

## **Performance Reviews**

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **1. Are annual performance reviews required for all employees?**

Yes. It is important all regular staff receive annual performance reviews. Questions about faculty, student, term and probationary employee reviews should be directed to campus and institute Human Resources offices.

Performance reviews provide an opportunity to receive written feedback, assess training and development needs, clarify expectations, discuss progress toward previously determined goals and set new goals for the next review period.

The review process can help improve efficiency and effectiveness and contribute to personal growth and job satisfaction.

#### **2. How are employee ratings on performance reviews used by supervisors and Human Resources officers?**

Ratings on performance reviews are indicators of overall performance and may, when applicable, be used to determine merit awards.

#### **3. What aspects of performance are covered by the review?**

The key elements of the performance review include:

- Accomplishments
- Service and relationships
- Accountability and dependability
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Decision making and problem solving

Employees also are evaluated on how well previously set goals were met, and new goals should be discussed and recorded for the upcoming period.

Forms used for the performance review are the same for all staff across the University and are available at:

[http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/employeerelations/performance\\_review/index.html](http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/employeerelations/performance_review/index.html).

#### **4. What is the process for conducting a performance review?**

While all supervisors do not conduct reviews the same, Human Resources suggests the following process:

- Supervisors should schedule performance review meetings with employees and ask them to complete a self-evaluative summary form in advance. Forms are available at the above-referenced website.

- Supervisors also should complete summary forms, minus the goals and objectives section, for employees being reviewed.
- Supervisors then should share the completed summary forms with their senior managers for review. Following this review, supervisors should conduct individual review meetings with employees. In this meeting, supervisors and employees should discuss the summary form and complete the goals and objectives section together.
- Employees should receive a copy of the signed forms. The forms should be maintained in the departmental file and also sent to Human Resources.

**5. When should reviews be conducted?**

Annual performance reviews should be conducted every spring, and forms should be submitted to Human Resources by March 31.

While supervisors are required to conduct written reviews once every 12 months, supervisors are encouraged to monitor performance, provide feedback, reward and recognize excellent performance, discuss goals and communicate about issues throughout the year. Employees also are encouraged to initiate conversations with supervisors as often as needed.

**6. If an employee transfers to a new University department in between reviews, are both supervisors required to conduct a review?**

The person who supervised the employee for the greatest period during the year should complete a review. If this is not possible, the new supervisor can complete the review, focusing on the employee's work to date.

**7. If a supervisor is new to a department or supervisory role in the department and has little experience working with existing staff members, how should the review process be handled?**

The new supervisor should work with his/her senior staff in determining a review process for these individuals.

**8. What is the process for submitting reviews to Human Resources?**

The submission process differs by campus and institute. Therefore, local Human Resources offices should be consulted.

**9. Is training available for supervisors?**

Yes. All new supervisors and supervisors new to UT should attend training on how to properly conduct a performance review. Training is provided at each campus and institute and information about the sessions will be shared by Human Resources officers.

An online training tool is being prepared and will be accessible from:  
[http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/employeerelations/performance\\_review/index.html](http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/employeerelations/performance_review/index.html).

Some basic tips for preparation include:

1. Tracking employee performance throughout the review period by keeping notes on accomplishments, issues and training
2. Updating job descriptions
3. Looking at attendance records

**10. What if an employee disagrees with or does not understand ratings given by his/her supervisor?**

The employee should first speak with his/her supervisor for clarification. If an understanding is not reached, the employee may submit a written rebuttal to Human Resources for inclusion in his/her personnel file. Some campuses also require supervisors be notified of the rebuttal.

**11. Who should employees call with questions about the performance review process?**

Campus and institute Human Resources officers are available to answer questions about the process. Contact information is available at:  
[http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/employeerelations/performance\\_review/index.html](http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/employeerelations/performance_review/index.html).

**12. How should employees prepare to participate in a review?**

Some basic tips for preparation include:

1. Keeping notes on accomplishments, feedback, training and issues throughout the review period
2. Completing a self-evaluative summary form to reflect on the prior year's work
3. Preparing discussion points for the review