

Taming the Evaluation Monster




PUBLIC SAFETY
TRAINING CONSULTANTS



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Goals for This Session



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- To give you ideas on how to use annual performance appraisals to benefit the employee *and* the agency.
- To show how annual evaluations can be used as motivators and not just discipline.
- To foster a more positive and productive workplace with clearly defined evaluation standards.


Performance Evaluations




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- Specific and timely
- Reasonable and consistent standards
- Measurable performance behaviors
- Applicable to job description(s)

Make sure employees know what the standards are!



"The Nexus"



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- What connection have you built between:
 - The initial job flyer (job description)
 - Your agency "Core Values"
 - Initial Training
 - In-Service Training
 - Daily Performance
 - Quality Assurance
 - Employee Evaluations

Mission Statements Are they Effective?



We, the members of the PSTC Police Department Communications Center are dedicated to the safety of our community, through team work and problem solving partnerships, providing excellent service, with dignity and respect.



Mission Statements Are they Effective?



"To equally and fairly, protect and serve all those people within its jurisdiction without regard to race, color, religion, ethnicity, gender, age or sexual orientation."



Purpose of evaluations



- Improve morale and acknowledge the work of those employees who meet your agency expectations
- Provide warning (and documentation) to those employees who are not meeting expectations
- They are critical to the organization, IF they are completed correctly

Establishing Evaluation Policy



- Evaluations must be "objective"
- Standards are set to establish a consistent approach between multiple supervisors
- Documentation is kept throughout the evaluation period
 - Keeping a "file" or "log" of performance
 - Like most employment files, this should be available to staff members to review.

Establishing Standards



The process should not be a secret!

Review job description or performance areas and identify those areas that are CRITICAL to our success.

Ask for input from those who work the line

Create "below", "meets" and "exceeds" expectations so everyone knows what they are being evaluated against.

CTO – DOR style?

What is "good" attendance?



- 1-2 days of sick leave?
- 5 sick days (always on Friday)
- Use of all sick leave but not one hour more.

- Does this change if you are a Mom?
- How about if you are a single Mom?
- How about if you have a severely ill child?

- MOU – Agency Policy – Agency Guidelines
- NOT "your opinion"

Call-taking (non-emergency)



- Directs conversation efficiently, using acceptable customer service
- Listens carefully to callers and makes decisions based on their needs.
- Is willing to assist less experienced staff members with call taking skills
- How about: Carl received 2 commendations this evaluation period and both myself and Supervisor Kern agree that Carl's call taking skills reach above our agency standards. He is a model call taker at this time and I will recommend him to be part of our classroom training team due to his expertise.
- NOT: I think Sheri does a very good job when call taking.

Terms to Use?



- Routinely
- Consistently
- Requires direction
- Initiative
- Proactive
- Usually

Let's be honest.....



- Exaggerating performance will lessen the effectiveness of evaluation process.
- Some evaluations provide little feedback to the organization on accurate employee performance
- Lack of evaluations or poorly written evaluations can expose your agency to liability. PLUS, they cause loss of credibility for the writer and the agency!

S.A.F.



Specific
Articulate

Facts

- Be aware of: "halo effect" (good or bad)
 "central tendency effect" (middle of pack)
 "similar to me effect" (high standard?)
 "stereotype effect" (that's what they have always been)

It's called a yearly evaluation for a reason.....



Create a document/spreadsheet that reflects the due date of each employee's evaluation

Name of employee	Title	Last Eval	Next Eval	Additional
Smith, Yvette	PSD II	1/4/2009	1/4/2010	Eligible for step "B"
DiCarlo, Steven	PSD I	7/4/2008	1/9/2009	Release from probation
Johnson, Derek	PSD II	12/30/2008	6/5/2009	Adj for long term disability

Talk to your employees...



- Establish a regular meeting with each employee to discuss their performance
- Have the employee complete a "feedback" form to attach to their evaluation

Feedback questions that start conversations.....



- What do you think is expected of you?
- What areas do you need to improve?
- What action plan can you suggest?
- What does your supervisor do...that you find helpful?
- What type of help would you like to see from your supervisor?
- What objectives can you suggest for the upcoming evaluation period?

Create a Development plan



- Mentoring and training
- Provide something for your employees to strive towards
- Give them the tools and resources necessary to achieve their goals
- Make it meaningful – MOTIVATE

Development plans...



Tracy continues to excel as our most senior dispatcher. Her 8-yr's of experience and hard work allows her to handle a variety of situations including those high-risk, low-frequency events that test her multi-tasking, delegating and voice inflection skills...although she has no current aspirations to achieve a supervisory position, her tenure places her in an "informal" leadership position...she and I will continue to look for appropriate leadership classes that will develop her confidence when dealing with supervisors outside the dispatch center....Tracy, we continue to appreciate your performance and dedication to the Niles Police department....

Resource List



- Perfect Phrases for Performance Reviews : Hundreds of Ready-to-Use Phrases That Describe Your Employees' Performance
Douglas Max, Robert Bacal
- Performance Appraisal Phrase Book: Effective Words, Phrases, and Techniques for Successful Evaluations Corey Sandler, Janice Keefe
- #1 Guide to Performance Appraisals: Doing It Right -James E. Neal

Resource List



- Performance Reviews (Essential Managers Series) Ken Langdon, Martin Shervington, Christina Osborne, Christine Osborne
- Powerful Performance Appraisals: How to Set Expectations and Work Together to Improve Performance Karen McKirchy
- Effective Phrases for Performance Appraisals: A Guide to Successful Evaluations, James A. Neal

Objectives:



- Provide "key elements" help write evaluations that:
 - Provide positive feedback to the trainee
 - Are clear, concise and fact-based
 - Are legally defensible
 - Don't make trainers pull their hair out!!

Key Elements



- Set the stage/scene
- Be objective
- Consider verbatim quotes
- Critique performance, not behavior
- Use lists and/or quantify, if appropriate or possible
- Be specific
- Report facts, avoid conclusions
- Don't predict
- Check spelling and grammar
- End with a goal!

Setting the Stage/Scene



- Sometimes it is necessary to provide background information
 - Think about activity level, hours of the day, shift worked, unusual circumstances
- Example:
 - "Mary answered numerous incoming 9-1-1 calls" OR
 - "Due to a power outage and storm, Mary answered numerous incoming 9-1-1 calls"
 - *2nd example sets the stage as being an unusual circumstance; busier activity levels*

Be Objective



- Do not impart personal feelings or biases
 - Good or bad
- Avoid words/phrases such as:
 - “I feel or felt”
 - “(s)he feels or felt”
- State what happened (the facts)
- Example: “Mary felt that I took over her radio channel too quickly”
 - *“Mary was 6 transmissions behind and two officers were not on the correct activity when I took over the radio channel to catch us back up.”*

Verbatim Quotes



- Particularly helpful when documenting extremely good or poor performance (especially customer service skills)
- Example:
 - Mary demonstrated a callous attitude when she remarked to the caller “we’ll get there, when we get there”.

Critique Performance, Not Behavior



- Behavioral problems can be tied to performance, but may be harder to define
- An employee with a “bad attitude” may be documented in other categories, like:
 - Relationships with others
 - Acceptance of criticism

Use Lists or Quantify



- Goes hand-in-hand with “be specific”
- Paints a clearer picture for the employee, the supervisor, training coordinator
- Examples:
 - “Mary entered a stolen vehicle, 2 stolen guns and a missing person into NCIC in only 45 minutes with no assistance” OR
 - “Mary made several entries into NCIC with no assistance”
 - *Which one is a clear picture of the work done?*

Where to Pull Quantities?



- Computerized telephones? Phone statistics can be pulled to show how many phone calls were answered.
- CAD system? Count the amount of incidents created.
- Radio system? Radio channel talk time statistics can be pulled to show actual minutes of radio activity.
- Handwritten notes by trainers. How do you keep track of the work done?

Trainer's - Supervisor Log



- Keep either a hand-written or typed log of activity completed during a shift
- Key information:
 - Responsibility (radio, telephones, paperwork)
 - CAD event numbers
 - Did the trainee do it at an acceptable level? With or without assistance?
 - Sometimes, keep track of how long it took them
 - Example: Status check on an officer, within the acceptable time frame?

Report Facts, Avoid Conclusions



- Also ties into "Don't Predict"
- Document what happened, "answer the key questions", just like call-taking, but we don't give our conclusions
- Don't use sentences like:
 - "Mary is doing well and should have no problem completing the training program on time"
 - *What if Mary hits a stumbling block – didn't you just write that she will be a successful employee?*
 - Do you see a legal ramification from such a statement if Mary does NOT make it through training?

Check Grammar/Spelling



- All evaluations, training records, including Daily Observation Reports, End of Phase Reports, Supervisor's Reports are discoverable during a legal proceeding
- These reports should be a positive reflection of your Department
- Error free and no typographical errors
- Grammatical and spelling mistakes can change the meaning and/or context of the sentence

Additional Helpful Tips



- Be positive
- Always praise good performance
- Use pronouns when praising, first name when documenting room for improvement
 - “You did a great job calming the caller down”
 - “Mary needs to remember to use repetitive persistence to calm hysterical callers”
- Attach examples of work (if possible), CAD calls, NCIC paperwork, etc.

More info on PSTC



- PSTC classes can be hosted anywhere
- We have an amazing staff of quality Instructors
- Our classes have been approved by NAEMD for in-service credits!
- Check our web site at www.pstc911.com or call us at 800-348-8911 for free hosting info and our class schedule!