



Performance Review and Development Process: A Guide for Non-Aligned Staff

Introduction

In preparation for the NJIT Non-Aligned Staff Performance Review Process we want to remind managers that good, effective performance management is a critical component in the management of our people, and a key element in the morale and retention of our best people.

As such, the Non-Aligned Staff Performance Review Process is designed to help managers maximize the performance of their staff, and it helps us to:

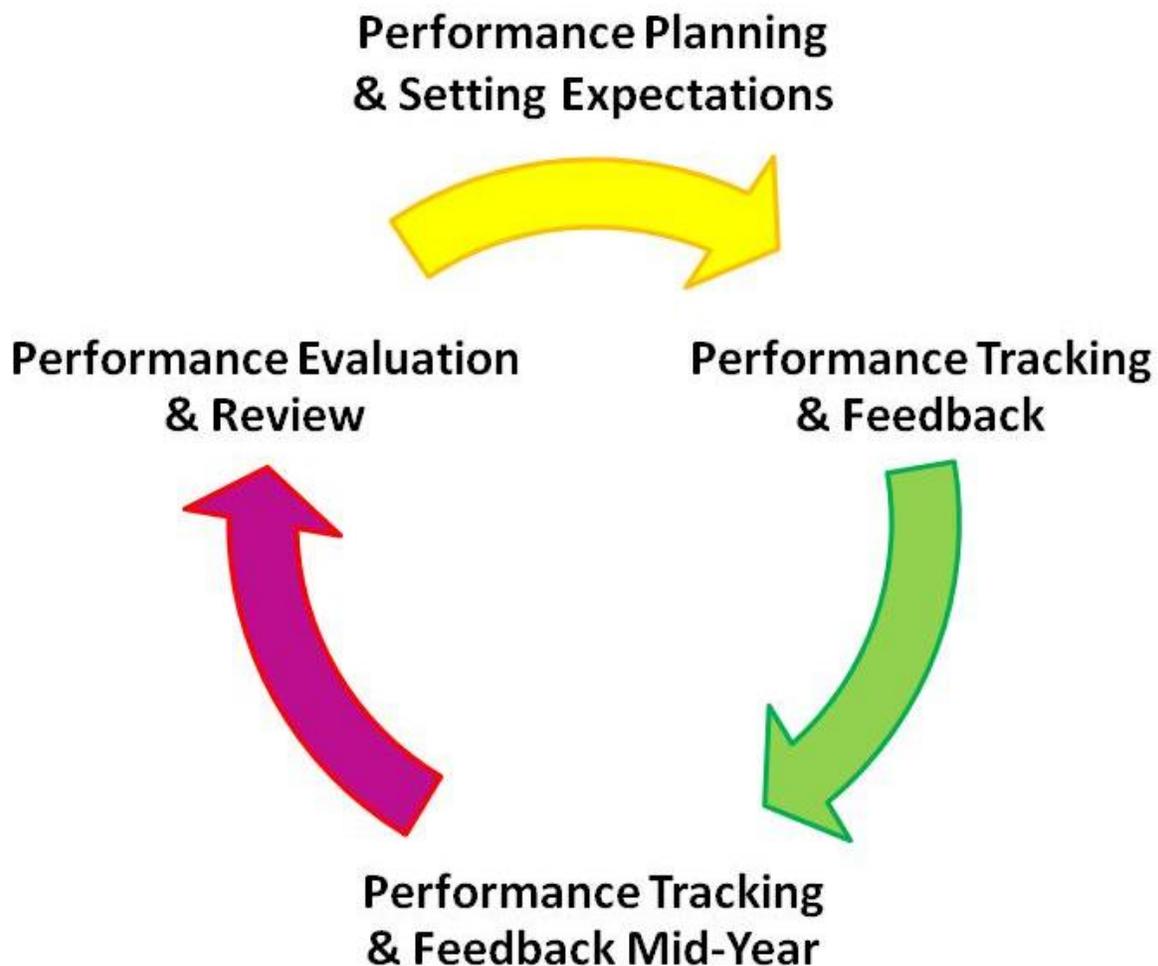
- focus on what is really important by aligning and clarifying department goals for a greater understanding of how our staff contributes to NJIT's success
- establish and gain mutual understanding between the employee and his/her manager of performance expectations, and establish accountability and measures for behavior and results
- drive performance improvement and excellence through ongoing performance discussions and feedback
- recognize and reward contributions by linking rewards to performance.

The keys to success are in:

- establishing clear links between individual performance and the strategy and goals of the University, and
- improved communications and feedback between manager and staff, including open and honest performance related discussions.

The Non-Aligned Staff Performance Review Process cycle has three key elements:

1. performance planning and setting expectations
2. performance tracking and feedback
3. performance review



We all contribute to the success of NJIT University. While our contributions vary in degree and type, it all begins with a clear understanding of our roles and the areas where we can make a difference in the University.

Establishing specific and clear performance expectations allows us to focus on those activities that can be accomplished within a given fiscal year. Attaining excellent overall results for NJIT requires each staff member to contribute to its success, and this requires the achievement of excellent results by each employee. Defining, planning, communicating, and reviewing these results are keys to this goal.

Performance Planning and Setting Expectations

Performance planning begins when the manager and employee define their thoughts and ideas as to areas of contribution and performance expectations for the coming year. The organization’s strategic plan should be discussed, as well as the priorities of the department, in order to obtain a sense of direction and priorities.



Areas for contribution and more specific performance expectations are developed in collaboration between the employee and his/her manager. While the process is intended to be collaborative, there may be some expectations that are givens and are non-negotiable. The performance expectations, the what (goals) and how (behavior), need to be written, and clear to both parties.

These performance expectations need to be viewed as a working document. As such, they should be reviewed as the demands and priorities change during the course of the year.

When clear expectations for performance are established and agreed to, the Non-Aligned Staff Performance Review Process is readily and successfully accomplished.

The performance expectations describe the key results the employee is expected to accomplish during the year. Most employees will have, typically, between five to seven performance expectations, with several of these focusing on the highest priority activities with the greatest potential for contribution to the department's and NJIT's success.

We encourage all performance expectations be specific and measurable, and should be:

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Achievable**
- **Realistic**
- **Time-bound**

Well written performance expectations describe key results and are an important tool in managing performance. By stating what will be done, how and when it will be achieved, and with what outcomes, a clear picture of success emerges.

The "How" (NJIT Competencies)

It has become increasingly important to consider and evaluate how work is accomplished. It is very possible that behavior can significantly enhance or diminish the overall value of an employee's contribution. By gaining clarity and understanding of how employees go about achieving goals, expectations for total success can be established.

A dictionary of key [NJIT competencies](#) has been developed to provide guidance in this area.

An employee may be able to successfully meet all their performance expectations and yet have a negative impact on the organization and/or on the performance of other employees. To minimize this negative type of behavior and foster teamwork and collaboration, these expectations should be clearly identified, discussed, and agreed to between the employee and manager. It is not useful to merely identify the "how", such as "communications". The "how" needs to be specific, actionable and tailored to the employee.

In summary, performance expectations should:

- contribute to results
- support division and department goals
- relate to the employee's job
- yield measurable or observable results
- have specific timetables
- be challenging, and
- provide a clear basis for reviewing performance.

Performance Tracking and Feedback

Managers need to provide regular performance feedback and coaching to their employees in order to maximize each person's performance. The manager and employee are jointly responsible for monitoring progress against expectations; both should know when performance is not on track and when assistance may be needed.

Performance tracking requires ongoing communication about performance. This can take two forms:

- informal progress checks, at regular intervals (e.g., bi-weekly one-on-ones), permitting feedback and coaching where appropriate, and
- more formal interim performance reviews, like a mid-year review.

The informal quarterly reviews and a more formalized mid-year review are recommended to help ensure that performance is progressing as planned, and to address any problems that may arise so that they may be resolved as quickly as possible. A specific set of measures, e.g., deliverable due dates, provides an opportunity to review progress and revise goals given changes in priorities. Addressing specific measures is also a logical way to open any discussion of performance.

Interim reviews or discussions should be documented, especially when a performance issue is identified and discussed.

Remember, good planning requires frequent checks against reality.

Agenda for One-on-One or Interim Performance Review Meeting

1. Progress to date against the goals
2. Obstacles to progress, both current and future
3. Other factors affecting the accomplishment of expectations
4. Suggestions for moving forward

Coaching is a critical aspect of day-to-day performance tracking and feedback. For managers, coaching means offering advice, asking questions, making suggestions, and modeling appropriate behavior. The key to effective coaching is the willingness to stand aside and let the employee solve the problem. It requires patience and tolerance. When coaching, the following tips are useful:

- **Make the coaching relevant and timely:** a coaching session should relate to current or upcoming work.
- **Keep coaching sessions brief:** short, frequent sessions are more effective than lengthy, infrequent ones.
- **Focus the coaching:** sessions should focus on one or two points, emphasizing action over theory.
- **Coach with models and examples:** show or model how the activity is to be done.
- **Coach for development:** the goal is to have the employee learn and grow.

Performance Review

This step, the year-end review, compares results against the performance expectations and provides the framework for the employee and manager to review and discuss accomplishments and contributions over the past year. The performance review will be ineffective if it is seen only as a 'piece of paper'. To have maximum impact the review must be clearly communicated and understood, and be seen as fair and accurate. **This is one of the most important functions of a manager's job and requires giving employees objective feedback on their performance and how they contributed to NJIT's success.**

Overview of Manager's Role

In the Review Phase, the manager:

- Documents performance results
- Reviews the employee's contribution
- Provides feedback on the employee's performance

Managers are responsible for completing a written performance review for each of their direct reports.

It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that the

- Performance expectations
- Accomplishments
- Review

are documented on the Non-Aligned Staff Performance Review Process form and accurately reflect the supervisor's assessment of the employee's performance and results.

The review includes the employee's perspective, as well as the manager's assessment of the employee's performance. ***There should be no surprises if the manager and employee have done an effective job of monitoring and discussing performance throughout the year.***

The "Accomplishments" section should be used to provide information to the employee regarding his/her work results. Managers should include specific examples of performance whenever possible.

How to Write Accomplishments:

Accomplishments should:

- reflect outcomes (not activities)
- be listed for each performance expectation
- include quantitative data wherever possible
- include statements of impact, i.e. value/impact to the organization
- note significant obstacles that were overcome.

Competencies results should:

- describe how well or to what extent specific competency behaviors were exhibited in the accomplishment of the performance expectations.

Example:

<i>Performance Expectation</i>	<i>Accomplishment</i>
By year end, reduce costs by 5% over prior year levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Costs were reduced 7% by focusing on fiscally responsible decisions resulting in limiting travel and meeting related expenses.

<i>Competency</i>	<i>Results</i>
Team Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assigned role as interim department director during the last quarter of the year, while director was on leave.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Received positive feedback from department staff team members, who responded well and met all their fourth quarter goals. |
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The “Rating” section is completed by the manager based on the employee’s contribution relative to his/her expectations.

Ratings should be consistent with the performance information described in the accomplishments section.

Individual Development Planning (IDP)

As part of the Non-Aligned Staff Performance Review Process, an assessment of the employee’s strengths or what they do well, as well as areas that need to be strengthened or developed, is also completed by the individual and their manager. The focus here is on the behavior, competencies, and/or knowledge required for success.

Discussion of performance strengths should:

- describe positive attributes the employee brings to the job
- explain what is most appreciated about the employee’s performance and/or contributions to NJIT
- include specific examples.

Discussion of development areas should:

- focus on what can be done to increase effectiveness
- highlight areas for the employee’s professional growth and development.

There are a myriad of strategies one can apply to complete an IDP. Here are just a few suggestions:

- On the job
- Coaching
- Special assignments
- Presentations to group
- Cross-training in department
- Temporary assignment in another department
- Observation of “role model”
- Courses, seminars, workshops
- Professional group membership
- Independent study/reading

Overall Performance Rating

The year-end performance review includes an opportunity for managers to provide an overall performance rating describing to what extent the employee's performance expectations, in total, were achieved.

The performance ratings are:

- Performance which exceeds job requirements (ER)
- Performance which meets job requirements (MR)
- Performance which does not meet overall job requirements (DR)

Performance Rating Definitions

- **(EE) Exceeded Expectations:** Employee exceeded all or most performance expectations and his/her goals. Employee successfully incorporated all core or management competencies in his/her job performance, often performing significantly beyond expectations. Employee contributed significantly to the broader goals of their department/function and/or NJIT.
- **(ME) Met Expectations:** Employee consistently and fully met performance expectations and achieved his/her goals. Employee successfully incorporated all core or management competencies into his/her job performance. Employee contributed to the broader goals of their department/function and/or NJIT University.
- **(DE) Did Not Meet Expectations:** Employee did not achieve any or most of his/her performance goals, performance expectations, and/or did not incorporate core or management competencies into his/her job performance

To ensure performance reviews reflect a realistic assessment of the employee's performance and contribution, managers need to:

- rate results, not the person
- rate the current performance year only
- evaluate performance, not potential
- rate the employee's work as a whole
- beware of managerial guilt

- rate performance, not salary level or compensation
- make thoughtful decisions

The advantages to this approach are:

- helps the employee understand the facts and reasoning underlying the manager's review and allows the employee to indicate differences in opinion
- establishes a basis for equitable decisions about rewards linked to performance and contribution
- provides a thorough documentation for important resourcing-related decisions and actions
- permits realistic planning for the employee's growth and development.

Completing the Process

Managers are required to meet, one-on-one, with each employee to review the end-of-year performance review. During this meeting, it is expected that the discussion will focus on what the employee did well, what aspects of performance can be improved, and what the employee can do to increase his/her effectiveness during the coming performance year.

The purpose of this discussion is not to debate the performance ratings, but to focus on actual performance and what can be done to increase effectiveness on the job.

At this all important performance feedback meeting, you, as the manager:

- Creates an environment of open dialogue
- Reviews each goal and competency and the Review of each, describing any areas where you did not agree with the employee's assessment
- Highlights the skills, knowledge, and behavior that impacted performance
- Communicates the overall rating
- Creates a non-threatening environment
- Describe the meeting's purpose and agenda
- Balances positive and negatives
- Focuses on results
- Preserves the employee's self-esteem
- Shows interest and attention
- Identifies next steps
- Ensures commitment
- Summarizes key points of the session

Are you:

- Both prepared for the session
- Meeting in a private area, with no interruptions
- Discussing both pros and cons of the performance
- Discussing improvement
- Asking open-ended questions
- Probing and follow-up questions
- Confronting feelings
- Actively listening and reflecting
- Giving specific and descriptive feedback
- Joint problem solving

At the conclusion of the performance feedback discussion, managers return the Non-Aligned Staff Performance Review Process to the employee for signature and indication of “agree/do not agree”. This signature is an acknowledgement that the review was conducted. It does not infer or mean that the employee is in agreement with the contents of the review.

All completed forms are returned to Human Resources for retention and retrieval as necessary.

For questions on the process, please contact Human Resources at extension 3140.