



**Supervisor's Guide to  
UA's Collaborative Performance Review Program**  
for Contract Professional, Unclassified Staff, Classified Staff, and Bargaining Unit Positions

This document is part of the *Employment Matters at UA for Supervisors* Training Module

Developed By

Human Resources  
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## **Introduction**

The performance review is potentially one of the most powerful tools at a supervisor's disposal. It is one of the few times when both the supervisor and employee can count on having the full attention of the other person. The University of Akron's collaborative performance review program is designed to take a "snap shot" of an employee's performance during a specific timeframe as well as provide an opportunity for the employee and supervisor to establish goals and objectives for the upcoming review period based on current University initiatives. Each year the annual goal setting section of the review form is updated to align with University goals and objectives that are established for the upcoming review period.

## **Background**

The Development and Assessment of Personnel Task Force, created during 1999 as part of a University-wide strategic thinking process, developed a model for professional development – Foundations for Shared Leadership. The task force's mission: "The development and assessment of personnel, including the effective use of merit-based pay structures, should be closely tied to strategic intent of The University of Akron." Two sub-groups were formed from this task force (Faculty and Academic Administrators and Contract Professionals and Staff). Each sub-group was provided with a list of charges to be considered. One such charge of the Contract Professional and Staff sub-group was to develop tools, annual timeliness, and processes for performance assessment. The work of this task force was reviewed and supplemented by the President's Commission on Equity, Human Resources work groups, and other academic and administrative offices around campus. As a result, UA's "Collaborative Performance Review" program was implemented.

## **Goals**

- Recognize the employee's contributions and accomplished goals for the current review period ending
- Identify a plan to improve an employee's performance in meeting University goals and objectives
- Support the employee's development and continuous learning
- Provide a forum in which the employee and supervisor can have a one-to-one collaborative discussion
- Continue the dialogue of discussing the institution's academic plan
- Assist the employee and supervisor in setting goals and objectives that align with UA's current priority areas and objectives

## **Objectives**

- Document employee performance
- Clarify/reinforce performance expectations
- Strengthen supervisor-employee work relationships
- Determine employee training and development needs
- Use to make personnel decisions (i.e., merit-based pay decisions, promotional or termination decisions)
- Serve as a measurement tool to assess individual progress towards attaining University objectives

## **Who is Covered**

All full-time and part-time regular and temporary employees designated as Contract Professional, Unclassified Staff, Classified Staff, or Bargaining Unit Staff shall receive a performance review. Note some exceptions may exist. Refer to the "Review Form Determination Chart" for a list of approved exceptions.

## Types of Performance Reviews

### Annual Performance Reviews:

A written performance review shall be completed at least once annually for regular and temporary full-time and part-time Contract Professionals, Unclassified Staff, Classified Staff, and Bargaining Unit Staff employees as per University policies and procedures.

### Probationary Performance Reviews:

Employees designated as part of the "classified" civil service are required to receive a minimum of two written probationary performance evaluations. In accordance with the Ohio Revised Code 124.27C and Ohio Administrative Code 123:1-19-01, classified civil service employees shall serve a probationary period following any appointment and promotion. Some transfers are also subject to a probationary evaluation (i.e., different job classification and/or different department as a result of applying for a position).

### Informal Performance Reviews:

The objective of informal (follow up) performance reviews is to coach the employee on improving performance for any duty/ responsibility rated as "poor" during the annual performance review process. Supervisors may wish to conduct a follow up review to gauge the employee's level of performance improvement.

## Forms Used

Three performance review/goal setting tools (forms) exist for UA's contract professional and staff positions:

- 1) *Annual Performance Review Form*
- 2) *Annual Performance Evaluation Form for Temporaries*
- 3) *Probationary Performance Evaluation Form for Classified and Bargaining Staff Employees.*

Forms are available as Microsoft Word documents and can be obtained from Training & Development Services' website at [http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining/Perf\\_Reviews/Perf\\_review.php](http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining/Perf_Reviews/Perf_review.php)

## Signature Requirements

Employee signatures indicate that the supervisor has reviewed the form with the employee. Should an employee refuse to sign a review form, the supervisor should make a note to that effect on the form, then proceed with obtaining any remaining signature(s).

In order for a review form to be considered "complete" the form must reflect signatures from the immediate supervisor and next level manager. Forms that do not contain an immediate level supervisory signature and second level manager signature will be returned to the department as incomplete. For some units additional signatures may be required. For example a dean or vice president may wish to review all forms within his or her respective area prior to the forms being submitted to Human Resources.

## Where to Obtain Forms and Guidelines/Instructions

UA's performance review forms are reviewed on an annual basis and are subject to updates so that forms reflect the goals and strategic direction of the Academic Plan, input from senior administration and campus as a whole. As a result, current versions of the forms along with guidelines/instructions and supplemental materials can be obtained from Training & Development Services' website at [http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining/Perf\\_Reviews/Perf\\_review.php](http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining/Perf_Reviews/Perf_review.php)

## Form Determination

A combination of factors (employment status, job classification and length of employment) is used to determine the type of evaluation form to be used during a review. In some cases, an employee may need to complete more than one review during a given review period.

Refer to the "Review Form Determination Chart" for guidance in determining which employee job group should complete a particular form(s).

## REVIEW FORM DETERMINATION CHART

IF EMPLOYMENT STATUS <u>AND/</u> <u>OR</u> NO. OF DAYS WORKED IS:	REVIEW FORM TO BE USED		
	Contract Professionals	Unclassified Staff	Classified Staff and Bargaining Unit Staff
<b>Regular Employment Status</b>			
<b>New Employee</b> <i>has worked less than 60 days</i>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>New Employee</b> <i>has worked 60 days to 120 days</i>	<b>Optional –</b> Annual Performance Review Form	<b>Optional –</b> Annual Performance Review Form	Probationary Evaluation Form
<b>Full-time and Part-time Employee</b> <i>has worked longer than 120 days in the same job</i>	Annual Performance Review Form	Annual Performance Review Form	Annual Performance Review Form  <i>(An annual performance review is not required if a probationary evaluation has been conducted within the past 6 months)</i>
<b>Interim / Temporarily Reclassified</b> <i>Working in a higher classification for a fixed or indefinite period of time due to performing more complex job duties, or serving an interim assignment to replace another employee who is out due to sickness, disability, or other type of approved leave of absence. The interim job ends immediately upon the return of the employee from LOA.</i>	Annual Performance Review Form	Annual Performance Review Form	Annual Performance Review Form
<b>Job Transfer</b> <i>Employee has obtained a different job as a result of accepting a new position through UA's employment process</i>	Annual Performance Review Form	Annual Performance Review Form	Probationary Evaluation Form for 1 <sup>st</sup> 60-days and 120-days of employment, thereafter Annual Performance Review Form  <i>(An annual performance review is not required if a probationary evaluation has been conducted within the past 6 months)</i>

IF EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND/ OR NO. OF DAYS WORKED IS:	REVIEW FORM TO BE USED		
	Contract Professionals	Unclassified Staff	Classified Staff and Bargaining Unit Staff
<b>Temporary Employment Status</b>			
<b>New Temporary Employee</b> <i>approved to work 6 months or less; appointment not expected to continue beyond the initial end date</i>	Not applicable	Not applicable	This type of employment status is not available to Classified Staff or Bargaining Unit Staff Positions
<b>Temporary Employee</b> <i>has worked beyond 6 months but has an expected end date</i>	Annual Performance Evaluation for Temporary Employees	Annual Performance Evaluation for Temporary Employees	
<b>Grant Research Position</b> (ex. Visiting Scientist, Researcher, Post Doctoral Researcher)	Not applicable	Not applicable	
<b>Interim</b> <i>Employed for an indefinite period of time fixed by the length of absence of another employee who is out due to sickness, disability, or other type of approved leave of absence. Job ends immediately upon the return of the employee from LOA.</i>	Annual Performance Evaluation for Temporary Employees	Annual Performance Evaluation for Temporary Employees	
<b>Intermittent</b> <i>Employee works on an irregular schedule based on fluctuation demands of work (on call).</i>	This type of employment status not available for Contract Professional Positions	Annual Performance Evaluation for Temporary Employees	
<b>Intern</b> (ex. Psychology Interns, Athletic Interns)	Not applicable	Not applicable	
<b>Pool Position</b> (ex. art models, pianists, interpreters)	This type of employment status not available for Contract Professional Positions	<b>OPTIONAL</b> – Annual Performance Evaluation for Temporary Employees	
<b>Seasonal</b> <i>Employee works on a certain regular season or period of time each year</i>	This type of employment status not available for Contract Professional Positions	Annual Performance Evaluation for Temporary Employees	

## Review Process Overview

### Prior to the Review

Prior to the review, it is the supervisor's role to explain the purpose for the review, the intended outcomes, and how the collaborative process will work. You may consider asking the employee to complete a self-assessment of his or her performance prior to attending the meeting. You may also want to ask the employee to gather information about certain projects, duties, and responsibilities that the employee was in charge of during the review period.

### During the Review

During the review, you will likely want to explain what will or will not be part of the review discussion. Be sure to provide the employee an opportunity to share his or her self-assessment. Let the employee hear and read your explanations of "what", "how", and "why", the employee received a particular rating.

### After the Review

After reviewing the previous review period's performance, you and the employee should then jointly establish goals for the upcoming review period. Upon completion of the review, allow the employee time to provide any written comments.

After the review, the employee, you as the immediate supervisor, and next level manager should sign the performance review form as acknowledgement that everyone has reviewed the form.

### Throughout the Next Review Period

During the next performance review period, seek opportunities in which you can continue the dialogue with your employee by recognizing excellent work done and acknowledging any areas of the employee's performance that require improvement and learning. Follow up with employees who received a low rating to assess progress and determine if additional assistance is necessary in helping to improve the employee's performance. Encourage and support the employee's development by approving and recommending training opportunities available throughout campus.

## Some Recommended Do's and Don'ts for Supervisors

- Do allow for ample time and a private place to hold the review (ex. conference room).
- Don't be distracted by interruptions during the one-on-one review.
- Do assist your employee with understanding the goals and objectives for the department and how each relates to the overall goals of the University.
- Do think of questions before the review that promotes a two-way line of communication.
- Don't leave the review with unresolved concerns without at least scheduling a follow-up meeting.
- Do refer to UA's online Catalog of Trainings to improve performance and/or assist in the employee's career development.
- Do allow the employee sufficient time to provide written comments before and after the collaborative review.
- Do provide a copy of the review form to your employee(s) AFTER all required signatures have been obtained.
- Do offer your help and support throughout the year to help the employee meet goals and objectives.

## Key Actions

Six key actions have been identified to assist supervisors while preparing for the collaborative performance review. Refer to the following *Key Action Reference Card* for a description of each key action.

<b>Key Action Reference Card</b>	
For conducting a Collaborative Performance Review	
<b>Key Action 1</b>	<p><b>Prepare yourself and the other person for a focused discussion.</b></p> <p><i>To prepare the employee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the purpose of the review, the intended outcomes, and how the collaborative process will work.</li> <li>• If you want the employee being reviewed to solicit feedback from customers and/or co-workers, agree on the process to follow and the people to be contacted.</li> <li>• Clarify how you and the employee being reviewed will use input from others.</li> <li>• Specify the areas you want the employee to cover in his or her self-evaluation.</li> </ul> <p><i>To prepare yourself</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review information about the employee's performance that you have gathered and shared throughout the review period.</li> <li>• Review any quantifiable data concerning results achieved.</li> <li>• Review any notes you may have made to yourself throughout the year.</li> <li>• Note specific situations in which the employee was particularly effective or ineffective in accomplishing organizational or group goals.</li> <li>• Review feedback from customers and co-workers.</li> <li>• Note specific skills, knowledge, or perspectives the employee used in accomplishing results.</li> </ul> <p><i>To prepare your core message</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select the major responsibilities that you want to focus on in the review.</li> <li>• Identify two or three competencies and/or areas for improvement or learning. Consider the employee's key interests/developmental needs, as well as the organization's strategic needs.</li> <li>• Organize specific examples to illustrate competencies or areas for improvement.</li> </ul> <p><i>To prepare for sharing your perspective</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine how you will link major responsibilities to the core points of your message.</li> <li>• Identify potential areas of agreement and disagreement. Consider how the employee may react and how you will respond.</li> <li>• Assemble specific examples to support your points.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Action 2</b>	<p><b>Begin the session by setting expectations for your discussion.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the purpose, desired outcome, and agenda for the discussion.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Action 3</b>	<p><b>Invite the employee to share his or her self-assessment.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the employee to give the highlights of his or her self-assessment.</li> <li>• Listen carefully and non-defensively; take notes. Save your comments for later, when you offer your own evaluation.</li> <li>• Ask questions to understand fully.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Action 4</b>	<p><b>Give your perspective on the employee's performance.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on the core points you identified in Key Action 1, linking your comments to them.</li> <li>• Begin with areas of agreement.</li> <li>• Move on to areas of disagreement, proceeding from minor to major disagreements.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Action 5</b>	<p><b>Jointly determine next steps.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap the opportunities for improvement and learning discussed during the review. Relate them to your core points.</li> <li>• Agree on next steps.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Action 6</b>	<p><b>Summarize the core points of your message.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the employee to summarize the main points covered in the discussion.</li> <li>• If necessary, restate the core points of your message.</li> <li>• Recognize the employee's contribution, expressing in concrete terms how his or her work is making a difference.</li> <li>• Express your confidence in the employee's future performance.</li> <li>• Offer your continued support.</li> </ul>

Source: *Conducting a Collaborative Performance Review*, \*2001 AchieveGlobal, Inc.

## **Review Period(s)**

The University's annual performance review period shall reflect a calendar year for the time period of January 1 through December 31.

A probationary evaluation should be conducted on/or before the completion of an employee's 60-days and 120-days of employment. Note some jobs which fall under UA's "public safety division" classification, must serve a 365-day probation period for appointments, promotions, and transfers.

## **Review Period Notification**

Supervisors are notified via memo when a classified or bargaining unit employee is scheduled to receive 60-day, 120-day or 365 day probationary evaluation. If you have a new employee but are unsure as to whether the employee should receive a probationary evaluation, contact Human Resources x6590.

Supervisors and affected employees are notified via campus mail and email when the annual performance review process is to begin. During the annual review process if you would like a list of employees within your unit who show as eligible to receive a performance review in PeopleSoft, contact Human Resources x6590 or email [bparker@uakron.edu](mailto:bparker@uakron.edu)

## **Timeline of Events**

With the exception of probationary evaluations, the following schedule depicts the annual performance review timeline.

November – January: prepare for participating in the annual performance review process (attend/recommend your employee(s) attend training sessions, begin reviewing/assembling documentation, review accomplishments and goals of University, review accomplishments and set goals for unit)

January 1 – April 30: conduct annual performance reviews

## **Appeals Procedures**

On occasion an employee may wish to discuss differences or unresolved matters about his or her performance review with additional parties. The following performance review appeal methods are available to employees at the University.

### In Person Appeal(s):

If an employee still has concerns which he or she feels have not been resolved after meeting with the immediate supervisor, the individual may request an appointment with the next level manager up to and including the vice president of the respective area.

### Written Appeal(s):

In the event the employee continues to have a difference in opinion after meeting with appropriate management in his or her reporting structure, the employee has the option of following up with written comments which will become part of the employee's permanent file maintained in Human Resources.

Should the employee wish to provide additional written comments about the review; the comments can be added directly onto the review form or as an addendum. Written comments can be forwarded to Human Resources either attached to the review form or submitted by the employee under separate cover.

## **Performance Logs**

Optional *Performance Logs* may be used by an employee or supervisor for recording the employee's performance, etc. throughout the review period. The form is available at [http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining/Perf\\_Reviews/Perf\\_review.php](http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining/Perf_Reviews/Perf_review.php)

## **Forms Retention**

The original *Annual Performance Review Form* and *Probationary Evaluation Form* along with any attachments will be maintained by Human Resources as part of an employee's permanent files. Supervisors are responsible for filing any *Informal Performance Reviews* within the individual's department.

Optional *Performance Logs* should be maintained by the individual who created the log.

## Employment Status Changes that Impact the Performance Review Process

- **Employees on Leave of Absence**

Performance reviews for an employee on leave of absence (i.e., medical, educational, military, etc.) cannot be conducted until the employee returns to active status at work. **Also note that the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act protect the right of an employee to take leave in qualifying circumstances. Therefore, if a supervisor has an employee who has taken ADA or FMLA-protected leave during an evaluation period, the supervisor cannot use the leave against the employee in his or her performance evaluation or in any other employment action, such as hiring, promotion or disciplinary action. If the supervisor is not sure whether or not an employee under his/her supervision has used ADA or FMLA leave during a review period, please call Benefits Administration at (330) 972-7092.**

It is the responsibility of the immediate supervisor to notify Training & Development Services about any employee who is currently on leave of absence at the on start of the review program usually beginning in January. An email listing the employee's name and department should be sent to [bparker@uakron.edu](mailto:bparker@uakron.edu).

Human Resources will return to the immediate supervisor any review form filled out on an employee who is on a leave of absence.

- **Employees Serving as an Interim while Performing Permanent Job Duties**

If a regular employee is filling in on an Interim basis while still performing his or her permanent job duties/responsibilities, the employee should complete a "regular" review form. The supervisor should assess the employee's work performance for both jobs by appropriately dividing the percentage of work time between the two jobs. For example, 60% of time spent performing interim duties and 40% of time spent performing permanent job duties.

- **Employees Temporarily Reclassified**

If the employee is temporarily reclassified to another position during a review period, he or she should be evaluated on the duties that the employee is currently performing.

- **Employees Promoted or Transferred to a New Job**

If an employee is promoted or transferred to a new job during a review period, the new supervisor is responsible for conducting the performance review. The review form should reflect the modified review period dates and mention that the employee was transferred or promoted.

- **Employees with No Immediate Supervisor**

If an employee does not have an immediate supervisor when the annual performance review process begins, the review should be conducted by the next level manager. To assist the next level manager during the review process, the manager should refer to evaluations from the employee's previous review period. Contact Human Resources at x7096 if copies of past employee evaluations cannot be located within the employee's department.

- **Employees in the Same Job but Reporting to a New Supervisor**

If you are a new supervisor hired during a review period, you are responsible for conducting the performance review unless the previous supervisor is still available. Previous supervisors should complete parts I – II of the review form. For the new supervisor who is responsible for conducting all parts of a review, the following tips may prove helpful as a starting point. Refer to the employee(s) last review(s); assess the employee's performance based on unit accomplishment and goals in effect prior to the new supervisor's hire; focus on setting goals with the employee(s) for the upcoming review period and plan to conduct an interim-year review if necessary. In all instances, the new supervisor should establish goals together with the employee for the upcoming review period.

## Available Trainings

Any person designated "supervisor" who has an employee reporting **directly** to him or her is encouraged to attend one or more employee performance management classroom training sessions designed to build upon and enhance supervisory skills. Current module names and availability can be found on Training & Development Services' web site [www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining](http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining) and University's Seminars web site [www.uakron.edu/seminars](http://www.uakron.edu/seminars)

### New Supervisors:

It is strongly recommended that new supervisors attend a classroom session entitled *Conducting Performance Reviews* prior to conducting the first annual performance review of his or her employees. At the completion of this module, the supervisor should be able to prepare for focused and collaborative performance review meetings, help employees prepare for performance review meetings, give their perspective of performance by focusing on core points, overcome major performance disconnects with employees, increase employee motivation, learning, productivity, and ensure collaboration throughout the year.

### Other Supervisory Training Modules:

Refer to UA's online Training Catalog to find out about the following supervisory skill building/enhancement modules titled *Making Training Pay Off*, *Addressing Emotions at Work*, *Giving Recognition*, *Developing Others*, and more. The catalog can be accessed by going to Training & Development Services' web site at [www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining/](http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hrtraining/)

## Who to Contact

- For general questions regarding filling out the review forms, contact Belinda Parker, ext. 6590.
- To obtain a copy of the employee's last performance review form, contact HRIS, ext. 7096.
- To learn more about training sessions being offered, contact Training & Development Services, ext. 7783.
- For assistance addressing existing or new employee performance issues, contact Employee Relations, ext. 6410.
- For questions or comments about this document, email [hrtrainer@uakron.edu](mailto:hrtrainer@uakron.edu) or call us at ext. 7783 or ext. 6590.

## About this Document

This document was developed as part of the *Employment Matters at UA for Supervisors* training module. It is one of several online "self-service" modules designed to assist the supervisor in performing human resources related administrative responsibilities in an efficient and time-effective manner.