improving their skills. Improved skills and knowledge, coupled with goals to be met, encourage people to work more independently. If a reward system is related to achievement—as it should be—people will respond with better and better work. Better and better work means better productivity, better guest service, more sales, and higher profits. Who could complain about that?

Morale benefits greatly. People feel secure when they know what to do and how to do it, and when their work is judged on the basis of job content and job performance. If they have participated in developing the objectives, they have a sense of pride and a commitment to seeing that the objectives work. Participation also contributes to their sense of belonging and their loyalty to the company.

A performance standard system can reduce conflict and misunderstanding. Everybody knows who is responsible for what. They know what parts of the job are most important. They know the level of performance the boss expects in each job. This reduces the likelihood that one person is doing less than another who is being paid the same wage—often a cause for discontent and conflict.
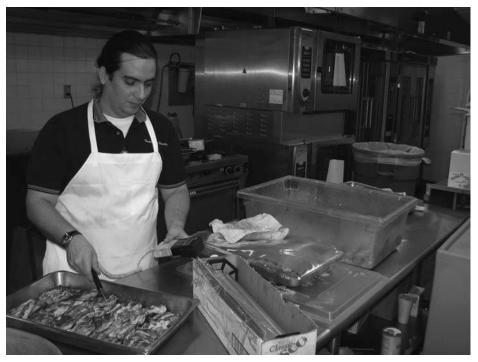
Well-defined standards can eliminate problems caused by the overlapping of functions or duties. Sometimes in a restaurant, for example, the functions of busing and serving overlap. Who resets the tables after customers leave? Both the bus person and the server may try to do it and run into each other, or each of them may think it is the other's job and it does not get done, and the table is out of service while people are waiting to be seated. At the front desk of the hotel, who will do the report for the housekeeper, the night auditor, or the early morning desk clerk, and will there be two reports or none? In the hospital, who picks up all the dirty trays, the kitchen personnel or the aides on the floor, or do

Check Your Knowledge

1. What is meant by performance standards?
2. What can performance management do for an organization?

Performance standards help ensure quality and consistency.

they sit in the patients' rooms all day? All these gaps and overlaps will be eliminated in a performance standard system because the responsibility for performing the tasks will be spelled out.

✎ IN RECRUITING AND HIRING

The typical job description spells out in general terms the content of the job, the duties, and perhaps the kind of experience or skill desired. Performance standards, on the other hand, clearly define the jobs and the duties, the methods of performing the duties, and the competencies required. This will help you as a supervisor to find the right people and to explain the jobs to prospective employees. It will also help in planning and forecasting personnel needs, because you will know exactly what you can expect from each trained employee. If you are looking for experienced people, performance standards are helpful for testing skills.

When you select a new employee, you have a ready-made definition of the day's work for the job. You and your new worker can start off on the right foot with a clear understanding of what is to be done in return for the paycheck. It is a results-oriented approach to defining the job.

We discussed recruiting and selection more fully in Chapter 4.

✎ IN TRAINING

A complete set of performance standards gives you the blueprint for a training program. Each standard sets the competency goals for on-the-job performance toward which the training is guided. The training that forms the heart of a successful performance standard system begins with a written procedure.

✎ IN EVALUATING PERFORMANCE

A complete performance standard system should include periodic evaluations of each worker's performance, with feedback to the workers on how they are doing. Realistic and well-developed standards of performance form a solid basis for objective evaluation. After evaluation, the supervisor is responsible for helping those who are working below standard to improve their performance. An evaluation system based on performance standards can pinpoint specific deficiencies needing corrective training. It is a positive approach; the focus is on the work, not the person; it does not put the person down. The problem is addressed and corrected, and everyone benefits. A performance standard evaluation system can also help you to identify superior workers by the way they meet or exceed the standards set. Such people merit your attention as candidates for development and promotion.

✎ IN YOUR JOB AND YOUR CAREER

A performance standard system will simplify your job as supervisor. Once it is in place and running, you will spend less of your time supervising because your people will be working more independently and things will run more smoothly of their own accord. You will have fewer misunderstandings, fewer mistakes in orders, fewer broken dishes, and fewer irate customers. You will have more time to spend in planning, training, thinking, observing, and improving product and method instead of managing on a crash-and-crisis basis.

After experiencing the standard-setting process, you will have a much better conceptual grasp of your own department, your own area of command, and everything that goes on there. You will be able to coordinate better the various aspects of the work you are responsible for, be able to see how things can better be organized, and be able to run a tight ship. It will be a growth experience for you, and it will make you a better manager. The experience will stand you in good stead as you pursue your career, and so will the improved results in your department.

Setting Up a Performance Standard System

Developing a complete performance standard system is not something you can do overnight. There are a number of steps to the process, and there are certain essentials for success that must be included in the planning and operation.

Three essentials for successful operation must be built into the system from the beginning. The first is *employee participation*. The people who are currently working in

a given job category should work with you as you analyze that job, set the standards for performance, develop the standard procedures, and determine a fair day's work. Every worker's input is very important to you. Often, they know the job better than you do, particularly the procedural steps involved.

The give-and-take of discussion will often produce better results than one person working alone. In many cases your workers will set higher standards of performance than they would have accepted if you alone had set them. In the end, there must be mutual agreement between supervisor and workers on the procedures and the standards and the fair day's work, although the supervisor always has the final say.

Helping to hammer out the *whats, hows*, and *how-wells* will inevitably commit workers to the goals. They will work much harder for something they have helped to develop than for something handed down by the boss. The experience will make them feel recognized, needed, and important, as well as helping to build that sense of belonging that is so necessary to morale.

The second essential for a successful system is *active supervisory leadership and assistance throughout*. As supervisor, you will make the final decisions on the work units to be included and their relative importance. You will determine how much leeway to give your people in working out the procedures and standards of performance. As leader, you will be in charge at all times. But you will all work together as much as possible in identifying the units, specifying the methods and procedures, and setting the performance standards. Under your leadership, performance standards will represent a joint acceptance of the work to be done and responsibility for achieving it.

In training and on the job, the supervisor's leadership continues. Now your role is the supportive one of facilitating the learning of skills, giving feedback, and providing additional training as necessary. Frequent evaluations, whether formal appraisals or a "Hey, you're doing fine," must be an integral part of the system. If the supervisor neglects this aspect of the system, the entire system will soon deteriorate.

The third essential is a *built-in reward system* of some sort, with the rewards linked to how well each worker meets the performance standards. People who do not want to work hard must understand that the better shifts, the promotions, and the other rewards will go to those whose work meets or exceeds the standards set. In some instances you may not have a great deal of leeway in handing out rewards, but you can always give the extra word of praise or written note of thanks for a job well done. Often, this means as much as a material reward. People feel that you are recognizing them as individuals and are appreciating their contributions.

For some people in some jobs, the sense of achievement measured against a defined standard of excellence is a reward in itself, as long as it is recognized and *not taken for granted*. This probably does not operate so effectively in dull and repetitive jobs such as washing dishes and vacuuming carpets. But in such jobs as desk clerk or server, dealing with customers offers many challenges, and the worker can take pride in improving skills and handling difficult situations well. There is nothing in this system that limits excellence to the standards set, and workers should be encouraged to excel.
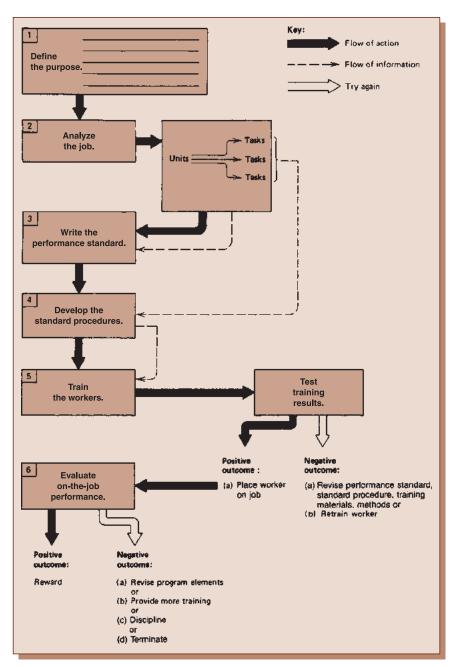
Check Your Knowledge

1. What are the essentials of setting up a performance management system?
2. The performance standard system operates successfully in many areas of supervisory responsibilities. What are these areas?

FIGURE 9-2: **Flowchart for developing a performance standard system.**

There is a definite order of steps to be taken in developing a performance standard system. Figure 9-2 is a flowchart depicting the entire process. The next several pages will follow in detail each progression on the chart. As you read, you will find it helpful to refer back to the flowchart to see the relationship of each step to the whole process.

✎ DEFINING THE PURPOSE AND ANALYZING THE JOB

The first step is to define the purpose for which the standards are to be used. Our purpose here is to develop a system for one job classification that can be used to define a day's work, set standards, develop training plans, and evaluate on-the-job performance. A performance standard is to be developed for each unit of the work.

Once you have defined your purpose, your next step is to analyze the job and break it down into units. First, your employees can help to identify all the different work units they perform. When your list of units is complete, you and your crew should list in order of performance all the tasks or steps to be taken in completing that unit of work.

Once you have agreed on a list of tasks or procedural steps for each unit, you have the data for the first two parts of each performance standard that you are going to write. The unit is the *what* of the objective. The tasks become the *hows* that make up the standard procedures. When you add a standard for each unit, you have a complete performance standard.

The supervisor and the people working at the job should set the standards of performance together, as already discussed. Although the supervisor has the final say in the matter, it is critical to have the workers' input on the standard and their agreement that it is fair. If they don't think that it is fair, they will stop cooperating and your entire system will fail. They will let you succeed only to the degree that they want you to succeed.

Sometimes it is appropriate to define three *levels of performance:* an optimistic level, a realistic level, and a minimum level. An *optimistic level* is your secret dream of how a fantastic crew would do the work. A *realistic level* is your estimate of what constitutes a competent job and the way that good steady workers are doing it now. A *minimum level* is rock bottom—if people did any less, you would fire them.

It is best to write your performance standards for a realistic level. A minimum level simply sets the standard at what a worker can get away with—and some of them will. This level is appropriate only for trainees or new employees during their first days on the job.

An optimistic level is appropriate for the high achiever who is not challenged by a goal that is too easy. Achievement on this high level must be rewarded if you want that kind of effort to continue.

When you have determined all the elements of each performance standard in a given job—the *what*, the *how*, and the actual standard itself for each unit—you should rate each unit in terms of the importance that you, as a supervisor, attach to it in on-the-job performance, as is done in Figure 9-3 for the job of server. This value scale should be made very clear to your servers and should carry considerable weight in a formal evaluation and in any reward system you set up. You may want to ask your servers for their ideas about relative importance, but the final decisions are your responsibility alone. You are the one with the management point of view and the company goals in mind. It will help your people if you explain clearly just why you rate the units as you do. In Figure 9-3, their relative importance is shown by assigning a point value to each unit. The rewards go to those people with the highest total points on their evaluation score.

Level of performance
Employee performance measured against a performance standard. **Optimistic level:** superior performance, near-perfection. **Realistic level:** competent performance. **Minimum level:** marginal performance, below which a worker should be terminated.

SERVER UNIT RATINGS

1.	Stocks service station.	4 points
2.	Sets tables.	4
3.	Greets guests.	8
4.	Explains menu to customers.	8
5.	Takes food and beverage orders and completes guest check.	8
6.	Picks up order and completes plate preparation.	4
7.	Serves food.	6
8.	Recommends wines and serves them.	8
9.	Totals and presents check.	8
10.	Performs side work.	4
11.	Operates equipment.	4
12.	Meets dress and grooming standards.	8
13.	Observes sanitation procedures and requirements.	8
14.	Maintains good customer relations.	10
15.	Maintains desired check average.	8
		100

FIGURE 9-3: Server unit ratings. Point values represent the importance of good performance in each unit of work (page from a procedures manual).

✑ WRITING THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Now we are ready for step 3 on the flowchart (Figure 9-4), writing the performance standards for each unit of the job. First, let us review the essential features of a performance standard. It is a concise statement made up of three elements that together describe the way a unit of work is to be carried out in a given operation:

1. What is to be done?
2. How is it to be done?
3. To what extent (quality, quantity, accuracy, speed) is it to be done?

You can use the form in Figure 9-4 and simply fill in the blanks as we go. Let us take the first unit on the server list (Figure 9-3) and go through the process step by step. The first unit is *stock service station*. You make this abbreviated description more

Writing performance standards is crucial to setting up a performance standard system.

precise by limiting the scope of the work sequence: "The server will stock the service station for one serving area for one meal . . ." Notice two things here:

1. You must use an action verb: the server will *do* something, will perform—not "be able to" or "know how to" or "understand," but actually do something. (The other phrases are used in objectives written for training purposes. Here we are writing objectives for day-in, day-out, on-the-job performance.) Use Figure 9-5 for help choosing a verb.

2. You limit the action as clearly and precisely as possible—which service station, what for. Limiting the action in this way makes it easier to measure performance.

Next you define the *how:* " . . . as described in the Service Station Procedures Sheet . . . " or " . . . following standard house procedures . . . " The standard simply states how or where this information is spelled out.

Finally, you state the standard of performance: " . . . completely and correctly in 10 minutes or less . . . " That is, everything must be put in its assigned place within 10 minutes and nothing must be missing.

Now you can put together the whole performance standard: "The server will stock the service station for one serving area for one meal as described in the Service Station Procedures Sheet. The server will stock the station completely and correctly in 10 minutes or less."

WRITING A PERFORMANCE STANDARD

Job classification:

Unit of work:

What must be done?   (state the performance)

The worker will:

How is it to be done?   (the standard procedures are
                            where they are spelled out)

. . . according to . . . using . . . as shown in . . .

To what standard?   (how you measure it or what
                         you must be able to observe):

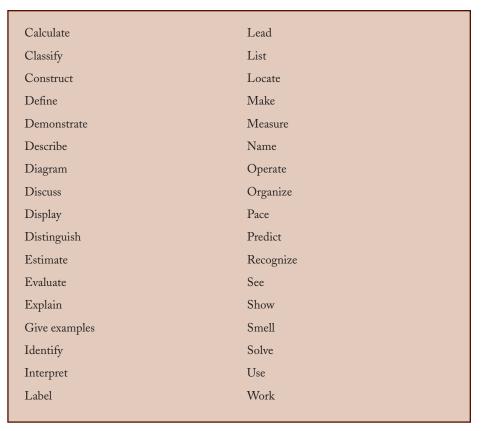FIGURE 9-4:   Sample form to use in writing a performance standard.

Calculate	Lead
Classify	List
Construct	Locate
Define	Make
Demonstrate	Measure
Describe	Name
Diagram	Operate
Discuss	Organize
Display	Pace
Distinguish	Predict
Estimate	Recognize
Evaluate	See
Explain	Show
Give examples	Smell
Identify	Solve
Interpret	Use
Label	Work

FIGURE 9-5: Action verbs for performance standards.

Here are the requirements for the finished product: a good, useful, workable performance standard.

1. *The statement must be specific, clear, complete, and accurate.* It must tell the worker exactly what you want. Instructions cannot be vague so that it is not misinterpreted or misread. If it is not specific, clear, complete, and accurate, it can be more confusing than anything else.

2. *The standard of performance must be measurable or observable.* "Good" and "well" are not measurable or observable; they are subjective judgments. "Correct" and "accurate" are measurable *if there is something to measure by*—a set of instructions, a diagram, mathematical accuracy. The waiter delivers the order correctly if he serves the customer what the customer ordered. The bartender measures accurately if she pours 10 two-ounce martinis and 20 ounces are gone from the gin bottle. There are ways to measure these performances. There *must* be a measurable or observable way for the supervisor to tell whether a person is meeting the performance standard.

3. *The standard must be attainable.* It must be within the physical and mental capabilities of the workers and the conditions of the job. For example, servers

cannot take orders at a specified speed because they have no control over the time it takes customers to make up their minds. Sometimes a standard is set too high the first time around. If nobody can meet it, expectations are unrealistic and you should reexamine the objective.

4. *The standard must conform to company policies, company goals, and applicable legal and moral constraints.* It must not require or imply any action that is legally or morally wrong (such as selling liquor to minors or misrepresenting ingredients or portion sizes).

5. *Certain kinds of standards must have a time limit set for achievement.* This applies to training objectives and performance improvement objectives, to be discussed shortly.

Performance standards are a specialized and demanding form of communication, and writing them may be the most difficult part of developing a performance standard system. But it is precisely this process that requires you to make things clear in your own mind. If you have problems with writing performance standards, don't worry—even experts do. But try it anyway. If it forces you to figure out just what you as a supervisor expect of your workers, you will have learned a tremendous lesson.

Check Your Knowledge

1. Name the three essentials to setting up a successful performance standard system.
2. What is meant by optimistic level, realistic level, and minimum level?

📖 DEVELOPING STANDARD PROCEDURES

The fourth step on the flowchart (Figure 9-6) is to develop standard procedures. Standard procedures complete each package and in many ways are the heart of the matter. The procedures state what a person must do to achieve the results—they give the instructions for the action. They tell the worker exactly how things are supposed to be done in your establishment. Spelling out, step by step, each task of each unit in a given job develops them. There may be many tasks involved—5, 10, 20, 100—whatever is necessary to describe precisely how to carry out that unit of the job.

The standard procedures have two functions. The first is to standardize the procedures you want your people to follow; the second is to provide a basis for training. You can use various means of presenting the how-to materials that make up each standard procedure: individual procedure sheets, pages in a procedural manual, diagrams, filmstrips, videotapes, slides, and photographs. It depends on what will be easiest to understand and what will best meet the requirements of the individual standard. For stocking the service station you might use a list of items and quantities along with a diagram showing how they are placed. For opening a wine bottle you might have a DVD or a series of slides or pictures showing each step. For dress and grooming you would have a list of rules (Figure 9-6). The important thing is to have them in some form of accessible record so that they can be referred to in cases of doubt or disagreement and so that the trainers can train workers correctly. Show-and-tell is not enough in a performance standard system.

Two areas of caution: Don't get carried away with unnecessary detail (you don't need to specify that the menu must be presented right side up), and don't make rigid

APPEARANCE AND GROOMING CHECKLIST

Immaculate cleanliness is required.
1. Clean body: take a daily shower or bath, and use deodorant.
2. Clean teeth and breath: brush your teeth often, use mouthwash after meals if brushing is impossible.
3. Clean hair: shampoo at least once a week.
4. Clean hands and nails at all times: wash frequently.
5. Clean clothing, hose, and underwear daily.
6. Clean shoes: polish well, in good repair.

Grooming must be neat and in good taste.
7. Hair neatly styled.
8. Nails clean, clipped short, no polish.
9. Minimal makeup.
10. No strong scents from perfume, cologne, after-shave, soap, or hair spray.
11. No jewelry except wedding ring and/or service award pins.

Uniforms will be issued by hotel. You must care for them.
12. Clean, wrinkle free, in good repair at start of shift.
13. Hose required.
14. Closed-toe shoes, low heels.

Health and Posture
15. Report any sickness, cuts, burns, boils, and abrasions to your supervisor immediately.
16. Stand straight, walk tall, and look confident!

FIGURE 9-6: Standard procedures for the unit on appearance and grooming: 16 tasks must be completed to meet the objective (page from a procedures manual).

rules when there is a choice of how things can be done (there are many acceptable ways to greet a customer). You do not want your people to feel that they have tied themselves into a straitjacket in helping you to develop these procedure sheets. In fact, this entire process should free them to work more creatively. You simply specify what must be done in a certain way and include everything that is likely to be done wrong when there are no established procedures. The rest should be left up to the person on the job as long as the work is done and the standards are met.

✎ TRAINING ASSOCIATES TO MEET THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Training is the fifth step in developing a performance standard system. A training program should have its own *training objective* for each standard. Each training objective will have a time limit added within which the worker must reach a required

Courtesy of Patrick Accord

Regardless of industry, leadership is a key constant: key because the quality of leadership affects the bottom line as well as most of the operations required to reach that point; constant because you can be assured that there will always be someone looking over your shoulder. Regardless of industry, there are certain qualities and characteristics that define a good supervisor. My personal experience, based on work as a kitchen chef, coupled with other experiences as an employee under supervision, has taught me that certain traits common to the most effective supervisors cross industry boundaries.

While supervising a kitchen, I learned quickly that personal communication is one of the main ingredients needed by an effective supervisor. Actually, I think I learned this while working under supervisors who weren't able to communicate effectively. There is nothing more disheartening for an employee than when he or she is blamed for something that was altered or lost in the channels of communication. To minimize the chance that information is lost in the chain of command, shorten the chain. The most effective supervisors and managers that I've witnessed are the ones who are in the field with employees, talking with them

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Training objective

A trainer's goal: a statement, in performance standard terms, of the behavior that shows when training is complete.

performance standard. For example: "After one hour of training and practice, the trainee will be able to stock the service station for one serving area for one meal completely and correctly in 15 minutes or less following standard house procedures." You will notice that the performance time limit is changed from the previous example because this is a training goal and not an on-the-job goal. In training, the procedures form the basis of the training plans and the training itself.

At the end of the training period, the results of the training will be tested. In a new performance standard program this is a test of both the worker and the various elements of the program. If the results are positive, you can put the worker right into the job (or that part of the job for which training is complete). If the results are negative, you have to consider where the problem lies. Is it the worker? The standard? The procedures? The training itself? Something calls for corrective action.

❧ EVALUATING ON-THE-JOB PERFORMANCE

The final step in developing a performance standard system is to evaluate worker performance on the job using the performance standards that apply to that job. This first evaluation is a test of both the workers and the system so far. If a worker meets all the standards, the outcome is positive and a reward is in order. A positive outcome is also an indication that your standards and procedures are suitable and workable.

If a worker rates below standard in one or more areas, you again have to diagnose the trouble. Is the standard too high? Are the procedures confusing, misleading, or impossible to carry out? Or is it the worker? If it is the worker, what corrective training does he or she need? If the worker is far below standard in everything, is there hope for improvement, or should the worker be terminated?

and keeping lines of communication intact. There is no need to ask Cook 1 what Cook 2 has been doing when you can just ask Cook 2 himself.

Through hard work and communication, a supervisor can then begin to foster a team atmosphere. A supervisor shapes a group's atmosphere or company culture through his work ethic, attitude, and set regulations. The supervisor must set the standard for hard work, do it in an affable manner, and set rules for the benefit of the entire unit. These rules might include a certain dress code or even a dress-down day. Functioning as a group in the workplace, so that the work can be accomplished efficiently, is the key to profitability. Hopefully, a supervisor who begins to foster a good atmosphere will be able to retain employees. Quality in almost any industry is synonymous with consistency. Two out of the four employees left during my first week of supervising the kitchen. Even though they had served notice and we started training in preparation, their loss set our consistency off for almost a month. Customers were complaining that their favorite recipes over the last several years tasted different and they weren't going to give us another chance. I stress the importance of consistency in everything that a supervisor does.

Obviously, good supervision is multidimensional and much more involved than the limited discussion above indicates. But I believe that the basic tenet of open lines of communication leads to good relationships, a good working environment, and retention of employees. Quality is consistency, and as we keep employee turnover at a minimum and build a valued and trusted staff, our jobs as supervisors become that much easier and more profitable.

Implementing a Performance Standard System

Once you have fine-tuned your system, you have a permanent set of instruments for describing jobs, defining a fair day's work for each job, training workers to your standards, evaluating performance, and rewarding achievement. How well can you expect it to work?

HOW TO MAKE A PERFORMANCE STANDARD SYSTEM PAY OFF

The first key to making your system work is the *workers' cooperation* in the developmental stage and their agreement to the standards of performance. If they have participated fully in developing them, they will participate fully in carrying them out. If, on the other hand, the development sessions were full of wrangling, bargaining, and manipulation, and in the end you more or less forced your people to agree to your decisions, they will find ways to sabotage the system. They will also be resentful and uncooperative if they are required to put in time and work in addition to their regular duties and hours without extra compensation or reward.

The second key to success is to *put the system to work slowly* over a period of time, one job at a time. It cannot be done in a day or a week or a month. A performance standard system is a total management system, and it takes a great deal of time to develop it and put it in place. It takes a long time to develop good standards, to standardize the procedures, to translate the standards and procedures into training programs,

and to train your people to meet the performance standards. It takes total commitment to the system, and if you do not have that commitment it will never work for you.

The third key to success is *an award or incentive system*. This is something you work out alone, since you are the only one who knows what you have to offer. It could be money: a bonus, a prize, a pay raise, a promotion. But it does not have to be money; it could be a better shift, an extra day off, a better serving area, a bottle of champagne, or a certificate of merit displayed for all to see. Whatever it is, it is important that all your people understand what the rewards are for and how they are allotted, that they feel the system is fair, and that you practice it consistently.

The fourth key to success is to *recognize your workers' potential* and use it as fully as you can within the limits of your authority. Performance standards tend to uncover talent that has been hidden under day-after-day drudgery. Numerous surveys have shown that many people in the hospitality industry are truly underemployed. If they are encouraged to become more productive, to take more responsibility, to learn new skills, you will get a higher return. Human assets are the most underutilized assets in the hospitality industry today. A performance standard system gives you new ways to capitalize on them. Better products, better service, more customers—who knows how far you can go?

The fifth key to continued success is to *review your system periodically*, evaluating and updating and modifying if your ways of doing things have changed. For example, you may have changed your menu or your wine list. Have you also changed the list of what wine goes with what food? You may have put in some new pieces of equipment. Have you adapted your procedures to include training the workers to use them properly?
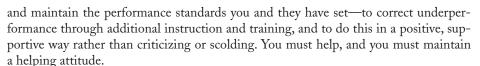
If you do not keep your materials up to date, if you begin to let them slide, you may begin to let other things slide, too—the training, the evaluations, the reward system. It will run by itself for a time, but not indefinitely. It works best when everyone is actively involved in maintaining it.

✑ HOW A PERFORMANCE STANDARD SYSTEM CAN FAIL

Performance standards do not work everywhere. Good, clear, accurate, understandable standards are often hard to write unless you or one of your workers is good at putting words together. (This may be one of those hidden talents that the process uncovers.) *If the standards are not clearly stated and clearly communicated to everyone, they can cause confusion instead of getting rid of it.* The objectives are communications tools, and if they do not communicate well—if the people do not understand them—the program will never get off the ground.

The supervisor can cause the system to fail in several ways. The worst thing that you can do is to change standards without telling your people. You just do not change the rules of the game while you are playing it, especially without telling anyone. You can make changes—often you have to—but you have to keep your people informed, especially when such critical matters as evaluations and rewards are at stake.

Another way in which the supervisor can bring about the failure of the system is to neglect its various follow-up elements. It is especially important to help your people attain

and maintain the performance standards you and they have set—to correct underperformance through additional instruction and training, and to do this in a positive, supportive way rather than criticizing or scolding. You must help, and you must maintain a helping attitude.

If you neglect the follow-up elements—if you do not help underperformers, if you fail to carry out a consistent reward system, if you do not recognize superior achievement and creativity, if you do not analyze individual failures and learn from them—all these things can make a system die of neglect. *Similarly, it will die if your people find no challenge or reward in the system—if the goals are too low to stimulate effort, if the supervisor is hovering around all the time "evaluating," or if for some reason the system has not succeeded in putting people on their own.*

What it often comes down to is that if the supervisor believes in the system and wants to make it work, it will, bringing all its benefits with it. If the supervisor is half-hearted, you will have a half-baked system that will fail of its own deadweight.

Sometimes a supervisor can become so preoccupied with maintaining the system that the system will take over and become a straightjacket that prevents healthy change in response to new ideas and changing circumstances. This happens at times in large organizations where the deadweight of routine and paperwork stifles vitality and creativity. It can also happen with a rigid, high-control supervisor whose management style leans heavily on enforcing rules and regulations. A performance standard system should not lock people in; it should change and improve in response to changes in the work and the needs of the workers.

Sometimes the system is administered in a negative way: "You didn't meet your objectives." "You won't get a raise." "You're gonna be fired if you don't meet these standards." People can experience it as a whip or a club rather than as a challenge, and that is the end of its usefulness. This is not the fault of the system, however, but of the way in which it is administered. Truly, the supervisor is the key to success.

Check Your Knowledge

1. Explain the two functions of standard procedures.
2. What are the keys to making a performance system work?

Essentials of Performance Evaluation

In management terms, the phrase *performance evaluation* refers to a periodic review and assessment of each employee's performance during a given period: three months, six months, a year, or a certain number of hours worked. The assessment is recorded, usually on a company rating form, and is then discussed with the employee in an interview that answers the perennial question "How am I doing?" and explores the possibilities for improvement.

Other terms used for this process are *performance appraisal* and *performance review*. We will use these terms to distinguish the system of periodic evaluation from the informal performance evaluation that is a daily part of the supervisor's job.

Performance reviews are not always used for hourly workers in the hospitality industry. This is partly because supervisors are so busy, partly because so many workers do not stay long enough to be evaluated, and partly because so many operations are

under the immediate direction of the owner. But the practice is increasing, especially in chain operations. It is part of their general thrust toward maintaining consistency of product and service, improving quality and productivity, and developing the human resources of the organization.

A performance review does not substitute in any way for the informal evaluations you make in checking on work in progress. Where things happen so fast, where so many people are involved and so much is at stake in customer satisfaction, you cannot just train your people, turn them loose, and evaluate their performance six months later. You must be on the scene every day to see how they are doing, who is not doing well, and how you can help those who are not measuring up. This is an informal blend of evaluation and on-the-job coaching and support to maintain or improve performance right now and to let people know when they are doing a good job. Performance reviews every six months or so cannot substitute for it. Feedback must be immediate to be effective.

In fact, if you had to choose between periodic reviews and daily evaluations, the daily evaluations would win hands down. But it isn't a choice; one complements the other.

ᕲ PURPOSE AND BENEFITS

If you are evaluating people every day, why do you need a performance review? There are several good reasons or purposes.

1. *In your day-to-day evaluations you tend to concentrate on the people who need to improve*, the people you have trouble with, the squeaky wheels who drive you crazy. You may also watch the outstanding performers, because they make you look good and because you are interested in keeping them happy and in developing them. But you seldom pay attention to the middle-of-the-road people. They come in every day, they are never late, they do their work, they don't cause any problems, but they never get any recognition because they do not stand out in any way. Yet they really are the backbone of the entire operation and they ought to be recognized. Everybody who is performing satisfactorily should be recognized. In a performance review you evaluate everybody, so you will notice these people and give them the recognition they deserve.
2. *Looking back over a period of time gives you a different perspective*. You can see how people have improved. You will also look at how they do the entire job and not just the parts they do poorly or very well. You evaluate their total performance.
3. *A performance review is for the record*. It is made in writing, and other people—the personnel department, your own supervisor, someone in another department looking for a person to fill another job—may use it. It may be used as data in a disciplinary action or in defending a discrimination case. It may be and should be used as a basis for recognition and reward.
4. A performance review requires you to get together with each worker to discuss the results. *It lets people know how well they are doing*. You may forget to tell them day by day, but you cannot escape it in a scheduled review. And if you know you will have to do ratings and interviews at evaluation time, you may pay more attention to people's performances day by day.

5. *A performance review not only looks backward, it looks ahead.* It is an opportunity to plan how the coming period can be used to improve performance and solve work problems. It is a chance for setting improvement goals, and if you involve the worker in the goal setting, it increases that person's commitment to improve. The improvement goals then become a subject for review at the next appraisal, giving the entire procedure meaningful continuity.

Performance reviews have many uses beyond their primary concern with evaluating and improving performance. *One is to act as the basis for an employee's salary increase.* This type of salary increase is called a *merit raise* and is based on the employee's level of performance. For example, an employee who gets an outstanding evaluation may receive a 6-percent increase, the employee who gets a satisfactory evaluation may receive a 4-percent increase, and the employee with an unsatisfactory evaluation may not receive any increase. In one survey of U.S. businesses, 75 percent of respondents reported using appraisals to determine an employee's raise.

Another use is to identify workers with potential for advancement: people you can develop to take over some of your responsibilities, people you might groom to take your place someday or recommend for a better-paying job in another department. As you know, managers have an obligation to develop their people, and a performance review is one tool for identifying people capable of doing more than they are doing now.

Other managers may use your performance reviews. Since they are a matter of record, others may use them to look for people to fill vacancies in their departments.

If they are going to be used this way, it is important that you make your evaluations as accurate and objective as you can. (It is important anyway—more on this subject later.) If someone has been promoted on the basis of your inaccurate evaluation and the promotion does not work out, you may be in hot water.

Your boss, to rate your own performance as a supervisor, may use your performance reviews. If the records show that most of your workers are poor performers, this may indicate that you are not a very good supervisor.

Performance reviews can *provide feedback on your hiring and training procedures*. When workers turn out to lack skills they should have been trained in, it may indicate that your training procedures were inadequate. Workers you hired who rate poorly in every respect reflect on your hiring practices. Both indicate areas for improvement on your part. (Good selection and training programs are discussed in Chapters 4 and 8.)

Workers who rate poorly across the board are of special concern and may be candidates for termination. Performance evaluations can help to identify such workers. If they do not respond to attempts to coach and retrain, their performance evaluations may document inadequacies to support termination and help protect your employer from discrimination charges.

Finally, *performance reviews may provide the occasion for supervisors to get feedback from employees about how they feel about their job, the company, and the way they are treated*. Supervisors who are skilled interviewers and have good relationships and open communication with their people may be able to elicit this kind of response. It takes a genuine interest plus specific questions such as "How can I help you to be more

Merit raise
A raise given to an employee based upon how well the employee has done his or her job.

effective at your job?" "Are there problems about the work that I can help you solve?" Many people will hesitate to express anything negative for fear it will influence the boss to give them a lower rating, but questions with a positive, helpful thrust can open up some problem areas.

When carried out conscientiously and when there is constant communication between reviews, performance reviews have many benefits. They help to maintain performance standards. By telling workers how they are doing, they can remove uncertainty and improve morale. By spotlighting areas for improvement, they can focus the efforts of both worker and supervisor to bring improvement about. They can increase motivation to perform well. They provide the opportunity for improving communication and relationships between supervisor and worker. They can identify workers with unused potential and workers who ought to be terminated. They can give feedback on supervisory performance and uncover problems that are getting in the way of the work.

All these things have great potential for improving productivity, the work climate, and person-to-person relations. And all this benefits the customer, the company image as an employer, and the bottom line.

❧ STEPS IN THE PROCESS

A performance review is a two-part process: making the evaluation and sharing it with the worker. There should also be a preparation phase in which both supervisors and workers become familiar with the process, and there should be follow-up to put the findings to work on the job. In all there are four steps:

1. Preparing for evaluation
2. Making the evaluation
3. Sharing it with the worker
4. Providing follow-up

Companies that use performance review systems usually give supervisors some initial training. They are told why the evaluation is important and what it will be used for: promotions, raises, further employee training, whatever objectives the company has. They are given instruction in how to use the form, how to evaluate performance fairly and objectively, and how to conduct an appraisal interview. This initiation may take the form of a briefing by the supervisor's boss, or it may be part of a company-wide training program. It depends on the company.

The people being evaluated should also be prepared. They should know from the beginning that performance reviews are part of the job. Good times to mention it are in the employment interview, in orientation, and especially during training, when you can point out that they will be evaluated at review time on what they are being trained to do now. Showing people the evaluation form at this point can reinforce interest in training and spark the desire to perform well.

People must also know in advance when performance reviews will take place, and they must understand the basis for evaluation. They should be assured that they will see the completed evaluation, that they and the supervisor will discuss it together, and that they will have a chance to challenge ratings they consider unfair.

When carried out conscientiously and when there is constant communication between reviews, performance reviews have many benefits.

Making the Evaluation

❧ PERFORMANCE DIMENSIONS

An evaluation form typically lists the *performance dimensions or categories* on which each worker is to be rated. Examples include the quality and quantity of the work itself, attendance, appearance, work habits such as neatness or safety, and customer relations. The dimensions of job performance chosen for an evaluation form should be:

- Related to the job being evaluated
- Clearly defined in objective and observable terms, as in a performance standard

Many evaluation forms go beyond specific performance to include such personal qualities as attitude, dependability, initiative, adaptability, loyalty, and cooperation. Such terms immediately invite personal opinion; in fact, it is hard to evaluate personal qualities in any other way. The words mean different things to different people, the qualities are not in themselves measurable, and they do not lend themselves to objective standards. Yet some of these qualities may be important in job performance. Some evaluation forms solve the problem by defining the qualities in observable, job-related terms. For instance, dependability can be defined as "comes to work on time."

Evaluation form
A form on which employee performance during a given period is rated.

Performance dimensions or categories
The dimensions of job performance chosen to be evaluated, such as attendance and guest relations.

Date _____

Employee Name _____ Department _____

Position _____ Supervisor _____

Please select the appropriate rating below

☐	5	Consistently exceeds expectations; given only for exemplary performance
☐	4	Exceeds expectations; routinely upholds standards of excellence
☐	3	Meets expectations; demonstrates minimum acceptable standards
☐	2	Needs improvement; improvement action plan necessary
☐	1	Unacceptable

Major Job Responsibilities

Responsibilities   **Rating**

1 _____ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

2 _____ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

3 _____ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Skills and Abilities Evaluation

Skills	Comments	Rating
Job Knowledge	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Quantity of Work	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Quality of Work	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Efficiency	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Adaptability	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Leadership	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Initiative	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Teamwork	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Attendance	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Communication	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
Safety Conscious	_____	1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

FIGURE 9-7: An Hourly Position Performance Appraisal Review Form.
Courtesy of the Longboat Key Club.

Some qualities that are pleasant to have in people who work for you are not really relevant to doing a certain job. A dish machine operator does not have to be "adaptable" to run the dish machine. A "cooperative" bartender may cooperate with customers by serving them free drinks. "Initiative" may lead people to mix in areas where they have no authority or competence or to depart from standard procedures (change recipes or portion size).

Sometimes the personal qualities found on company evaluation forms are included because they are important in assessing potential for advancement. But where you are

Date _____

Employee Name _____   Department _____

Goals

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Overall Rating

Rating	Performance	Recommendations
5	Consistently Exceeds Expectations	
4	Exceeds Expectations	
3	Meets Expectations	
2	Below Expectations	
1	Unacceptable	

The overall rating is calculated by adding all the available points and dividing by 14 (total categories rated). This average score becomes the overall rating and should be circled above.

Review completed by _____   Date _____

Employee Signature _____   Date _____

Reviewed by Human Resources _____   Date _____

This appraisal covers performances for the period _____ to _____

FIGURE 9-7: *(Continued)*

concerned only with evaluation of the performance of routine duties, it is not appropriate to include such qualities in an overall evaluation on which rewards may be based. People who polish silver or wash lettuce should not be penalized for lacking initiative. In such cases the question can be answered "NA," not applicable. Concern with promotions should not be allowed to distort an evaluation system intended primarily for other purposes.

❧ PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

A quality evaluation form defines each performance dimension in measurable or observable terms by using performance standards (Figure 9-8). There should be standards, measurable or observable standards, wherever possible to make evaluation more objective. Unfortunately, subjective evaluations are not legally defensible if an employee for matters such as employment discrimination ever takes you to court. To be legally defensible, your evaluation of job performance should be based on measurable and objective performance standards that are communicated to employees in advance.

On the face of it, an evaluation based on performance standards may look intricate and difficult to carry out. But supervisors who have used performance standards in training and in informal day-by-day evaluations find them to be a very simple way to rate performance. Usually, they don't have to test people; they recognize performance levels from experience.

Probably not many organizations have such a system, and not all jobs lend themselves to this kind of evaluation. It is best suited to jobs where the work is repetitive and many people are doing the same job, a situation very common in hospitality operations.

FIGURE 9-8: Performance appraisal form based on performance standards.

✐ PERFORMANCE RATINGS

Many evaluation forms use a *rating scale* ranging from outstanding to unsatisfactory performance. A common scale includes ratings of outstanding, above average, average, needs improvement, and poor. In the case of performance standards, you can simply check off that the employee either meets or does not meet the standard. In some systems, there is also a category for "exceeds standard" (Figure 9-9).

The major problem with ratings such as outstanding or excellent is figuring out what they mean in performance terms. What constitutes excellent? What is the difference between fair and poor? If there is no definition, the ratings will be entirely subjective and may vary greatly from one supervisor to another. Where raises and promotions are involved, the results are not always fair to everyone. And nothing bugs employees more than seeing an employee who puts in half the amount of work they do receive the same raise as everyone else.

Some forms take pains to describe what is excellent performance, what is average, and so on. The more precise these descriptions are, the fairer and more objective the ratings will be. In some cases, point values are assigned to each performance dimension (Figure 9-9), indicating its relative importance to the job as a whole. These point values add up to 100 percent, the total job. A different set of point values is

Performance Standards	Exceeds	Meets	Does Not Meet
12. Meets at all times the Dress Code requirements.			
Comments:			
13. Uses at all times the sanitation procedures specified for serving personnel in the Sanitation Manual; maintains work area to score 90 percent or higher on the Sanitation Checklist.			
Comments:			
14. Maintains a "Good" or higher rating on the Customer Relations Checklist; maintains a customer complaint ratio of less than 1 per 200 customers served.			
Comments:			
15. Maintains a check average of not less than $7 per person at lunch and $15 per person at dinner.			
Comments:			
16. Is absent from work less than 12 days in a year.			
Comments:			
17. Is late to work less than 12 times in a year.			
Comments:			
18. Can always be found in work area during work hours or supervisor knows where he or she is.			
Comments:			
19. Attends or makes up all required meetings and training.			
Comments:			
20. Supervisor receives positive feedback from peers with minimal complaints.			
Comments:			

OVERALL RATING:
Outstanding Performance: 75–100 points (must meet or exceed all standards)
Good Performance: 50–74 points
Marginal Performance, Reevaluate in 60 Days: Below 50 points

EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS: _____

EMPLOYEE'S COMMENTS: Please comment freely on this evaluation.

EMPLOYEE'S OBJECTIVES: What would you like to accomplish in the next 12 months?

EMPLOYEE'S OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS:
(Plan should be specific, realistic, measurable, and include target dates.)

SIGNATURES:

Employee   Evaluator   Reviewer
Date:_____

FIGURE 9-8: *(Continued)*

Performance (abbreviated here)	Point Value		Performance Level*		Overall Evaluation**
1. Stocks service station	4	×	2	=	8
2. Sets/resets a table properly	4	×	2	=	8
3. Greets guests	8	×	3	=	24
4. Explains menu	8	×	3	=	24
5. Takes orders	8	×	3	=	24
6. Picks up and completes order	4	×	2	=	8
7. Serves meal	6	×	3	=	18
8. Recommends and serves wines	8	×	1	=	8
9. Totals and presents check	8	×	3	=	24
10. Performs side work	4	×	0	=	0
11. Operates equipment	4	×	2	=	8
12. Meets dress and grooming standards	8	×	3	=	24
13. Observes sanitation procedures	8	×	2	=	16
14. Maintains good customer relations	10	×	3	=	30
15. Maintains check average	8	×	3	=	24
	100				248

*Superior = 3
Competent = 2
Minimal = 1
Below minimum = 0

**Overall rating of 300 = outstanding: highest reward
250–300 = superior: middle reward
200–250 = competent: minimum reward
100–200 = improvement needed
100 = marginal
below 100 = hopelessly inadequate

FIGURE 9-9: Performance dimensions rated using point values.

used to weight each level of performance (three points for superior, two for competent, one for minimum, zero for below minimum). After evaluating each item you multiply the point value by the performance level. Then you add up the products to give you an overall performance rating. This will provide a score for each person based entirely on performance; raises can then be based on point scores. This system allows you to rate performance quality in different jobs by the same standard—a great advantage. Perhaps the most valuable feature of this rating method is that it pinpoints that part of the job the employee is not doing well and indicates how important that part is to the whole. It gives you a focus for your discussions with the worker in the appraisal interview, and it shows clearly where improvement must take place.

The evaluation forms in Figures 9-7 and 9-8 achieve a good balance in what they ask of the supervisor. They are simple, yet they require a fair amount of thought. The required ratings provide both a means of assessing excellence for reward purposes and a way of determining where improvement is needed. Both evaluation forms feature another element often used in the overall review process—improvement objectives.

Each evaluation considers how well past objectives have been met and sets new objectives for the upcoming period. This tends to emphasize the ongoing character of the performance review process rather than a report-card image.

No evaluation form solves all the problems of fairness and objectivity. Probably those that come closest are designed exclusively for hourly workers, for specific jobs, and for evaluating performance rather than promotability. Some experts suggest that a single form cannot fulfill all the different purposes for which performance reviews are used, and that questions needed for making decisions on promotion and pay be eliminated where reviews are used primarily for feedback, improvement, and problem solving.

The form you encounter as a supervisor will probably be one developed by your company. Whatever its format and its questions, its usefulness will depend on how carefully you fill it out. You can make any form into a useful instrument if you complete it thoughtfully and honestly for each person you supervise.

If your company doesn't have an evaluation system, you can develop your own forms, tailored to the jobs you supervise. If they evaluate performance rather than people and are as objective as you can make them, they will serve all the basic purposes of performance review on the supervisory level: feedback, improvement, incentive, reward, and open communication between you and your people.

The performance evaluation is typically formalized in an *evaluation form* that the supervisor fills out. There are probably as many different forms as there are companies that do performance reviews, but all have certain elements in common. Figures 9-7 and 9-8 are sample evaluation forms.

Do You Know?

Name the five pitfalls in performance evaluation. How can you overcome each?

✎ PITFALLS IN RATING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Whatever form or system you use, evaluating performance consists of putting on paper your ratings of each person's work over the period since hiring or since the last performance review. It is based on your day-to-day observations plus relevant records such as attendance records. No matter how well you think you know an employee's work, the process demands thought and reflection and a concentrated effort to be fair and objective.

There can be many pitfalls on the way to objectivity. *We have noted how the form itself* may in some cases encourage subjective judgments. Another pitfall is the *halo effect*, which you encountered in Chapter 4 in the selection interview. Something outstanding, either positive or negative, may color your judgment of the rest of a person's performance. Kevin may sell more wine than anyone else, so you may not observe that he comes in late every day. Sharon broke a whole tray of glasses her first day on the job, so you don't even notice that she has not broken anything since and that her check average has risen steadily.

Letting your feelings about a person bias your judgment is another easy mistake. If you don't like someone, you see their mistakes and forget about their achievements. If you like someone, you reverse the process.

Comparing one person with another is another trap: If John were as good as Paul . . . if he were even half as good as Paul . . . But Paul really has absolutely nothing to do with John. You have to compare John's performance with the job standards, not John with Paul.

Sometimes supervisors' feelings about the entire evaluation process will affect their ratings. They may be impatient with the time that evaluations take and the cost of taking people away from work for interviews. Even supervisors who believe in evaluation

and practice it informally all the time may resent putting pencil to paper (and the interviews too) as an intrusion into their busy days. Some supervisors do not take evaluations seriously and simply go through the motions. Some are really not familiar with the details of their employees' work. Some simply hate paperwork and feel that daily informal evaluation and feedback are enough.

Some supervisors let concern about the consequences influence their ratings. They may fear losing good workers through promotions if they rate them high. They may fear worker anger and reprisals if they rate them low. They may not want to be held responsible or take the consequences of being honest, so they rate everybody average. That way they do not have to make decisions or face the anger of people they have rated negatively, and nobody is going to argue.

Procrastination is another pitfall. Some people postpone ratings until the last minute on grounds of the press of "more important" work. Then the day before evaluations are due they work overtime and rush through the evaluation forms of 45 people in 45 minutes. Obviously this is not going to be a thoughtful, objective job.

Another pitfall is the *temptation to give ratings for the effect they will have*. If you want to encourage a worker, you might give her higher ratings than her performance warrants. If you want to get rid of somebody, you might rate him low—or recommend him for promotion. If you want to impress your boss, you might rate everybody high to show what a good supervisor you are.

If you are a *perfectionist*, and few employees measure up to your standards, you might rate everyone poorly. Another pitfall occurs when you *rate employees on their most recent performance* because you kept insufficient documentation of their past performance. This often results in vague, general statements based only on recent observations. This can upset the employee, especially if earlier incidents of outstanding performance are forgotten.

Sooner or later, false ratings will catch up with you. Unfair or wishy-washy evaluations are likely to backfire. You are not going to make a good impression with your superiors, and you will lose the respect of your workers. Such evaluations tend to sabotage the entire evaluation system, the value of which lies in accuracy and fairness.

The defense against such pitfalls and cop-outs lies in the supervisor's own attitude. You can never eliminate subjectivity entirely, even by measuring everything. But you can be aware of your own blind spots and prejudices, and you can go over your ratings a second time to make sure that they represent your best efforts. You can make the effort needed to do a good job. You can also do the following:

- Evaluate the performance, not the employee. Be objective. Avoid subjective statements.
- Give specific examples of performance to back up ratings. Use your supervisor's log or other documentation to keep a continual record of past performance so that doing evaluations is easier and more accurate.
- Where there is substandard performance, ask "Why?" Use the rule of finger, which means looking closely at yourself before blaming the employee. Perhaps the employee was not given enough training or the appropriate tools to do the job.
- Think fairness and consistency when evaluating performance. Ask yourself, "If this were my review, how would I react?"

- Get input from others who have some working relationship with the employee. Write down some ideas to discuss with the employee on how to improve performance.
- If you set out to be honest and fair, you probably will be. If you keep in mind what evaluations are for and how they can help your workers and improve the work, you will tend to drop out personal feelings and ulterior motives and to see things as they are.

✎ EMPLOYEE SELF-APPRAISAL

As part of some performance appraisal systems, some employees are asked to fill out the performance appraisal and evaluate themselves. *Employee self-appraisal* is surpris-ingly accurate. Many employees tend to underrate themselves, particularly the better employees, whereas less effective employees may overrate themselves. If the employee is given the chance to participate, and the manager really reads and takes the self-appraisal seriously, the employee gets the message that his or her opinion matters. This may result in less employee defensive-ness and a more constructive performance appraisal interview. It may also improve motivation and job performance. Self-appraisal also helps put employees at ease because now they know what will be discussed during their appraisal. Employees may also tell you about skills they have or tasks they have accomplished that you may have forgotten. Self-appraisal is particularly justified when an employee works largely without supervision.

The Appraisal Interview

The *appraisal interview (evaluation interview, appraisal review)* is a private face-to-face session between you and an employee. In it you tell the worker how you have evaluated his or her performance and why, and discuss how future performance can be improved. The way you do this with each person can determine the success or failure of the entire performance review.

✎ PLANNING THE INTERVIEW

Each interview should take place in a quiet area *free of interruption*. Schedule your interviews in advance, and allow enough time to cover the ground at a comfortable pace. A sense of rush or hurry will inhibit the person being appraised. If you encourage people to feel that this is a time with you that belongs to them alone, they are likely to be receptive and cooperative.

It is important to review your written evaluation shortly before the interview and to plan how you will communicate it to the employee for best effect. Indeed, in some companies you may give a copy of the evaluation to the employee ahead of time.

Your major goal for the interview is to establish and maintain a calm and positive climate of communication and problem solving rather than a negative climate of criticism or reprimand. Although you may have negative things to report, you can address them positively as things that can be improved in the future rather than dwelling on things that were wrong in the past. If you plan carefully how you will approach each point, you can maintain your positive climate, or at the very least stay calm if you are dealing with a hostile employee.

You will remember that in communications the message gets through when the receiver wants to receive it. Successful communication is as much a matter of feeling as of logic, so if you can keep good feeling between you and the worker, you have pretty much got it made. Your own frame of mind as you approach the interview should be that any performance problems the worker has are your problems, too, and that together you can solve them.

∽ CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

Usually, a bit of small talk is a good way to start off an interview—a cordial greeting by name and some informal remarks. You want to establish rapport; you want to avoid the impression of sitting in judgment, talking down, or laying down the law. You want to be person-to-person in the way you come across. You want your workers to know you are there to help them do their jobs well, not to criticize them. Criticism diminishes self-esteem, and people who have a good self-image are likely to perform better than people who don't.

Workers who are facing their first appraisal interview may be worried about it. Even though they have been told all about it before, it may seem to them like a day of judgment or like getting a school report card. *It is important to make sure that they understand the evaluation process:* the basis for evaluation, its purpose, how it will be used, and how it affects them. Stress the interview as useful feedback on performance and an opportunity for mutual problem solving. Conveying your willingness to help goes a long way toward solving problems: "How can I help you to do a good job?"

After explaining the purpose of the interview, *it is often useful to ask people to rate their own performance on the categories listed on the form.* If you have established clear standards, they usually know pretty well how they measure up. Often, they are harder on themselves than you have been on them. The two of you together can then compare the two evaluations and discuss the points on which you disagree. Stress the positive things about their work, and approach negative evaluations as opportunities to improve their skills with your support.

Encourage them to comment on your judgments. Let them disagree freely with you if they feel you are unfair. You could be wrong: You may not know the whole story or you may have made a subjective judgment that was inaccurate. Do not be afraid to change your evaluation if you discover that you were wrong.

Get them to do as much of the talking as possible. Ask questions that make them think, discuss, and explain. Encourage their questions. Take the time to let them air discontent and vent feelings. Let them tell you about problems they have and get them to suggest solutions.

Be a good listener. Don't interrupt; hear them out. Maintain eye contact. If the people being reviewed feel that you are not seeing their side, if they begin to feel defensive,

you have lost their cooperation. An evaluation that is perceived as unfair will probably turn a complacent or cooperative employee into a hostile one.

Although you encourage them to do most of the talking, you do not relinquish control of the interview. Bring the subject around to improvement goals and *work with them on seeing objectives for improvement*. Many evaluation systems make goal setting a requirement of the appraisal interview. The worker, with the supervisor's help and guidance, sets goals and objectives with specific performance standards to be achieved between now and the next appraisal. These goals are recorded (as in Figure 9-6) and become an important part of the next evaluation. It is best to concentrate on two or three goals at most rather than on the whole range of possibilities. Goals should be measurable and attainable.

If you can get people to set their own improvement goals, they will usually be highly motivated to achieve them because they themselves have made the commitment. You should make it clear that you will support them with further training and coaching as needed to meet their goals.

It is a good idea to *summarize the interview* or ask the worker to summarize it and to make sure that you both have the same understanding of what the employee is to do now. Have the employee read the entire evaluation and sign it, explaining that signing it does not indicate agreement and that he or she has the right to add comments. Discuss your reward system openly and fully and explain what is or is not forthcoming for the person being interviewed. Make sure that the employee receives a copy of the completed evaluation form.

End the interview on a positive note—congratulations if they are in order, an expression of hope and support for the future if they are not. Your people should leave their interviews feeling that you care how they are doing and will support their efforts to improve, and that the future is worth working for.

✍ COMMON MISTAKES IN APPRAISAL INTERVIEWS

A poorly handled appraisal interview can undermine the entire evaluation process, engender ill feeling and antagonisms, cause good people to leave, and turn competent workers into marginal performers and cynics. Interviewing is a human relations skill that requires training and practice.

If you have established good relations with your people, the appraisal review should not present any problems. It is simply another form of communication about their work—a chance to focus on their problems, reinforce acceptable behavior, and help them improve—no big deal for either of you. If you are new to supervision or if you are a hard-driving, high-control type of person, you may have difficulty at first in carrying out the human relations approach recommended for a productive appraisal review. But you will find it worth the effort. Here are some major mistakes to avoid.

If you take an *authoritarian approach* (this is what you have done well, this is how I want you to improve, this is what you will get if you do, this is what will happen if you don't), it will often antagonize employees rather than produce the improvements you want. It may work with the employee who thinks you are right or with dependent types of people who are too insecure to disagree. But people who think your evaluations are unfair in any way and do not have a chance to present their point of view may not even listen to your message, and they probably won't cooperate if the message does

Be a good listener. Do not interrupt; hear them out. Maintain eye contact.

come through. *You* cannot improve their work; only they can improve their work, and few will improve for a carrot-and-stick approach unless they desperately need the carrot or truly fear the stick. They will leave, or they will remain and become hostile and discontented. Discontented people complain about you to each other, morale declines, and problems multiply. Improvement does not take place.

The tell-and-sell approach is a mild version of the authoritarian approach: The supervisor tells the worker the results of the evaluation and tries to persuade the employee to improve. It is a presentation based on logic alone, rather like a lecture. It seems to be a natural approach for someone who has not developed sensitivity in handling people.

The assumption is that the worker will follow the logic, see the light, and respond to persuasion with the appropriate promise to improve. No account is taken of the feelings of the people being evaluated, and the supervisor has no awareness of how the message is being read as the interview proceeds. There is also the assumption that the supervisor's evaluation is valid in every respect, so there is no need for the worker to take part in discussing it.

The result for the people being evaluated is at best like getting a report card; it is a one-sided verdict handed down from the top, and it leaves them out of the process. Usually, they sit silent and say nothing because the format does not invite them to speak. If they do challenge some part of the evaluation, the supervisor brushes aside the challenge and doubles the persuasion (being sure that there are no mistakes or perhaps being afraid to admit them). The supervisor wins the encounter but loses

the worker's willingness to improve. The results are likely to be the same as in the hard-line authoritarian approach.

Certain mistakes in interviewing technique can destroy the value of the interview.

- *Criticizing and dwelling on past mistakes* usually make people feel bad and may also make them defensive, especially if they feel you are referring to them rather than to their work. Once they become defensive, communication ceases. The best way to avoid such mistakes is to talk in terms of the work, not the person, and in terms of the future rather than the past, emphasizing the help and support available for improvement.
- *Failing to listen, interrupting, and arguing* make the other person defensive, frustrated, and sometimes angry. Avoiding these mistakes requires you to be aware of yourself as well as of the other person and to realize continuously what you are doing and the effect it is having. It takes a conscious effort on your part to maintain a cooperative, problem-solving, worker-focused interview.
- *Losing control of the interview* is a serious mistake. There are several ways this can happen. One is to let a discussion turn into an emotional argument. This puts you on the same level as the worker: You have lost control of yourself and have abdicated your position as the boss. Another way of giving up control is to let the worker sidetrack the interview on a single issue so that you do not have time for everything you need to cover. You can recoup by suggesting a separate meeting on that issue and move on according to plan. Still another way of losing control is to allow yourself to be manipulated into reducing the standards for one person (such as overlooking poor performance because you feel sorry for someone or in exchange for some benefit to yourself). Although you may think you have bought future improvement or loyalty in this way, you have actually given away power and lost respect.

Your first appraisal interviews may not be easy. Many supervisors have trouble telling people negative things about their work in a positive, constructive way. As with so many other management skills, nobody can teach you how; it is something you just have to learn by experience, and if you are lucky you will learn it under the skillful coaching of a good supervisor. A good interview comes from preparing yourself, from practicing interviewing for other purposes (hiring, problem solving), from knowing how to listen, from knowing the worker and the job, from staying positive, and from keeping tuned in to the interviewee, whose feelings about what you are saying can make or break the interview. It is probably one of the best learning experiences you will have in your entire career in the industry.

Follow-Up

The evaluation and the appraisal review have let employees know how they are doing and have pointed the way toward improved performance. If you have done the reviews well, they have fostered momentum for improvement in responsive employees. You have become aware of where people need your help and support and probably also of where your efforts will be wasted on people who will not change or are unable to meet

the demands of their job. So the appraisal review has marked the end of one phase and the beginning of a new one. How do you follow up?

The first thing you do is to see that people receive the rewards they have coming to them. You must make good on rewards promised, such as raises in pay, better shifts, better stations, and so on. If there is some problem about arranging these things, devise several alternative rewards and discuss them promptly with the people concerned. Never let people think you have forgotten them.

For people you have discovered need more training, arrange to provide it for them. For people you feel will improve themselves, follow their progress discreetly without hovering or breathing down their necks. Coaching is in order here, day-to-day counseling as needed. Remember that in the appraisal review you emphasized your help and support. It doesn't take much time: just touching base frequently to let people know you will come through for them, frequent words of praise for achievement, readiness to discuss problems. Put them on their own as much as possible, but do not neglect them.

There will be some people who you are sure will make no attempt to improve, who will continue to get by with minimum performance. Reassess them in your mind: Was your appraisal fair? Did you handle the interview well? Is there some mistake that you are making in handling them? Are you hostile or merely indifferent? Are *they* able to do better, or is minimal performance really their best work? Would they do better in a different job? Is their performance so poor on key aspects of the job (customer relations, absenteeism, sanitation, quality standards) that discipline is in order? Should they be retrained? Should they be terminated (hopelessly unwilling or unable to do the job)?

If employees are complacent or indifferent, you might as well give up trying to make them improve unless you can find a way to motivate them. If employees are hostile, you should try to figure out how to turn them around or at least arrive at an armed truce so that they will do the work and get their pay without disrupting the entire department. We have more to say on motivation and discipline in later chapters.
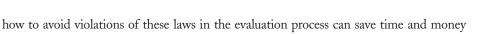
There are two important facets of follow-up. One is actually carrying it out. If, after you have done your reviews, you let the process drop until the next appraisal date, you will let all its potential benefits slip through your fingers. The other important facet is using all you have discovered about your people and yourself to improve your working relationship with each person you supervise. It can be a constantly expanding and self-feeding process, and it will pay off in the morale of your people and in your development as a leader.

Check Your Knowledge

1. List four common mistakes in appraisal interviews.
2. List the steps to follow when conducting an interview.

Legal Aspects of Performance Evaluation

Four major equal employment opportunity laws affect the process of performance evaluation: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (see Chapter 2). Knowing

how to avoid violations of these laws in the evaluation process can save time and money as well as create goodwill with your employees and a positive public image. Following are ways to ensure fair and legal evaluations:

1. Evaluation of performance should be based on standards or factors obtained from a job analysis of the skills, tasks, and knowledge required to perform the job.
2. Performance standards should be observable, objective, and measurable.
3. Keep a positive rapport during your discussions with the employee. This helps tremendously to avoid complaints of being unfair and, possibly, charges of discrimination.
4. Do not enter into discussions that focus on qualities of employees based on their membership in a group protected by EEO laws. If employees refer to their membership, it is best not to respond. For example, suppose that Jack, who is sixty, says: "At my age it gets harder to see the small details. I guess that explains my trouble with this." It would be appropriate for you to focus on how to ensure that Jack is able to see well enough to perform his job. It would be an error for you to make any mention of his age, both to him or anyone else, and certainly not on the written part of his appraisal, even though he brought up the subject.[4]
5. Employee performance should be documented more frequently than once a year at appraisal time. An employee should not be surprised at performance appraisal time.
6. If an employee disagrees with his or her evaluation, he or she should be able to appeal.

ᔕ KEY POINTS

1. If you develop a full set of performance standards for each job that you supervise, you have the basis for a management system for your people and the work they do. You can use them in recruiting, training, and evaluation. You can use them with employees to reduce conflict and misunderstanding. Everyone knows who is responsible for what.
2. Three essentials to setting up a successful performance standard system are worker participation, active supervisory leadership and assistance throughout, and a built-in reward system.
3. Figure 9-1 depicts how to develop a performance standard system: define the purpose, analyze the job, write the performance standard, train the workers, and evaluate on-the-job performance.
4. Figure 9-4 shows a sample form to be used when writing performance standards.
5. Performance standards must be specific, clear, complete, accurate, measurable or observable, attainable, and in conformance with company policies and legal and moral constraints.
6. The first key to making your system work is the workers' cooperation and agreement in the developmental stage. The second key to success is to put the system to work slowly over a period of time, one job at a time. Other keys to success include having an

award or incentive system, recognizing your workers' potential, and reviewing the system periodically.

7. A performance standard system can fail if the standards are not clearly stated and communicated to everyone, if the supervisor does not follow up properly, if the supervisor does not provide enough challenge or reward, or if the system is administered in a confining or negative manner.

8. Performance evaluation refers to the periodic review and assessment of each employee's performance during a given period, such as a year. This is in addition to the informal performance evaluation that is a daily part of a supervisor's job.

9. When carried out conscientiously and when there is constant communication between reviews, performance reviews have many benefits. They help to maintain performance standards. By telling workers how they are doing, they can remove uncertainty and improve morale. By spotlighting areas for improvement, they can focus the efforts of both worker and supervisor to bring about improvement. They can increase motivation to perform well and provide the opportunity for improving communication and relationships. They can identify workers with unused potential and workers who ought to be terminated. They can give feedback on supervisory performance and uncover problems that are getting in the way of the work.

10. The performance review process includes these four steps: preparing for evaluation, making the evaluation, sharing it with the worker, and providing follow-up.

11. An evaluation form typically lists the performance dimensions or categories on which each worker is to be rated. The performance dimensions should be related to the job being evaluated and defined clearly in objective and observable terms, as in a performance standard.

12. A rating scale is used for each performance dimension, such as outstanding to unsatisfactory. The more precise the descriptions for each rating, the more objective the ratings will be.

13. No evaluation form solves all the problems of fairness and objectivity. Probably those that come closest are designed exclusively for hourly workers, for specific jobs, and for evaluating performance rather than promotability.

14. Some pitfalls when rating employee performance include the halo effect, letting your feelings about a person bias your judgment, comparing one person with another, letting your feelings about the evaluation process affect rating, procrastination, giving ratings for the effect they'll have, and being too lax or too much of a perfectionist.

15. Evaluate the performance, not the employee.

16. Employee self-appraisals are especially justified when an employee works largely without supervision.

17. Plan a quiet location for appraisal interviews, review your written evaluation shortly beforehand, and plan how you will communicate it to the employee for best effect.

18. When conducting the appraisal interview, start with a bit of small talk. Make sure that the employee understands the evaluation process, ask the employee to rate his or her own performance first, encourage employees to comment on your judgments, get the employee to do most of the talking. Work with them on setting improvement objectives, summarize the interview, and end on a positive note.

19. Common mistakes in appraisal interviews include taking an authoritarian or tell-and-sell approach, criticizing, dwelling on past mistakes, failing to listen, and losing control of the interview.
20. Follow-up after performance appraisals is crucial. If you let the process drop until the next appraisal date, you will let all its potential benefits slip through your fingers.
21. Equal employment opportunity laws apply to performance evaluation, so the evaluation process needs to be nondiscriminatory.

KEY TERMS

appraisal interview (evaluation interview, appraisal review)
employee self-appraisal
evaluation form
levels of performance: optimistic level, realistic level, minimum level
merit raise
performance dimensions or categories
performance evaluation (performance appraisal, performance review)
performance standards
position
rating scale
strategy
tasks
training
units of work

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer each question in complete sentences. Read each question carefully and make sure that you answer all parts of the question. Organize your answer using more than one paragraph when appropriate.

1. Briefly describe how you would set up a performance standard system in a restaurateur hotel. How would you implement it? What would you do to make sure that it was successful?
2. Think of a unit of work performed by a hospitality worker, such as taking reservations or setting up a salad bar, and write a possible performance standard for that unit. Did your performance standard meet the five standards mentioned in the book?
3. Describe the major points in each of the four steps in a performance review: preparing for evaluation, making the evaluation, sharing it with the employee, and providing follow-up.
4. Which equal employment opportunity laws affect the process of performance evaluation?
5. What can you do to ensure legal evaluations?

ACTIVITIES AND APPLICATIONS

1. Discussion Questions

- Describe the goals of a performance standard system as you see them. How must the performance standards be used to attain these goals?
- What elements of scientific management are contained in a performance standard system? Of human relations theory? Of participative management? Explain each answer.
- What managerial style would go best with a performance standard system? Why do you think so?
- In your opinion, what are the chief values in using a performance standard system? What are the chief drawbacks? Do you think it is worthwhile or even possible to develop such a system in an industry with such high turnover?
- What is the relationship between ongoing day-by-day evaluations and periodic performance reviews? Is either one valid without the other? Defend your answer.
- Explain the following statement: "Performance appraisals are about as beloved as IRS audits." As a supervisor, what can you do to reduce employee fear and anxiety about performance appraisals?
- Do you think periodic performance reviews are worth the time and trouble they take? Why or why not?
- What type of evaluation form do you think is most suitable for hourly employees in hospitality operations? Consider performance dimensions, performance ratings, length, and ease of completion. Explain your choice.
- In your opinion, which part of the appraisal review is most important: the written evaluation, the interview, or the follow-up? Explain.
- Explain the following statement: "A poorly handled appraisal interview can undermine the entire evaluation process." Give examples of poor handling and their effects.
- When you allow employees to do a self-appraisal, do you think they can rate their own performance accurately? What are the advantages and disadvantages of having an employee do a self-appraisal?

2.1. Group Activity: Critique of Job Descriptions

Using a variety of job descriptions from student workplaces, or other hospitality operations, critique them using this chapter as a guide. What works well with each job description? What could be improved, and how would you improve it? In your personal experience, do hospitality operations really rely upon job descriptions to recruit, hire, train, and evaluate?

2.2. Role-Play: The Appraisal Interview

In a group of four, complete one of the performance evaluation forms in this chapter for a fictitious person. While two students role-play the supervisor and employee in an appraisal interview, the other two students can be observers. When the role-play is done, the observers can take a turn doing the appraisal interview.

3.1. Writing Performance Standards

The following standards represent first attempts by a housekeeping supervisor to write some of the standards for the job of room cleaner in a motel. They are for on-the-job performance. You are to evaluate them according to the criteria listed here and correct any that do not

meet the criteria. Then discuss each one as it was and as you have rewritten it. (This is not intended to be a complete list for the job.)

Drafts of Standards

1. Before starting work, the cleaner will load the cleaning cart correctly according to the Cleaning Cart Diagram and Supply Sheet.
2. The cleaner will make all beds using the procedures shown on the Bed Making Procedures Sheet.
3. The cleaner will scrub the tub, shower, basin, floor, and toilet according to the Bathroom Cleaning Procedures Sheet, using the cleaning supplies and utensils specified on that sheet. The result must score 90 percent or higher on the Cleanliness Checklist for each room cleaned.
4. The cleaner will vacuum carpeting according to the instructions on the Vacuum Cleaning Procedures Sheet.
5. The cleaner will operate all cleaning equipment correctly and safely.
6. The cleaner must be able to clean 15 rooms per day in an average time of 25 minutes per room.

Criteria for Evaluation

- Specific, clear, and complete: states what, how, and how well
- Measurable or observable standard of performance
- Attainable, possible
- Correct verb type for on-the-job performance

3.2. Case Study: Labor Turnover

Labor turnover for the past 12 months at Maria's restaurant was 220 percent. For every person who came to work at the restaurant, two others left. Maria had no idea of the exact cost of this turnover, but she knew that some things had to change. The manager she had hired, Joe, had excellent references, but he had not worked out as she had hoped. Many of the older employees complained that Joe showed favoritism in scheduling, giving the better-tipping shifts to people he liked most. Saturday night was an absolute disaster—the restaurant was full, with a wait list; food was slow in coming out of the kitchen; and the service seemed to be disorganized. Servers seemed to be wandering about the restaurant without any direction or station being allocated to them. New staff was expected to learn what to do from existing servers and busers. It seemed as if no one had really determined what needed to be done, when it needed doing, and who should do it. The resulting chaos meant that guests were constantly complaining, and guest counts were down over the same period last year. Maria has asked you, as a consultant, to make specific recommendations advising her what needs to be done to make the restaurant successful.

Case Study Questions

What are your top 10 recommendations?

3.3. Case Study: The First Appraisal Interview

Sandy is sitting outside her boss's office awaiting her first appraisal interview. She is nervous, but confident. She has improved tremendously since she dropped that whole tray of dinners when she first came to work three months ago. Her boss has stopped coming around

and telling her not to do this and that, so she thinks that she's doing all right (although, of course, you never know). She gets along very well with the guests, and in fact, sometimes people ask to be seated at her tables. Her tips are higher than almost anyone else's, and that must mean something.

The door opens and the boss motions her to come in and sit down. "Good morning, Sally," he says. "We're a little bit rushed for time, so I'll just go through this evaluation form with you—er—Sandy. Read it over, won't you? Then we'll talk."

Sandy glances through the ratings: Average, Average, Average, Needs improvement. Well, she has to admit she still has trouble opening wine bottles and sometimes breaks the cork. Average, Average, Average.

She sighs, hands the form back to her boss, sits back in her chair, folds her hands tightly, and looks down at them.

"Well, what do you think, Sandy? Do you agree? We need to make a plan for your improvement on wine service. I know you sometimes ask Charlie to open your bottles and that's not really what good customer service is all about. Why don't you get Charlie to give you some tips on what you're doing wrong? Then maybe next time you'll get a better rating. Now, do you have any comments or questions?"

"What's average?" Sandy asks.

"Well, I guess it means no better and no worse than anyone else. Actually, it means you're doing okay, you're just not as good as people like Ruth and Charlie. But you certainly don't need to worry about losing your job or anything like that—you're all set here! Anything else?"

"Well," Sandy begins, gathering up her courage, "I thought I was really above average in customer service—people ask for me and they tip me a lot, so I must be—"

"But don't forget the time you dropped the dishes, Sandy! I do think you're doing very well indeed now, but we're talking about the whole evaluation period! Now, if you'll just sign this . . ."

Case Study Questions
1. What do you think of the boss's ratings and his defense of them?
2. How do you think Sandy feels? Will she be motivated to improve? Is it enough to know you are not going to lose your job?
3. List the mistakes the boss makes in his interview. How could he have handled things better?
4. What do you think of the boss's improvement plan? How will Charlie feel about it?
5. If the boss's supervisor could have heard this interview, what would have been the supervisor's opinion of it? What responsibility does the boss's boss have for the way that interviews are handled? What means could be set up for evaluating supervisors on their interviews?

✧ WEB ACTIVITY

- Go to the following Web site: www.jan.wvu.edu/media/JobDescriptions.html
- Answer the following questions:
   1. What are several reasons why a function could be considered essential?
   2. Name some of the types of evidence that are considered in determining whether a function is essential.

3. According to Fullmer and Loy, what are the steps in completing a job description?
4. Why do many job seekers consider job descriptions a valuable screening tool?
5. What does it mean for the potential employee if an employer is detailing qualifications? What should the employer keep in mind?

RELATED WEB SITE

National Skill Standards Board   www.nssb.org

ENDNOTES

1. Alan Mohrman, Jr., and Susan Albers-Morrison, "Performance Management Is Running the Business," *Compensation and Benefits Review,* July–August 1995, p. 69.

2. Ibid.

3. From an address to the National Restaurant Association by Ken Blanchard, May 14, 2001.

4. Adapted from William S. Swan, *How to Do a Superior Performance Appraisal,* New York: Wiley, 1991.