

TOWN OF NEEDHAM
PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION #410
NON-MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Town's non-management performance evaluation program, including the use of the Performance Evaluation Form. The performance evaluation program has been developed to accomplish several goals: to continuously improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Town services; to provide an opportunity for two-way communication and planning between employees and supervisors; to assist employees in increasing the effectiveness of their job performance; to provide a mechanism for the establishment of individual and departmental goals; to serve as the basis of acknowledging employee's accomplishments and recognizing employee's potential need for guidance, training, and/or support; and to provide documentation of employee performance to serve as the basis for salary adjustments and personnel actions.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all administrative, clerical and professional staff, both represented and non-represented, and excludes public safety employees, DPW labor employees, and employees under the control and supervision of the School Committee.

III. DEFINITIONS

Refer to the Glossary of Terms in the Personnel Policy Manual for commonly used words and phrases.

IV. POLICY

It is policy of the Town of Needham that all full-time and permanent part-time employees will be evaluated on an annual basis. Additionally, employees who are nearing the end of the probationary period will be evaluated prior to the determination as to whether the employee should be retained on a permanent basis.

V. GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. Coordination

The performance review system will be coordinated and monitored by the Personnel Department. Coordination will include the following tasks:

1. Informing department heads about which employee reviews should be completed;
2. Providing supervisors with the performance review forms needed to complete the reviews;
3. Monitoring the completion of reviews;
4. Placing the completed reviews in employees' official personnel files;
5. Keeping employee reviews in a secure file to protect confidentiality; and
6. Regulating access to employee review files.

B. Forms

All non-management administrative, clerical and professional employees will be evaluated using the Performance Evaluation Form.

C. Timing

All employees will be evaluated prior to the conclusion of the probationary period, and annually thereafter on their anniversary/step date.

D. Meetings

All supervisors are expected to hold a private meeting with each of their employees to complete both the mid-year and annual reviews.

E. Compensation

Department heads must complete a Payroll Authorization Form as well as the

Performance Evaluation Form and forward them to the Personnel Department as soon as the review is completed. The Personnel Department will then process a step raise request, if applicable.

F. Employee Response

If an employee disagrees with his or her review, he or she may offer comments in the space provided on the Performance Evaluation Form. If the disagreement cannot be resolved within the department, the supervisor should refer the employee to the appropriate grievance or appeal procedure in the collective bargaining agreement or by-law.

VI. EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The following steps should be followed for all performance evaluations. Supervisors should complete only the applicable portions of the form for probationary employees, and for first-time evaluations, since no goals will have been set for the previous review period.

A. Step I Evaluation of Previous Review Period

The evaluator should comment on the employee's performance with regard to each of the performance criteria listed on the form. A narrative description of the employee's performance must be included under each category. If the employee's performance in any of the criteria warrants improvement, indicate the level of performance which would be acceptable and the method by which the employee may improve his/her performance.

B. Performance Criteria

1. Job Knowledge

- a. Understanding of Departmental rules, procedures, workflow, policies and operations.
- b. Special skills required for the department, willingness and initiative taken to

acquire additional knowledge and assume new tasks.

- c. General understanding of Town operations; knowing when to answer a question and when and how to refer questions to someone else.
- d. Understanding one's own job responsibilities and how those responsibilities fit into departmental operations; initiative in learning the responsibilities of other department positions, when appropriate.

2. Quality of Work

- a. Organizational skills; ability to pace workflow and schedule time; timeliness of work.
- b. General appearance of finished work products.
- c. Accuracy of work – number of errors or corrections.
- d. Number and nature of complaints or problems received from the public and /or other department staff due to work errors.
- e. Degree of thoroughness applied to tasks; ability to follow work through to completion.
- f. Ability to accept and understand criticism and to take appropriate action to correct and improve performance.

3. Quantity of Work

- a. Quality of output viewed in terms of the general volume of activity in the department; amount of work assigned versus amount produced; amount of work back-logged; volume of output compared to other staff.
- b. "Interruptability quotient" – ability to immediately resume work on one task after being interrupted to perform another task.

4. Dependability

- a. Acceptable attendance level.
- b. Consistently punctual; appropriate use of “breaks.”
- c. Dependable when supervisor is away from the office.
- d. Willingness to take on extra work when required by circumstances.
- e. Performs work in such a fashion that the supervisor can rely on the work as accurate and timely.

5. Interpersonal Skills/Customer Service

- a. Ability to get along with others in the department; ability to avoid or handle minor office conflicts without the intervention of the supervisor.
- b. Consistent attention to and patience with the public; tolerance of diversity willingness to go out of one’s way to assist the public and other employees; projecting a consistently pleasant manner.
- c. Ability to effectively handle complaints and problems both on the phone and in person.
- d. Propensity for resolving conflict rather than creating animosity.
- e. Willingness to cooperate with peers and supervisor; ability to give and receive help; offering assistance to other departments when work flow allows.

6. Judgment

- a. Ability to identify the appropriate circumstances under which to make a decision.
- b. Willingness to make effective decisions and to keep supervisor adequately

informed.

- c. Capacity to identify and evaluate available options and make appropriate decisions.
- d. Ability to learn from decision making.
- e. Ability and willingness to evaluate and change work methods to improve efficiency and operations.

7. Communication

- a. Clarity and appropriateness of oral and written communicated with employees and customers.
- b. Providing the appropriate level of information flow to supervisor and other employees.
- c. Listening skills, the ability to understand questions and obtain additional information needed to answer correctly.

8. Supervision

- a. Management skills – success in planning and organizing work and achieving goals within scheduled time and fiscal limits.
- b. Motivation of Employees – success in gaining cooperation and high level of performance from employees supervised.
- c. Development of Employees – success in training employees in skills required for assigned duties as well as providing for flexibility in back-up.

C. Step 2 **Evaluation of Goals for Previous Review Period**

During Step 2 of the performance evaluation program, the supervisor and the employee review the goals set the previous year. Each employee should have at least three (3) goals per year, which may be modified during the mid-year review, if necessary. If a particular goal was not achieved due to mitigating circumstances, the evaluator should indicate that fact in the space provided.

D. Step 3 **Goal Setting for Next Review Period**

During Step 3, the evaluator and the employee mutually agree on the goals to be set for the coming year. Each goal should be a concise statement of the objectives to be attained within the performance period, and should have a specific target date. Some objectives will be on-going “maintenance” objectives, such as “oversee the payment of all invoices,” and some objectives will be unique to the evaluation period, such as “Convert the Town’s invoice payment system from a manual system to an automated system by February 1.

E. Step 4 **Overall Evaluation for the Review Period**

Because the Town’s evaluation program does not have any numerical or label type of rating system, the narrative submitted in step 4 is the most important aspect of the form in terms of letting the employee know exactly how he or she is performing. In the space provided, or on attached sheets if necessary, the evaluator should prepare a brief narrative detailing his/her overall evaluation of the employee for the previous review period. The evaluator should take into account the eight key performance criteria as well as the completion of the goals set for that period. It is up to the evaluator’s discretion as to how to weight the value of the performance criteria against the achievement of goals (or lack thereof).

F. Step 5 **Optional Personal/Professional Development Plan**

Evaluators should encourage employees to discuss options for personal and professional development. Examples include training opportunities the

employee may be interested in; requests for flexible work hours to accommodate child care or higher education; interest in learning new skills to prepare for promotion, etc.

G. Step 6 **Employee Comments**

Any employee who wishes to comment may have the opportunity to do so before the evaluation is placed in his/her personnel file. Step 6 is not mandatory, it is entirely at the employee's discretion.

H. **Mid Year Review/Self Evaluation**

At the mid-period point during the evaluation year, the evaluator and the employee meet to discuss the employee's progress in terms of performance criteria and goals. Both the employee and the supervisor complete the Mid-Year Review/Self-evaluation Form prior to the meeting and use it as a basis of discussion during the meeting.

For each of the performance criteria, the evaluator should indicate whether the employee's performance is satisfactory or detail the improvements that need to be made. Employees may indicate particular assistance they may need in reaching the satisfactory level.

For each of the goals agreed upon at the previous review meeting, the evaluator should indicate whether the completion of the goal is on or behind schedule, or detail how and why the goal has been modified or eliminated.

EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 27, 1994

ATTACHMENT 1

Guidelines for Goal Setting

What is a goal?

A goal is a statement of intention.

A goal is the result toward which effort is directed.

A goal is a target, a point of completion.

A goal is an agreed upon, measurable level of output.

How should goals be written?

Goals should be:

1. **Specific** The goal should state the exact result that you are seeking.
2. **Measurable** The goal should be observable and quantifiable.
3. **Realistic** The goal should be achievable within the appropriate time-frame.
4. **Written** In order to be measured, the goal must be written in clear, concise language and reviewed on a regular basis.
5. **Time-limited** The goals should include specific dates for completion of each goal, sub-goal and/or follow-up meeting.
6. **Positive** Goals should be stated in positive terms.

7. **Action-oriented** Goals should be defined in action steps.

ATTACHMENT 2

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TIPS

1. Schedule the performance review meeting with the employee several days in advance.
2. Reserve a private room for the meeting where you will be undisturbed.
3. Review the employee's job description and note any changes which need to be discussed.
4. Provide the employee with a copy of the performance review form prior to the meeting.
5. Review any notes from regular supervisory sessions with the employees, and incident file, any special achievements or problem areas, and obtain input from other departments as needed.
6. Honestly critique your own performance as a supervisor during the review period.
7. Specifically define any problem areas and possible solutions prior to presenting them to the employee.
8. Outline the meeting format beginning with positive recognition for areas of strength.
9. Focus on job performance, not personality, as you evaluate each employee. It is your job to be fair and equitable, and to listen to the employee's point of view.

ATTACHMENT 3

The Performance Review Meeting

1. Be on time and devote your complete attention to this meeting.
2. Sharing with the employee the outline of the meeting, noting areas for discussion.
3. Ask the employee if there are any specific questions or problems that he/she would like to discuss and insert these items into the agenda.
4. Review the previous year's Performance Evaluation Form, any mid-year discussions or special achievements, or other unique circumstances with the employee.
5. Compliment the employee on specific job accomplishments and strengths.
6. Present specific areas for improvement and discuss them with the employee. Listen carefully to the employee's point of view and his/her suggestions for how the problem could be resolved. Also ask the employee how you may assist him/her in this process.
7. Mutually agree on goals for improving problem areas and schedule a follow-up meeting to discuss progress within one month (if applicable).
8. Discuss any changes in job responsibilities/career plans with the employee and consider advancement opportunities and training needs of the employee.
9. Attempt to mutually agree upon goals for the coming year.
10. Remember – regular on-going meetings with your employees and coaching sessions with employees experiencing problems will facilitate smoother review meetings with each of your employees since you will both be up-to-date on performance issues.
11. After the performance review meeting, complete the form and provide the employee with an opportunity to respond to the form or insert comments after you have given it to him/her.

12. Have the employee sign the Performance Evaluation Form and return the form to the Personnel Department.

ATTACHMENT 4
Coaching Questionnaire for Supervisors

Coaching is a process used by supervisors to help an employee improve job performance. This questionnaire is designed to help supervisors clarify specific job performance problems and determine a useful strategy prior to beginning the coaching process.

1. Identify the specific behavior that causes the unsatisfactory job performance. Link the behavior to the employee's job description.
2. Is the job performance problem important enough to warrant your time and energy to correct it? If no, then don't waste your time on it. If yes, let your employee know that his/her performance is unsatisfactory and that both of you are going to work towards resolving the problem.
3. Does the employee agree that there is a job-performance problem in this area? If no, refer the employee to his/her job description or workplace procedure and clarify the expected standards of performance. If yes, ask the employee for a commitment to resolve the problem.
4. Prior to the coaching interview, ask yourself the following questions:
 - a. Are there obstacles outside of the employee's control that prevent him/her from performing in the desired manner?
 - b. Does the employee have the ability to perform in the desired manner? Is the employee motivated to do so?
 - c. Has the employee received enough or appropriate training?
 - d. What will be the consequences if the employee does not resolve the problem?
 - e. If the employee resolves the problem and achieves satisfactory work performance,

what will be the reward/positive recognition?

ATTACHMENT 5
Interview Steps for Coaching Meeting with Employee

Step One

In a private meeting with the employee, introduce the problem in a positive manner, acknowledging the employee's strengths on the job. Use the Employee Conference Form for Coaching Meeting as a guide.

1. Be specific in describing the problem, using examples.
2. Ask the employee to verify and clarify the problem.
3. Negotiate a mutual agreement on the exact problem and the exact behavior required on the job. Do not continue until you have reached agreement.

Step Two

Identify and write down all possible solutions to the problem together, making sure the solutions address the causes of the problem. Listen carefully to the employee's input and objections.

Step Three

Agree on a solution to the problem and develop an action plan. Write down the specific actions that each of you will take, and include completion dates.

Step Four

Schedule a follow-up meeting within one week; include the date, time and how progress will be measured. Another follow-up meeting in one month is advisable.

Step Five

Reinforce and review all written agreements and be clear with the employee about the consequences of failure to reach resolution of the issue. Try to close the meeting on a positive note.

ATTACHMENT 6

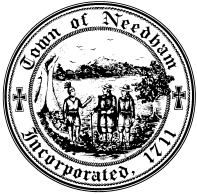
Employee Conference Form for Coaching Meeting

Describe the job performance issue to be discussed. Mutually agree on the specifics of the problem and the desired behavior required to resolve it.

Discuss solutions which could improve the job performance problem.

Select one solution and write out the actions steps and completion dates.

Follow-up meeting dates:



Town of Needham
Performance Evaluation Form
Annual Review/Probationary Review

Name:

Department:

Date of Review:

Title:

Date of Hire:

Type of Review:

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STEP 1 Evaluation of Previous Review Period

Please comment on the employee's performance with regard to each of the following criteria over the past review period. If the employee's performance in any of the criteria should be improved, indicate the level of performance which is acceptable and the method by which the employee may improve his/her performance.

Job Knowledge How did the employee perform in terms of acquiring and maintaining the technical skills and knowledge required for the position? Did the employee seek new ways to perform the functions of his/her job?

Interpersonal Skills/Customer Service How does the employee interact with the public and fellow employees?

Quality of Work How would you describe the quality of the employee's work, such as the accuracy, thoroughness, timeliness, appearance and consistency with which the work was performed?

Quantity of Work Does the employee produce the appropriate volume of work on a regular basis? Explain.

Dependability Is the employee 1) reliable in attendance and 2) able to work well without direct supervision? Explain.

Judgment Does the employee exhibit good common sense, and make decisions without routine supervision? Explain.

Communication Is the employee able to communicate clearly, both verbally and in writing?

Supervision How does the employee perform with regard to supervisory skills such as planning and organizing work, motivating and communicating with staff?.

STEP 2 Evaluation of Goals for Previous Review Period

Outline each goal and indicate whether or not the goal was achieved during the review period.

Goal 1

Goal 2

Goal 3

Goal 4

Goal 5

STEP 3 Goal Setting for Next Review Period

Outline the goals that you and the employee have set for the coming year. Each goal should be a concise statement of the objectives to be attained within the performance period, and should have a specific target date.

Goal 1[New Goal 1]

Goal 2[New Goal 2]

Goal 3[New Goal 3]

Goal 4[New Goal 4]

Goal 5[New Goal 5]

STEP 4 Overall Evaluation for the Review Period

STEP 5 Optional Personal/Professional Development Plan

STEP 6 Employee Comments

Each employee reviewed should have the opportunity to comment on the evaluation after it is completed.

STEP 7 Signatures

Supervisor (date)

Employee (date)

Mid-Year Review/Self Evaluation

The employee and the supervisor meet mid-period to discuss the employee's progress, both in terms of performance evaluation criteria and goals. Both the employee and the supervisor complete this form and use it as a basis for discussion during the mid-year review meeting. For each category listed below, indicate whether the employee's performance is satisfactory or detail the improvements which need to be made.

1. **Job Knowledge**
2. **Interpersonal Skills/Customer Service**
3. **Quality of Work**
4. **Quantity of Work**
5. **Dependability**
6. **Judgment**
7. **Communication**
8. **Supervision**

For each goals listed below, indicate whether the completion of the goal is on or behind schedule, or detail how and why the goal has been changed.

Goal 1

Goal 2

Goal 3

Goal 4

Goal 5

Employee (date)

Supervisor (date)