

## Helpful Responses to Employee Feedback

### 1. I am a working supervisor. I do not have time for this.

In the State system, most of our supervisors are working supervisors. However, your main and most important job duty is to supervise your employees. It is the reason your position is classified as supervisory.

Because this is a new process for most supervisors, it feels overwhelming. There is some work on the front end, but the end result is a huge time savings and the process will show a clearer path for you and your employee. Your regular meetings with your employees do not have to be an hour long. They can be brief because your frequent monitoring is keeping both you and your employee on top of progress.

### 2. I have some employees who have 20 years of experience and some with one year. Do they all need to have the same expectations?

Performance expectations are position specific. If two positions are doing the exact same job (their position descriptions are the same) then they should have the same expectations. One might normally assume that after 20 years an employee really knows a job and will function at a higher level. This may or may not be the case. The rating criterion for an expectation is the same no matter how much experience an employee has. Successful work is successful work no matter how long a person has been employed.

Can you give the seasoned employee extra duties? Short term projects for sure. A position description does not include every single task assigned to an employee and expectations only refer to the main responsibilities of a position. So if there is a short term project that you assign to one employee and not others with the same job duties, that is fine. If the seasoned employee is consistently performing different duties than others, this is something you need to discuss with your HR office. Possibly the position description can be reworked or in some instances, if duties have dramatically changed, a reclassification might be in order.

### 3. What do I do if I have an employee who has been receiving 4's and 5's for 20 years and now I start rating them with 3's and an occasional 4? How can I justify this?

When you have your initial planning meeting you will explain to the employee that their expectations are changing. You should explain that now all State supervisors will be evaluating on SMART expectations and that these expectations will be measurable and based on metrics. This may cause evaluation scores to be realigned to produce a more accurate evaluation score than the employee received in the past. The supervisor should explain to the employee that 3 does not equal average, instead, 3 means the employee is successful. They are doing their job well and meeting expectations. Let them know as part of the process you will be meeting with them so they know each step of the way how they are performing. You will be able to tell them at each meeting "if you were being evaluated today, this is what your evaluation score would be". In this way the employee will know where they stand and know what they need to do to improve if they wish to do so.

**4. How can I possibly do this with remote/shift work staff?**

Supervising staff you do not see every day is always a challenge. SMART expectations will really make supervising remote staff easier. It will give you something more concrete to rate your staff on even though you do not see them regularly.

**5. Employees have not received a raise in 7 years. A good evaluation is the least I can do for them. It helps with morale.**

It may appear to give a short term boost to employees to give them an inflated evaluation, but in the long run it does not help them, you or your agency. Employees will begin to resent that they are getting the same evaluation as others who have not worked as productively as they do. They will also resent that you, as a supervisor, have not done anything to assist them in growing their skills in preparation for other positions.

If an employee is not really doing a good job and you give them an inflated evaluation, it may be difficult for you to take any needed corrective action against the employee as the evaluation shows they are exceeding all expectations.

**6. I heard there may be money to pay top performers. If that is the case, I want to give my employees high ratings so they can get some money. They are good people and haven't had a raise in 7 years.**

If there is money set aside in the budget to pay top performers, there would only be a limited amount of funds available. Giving those limited dollars to those who are not truly top performers may use up the funds prior to being able to recognize the true top performers. Additionally, it diminishes the accomplishments of the top performers if they receive the same rating as those who have not performed at the top levels.

**7. I want to evaluate my employees properly, but I know Supervisor Smith rates all her employee's 4's and 5's. I don't want it to look like her employees work harder than mine, and I certainly do not want them to receive monetary awards over my employees.**

Performance evaluations should be based on an employee's performance as measured by the performance expectations, not as compared to the performance of other employees.

One of the main reasons a uniform curriculum has been developed to train all supervisors in all State agencies is to prevent this from happening. As part of this training we are also expanding the role of the reviewer to help ensure that evaluations are completed accurately. It would be very unusual for every employee in a work unit to be at a 5 level. If a reviewer notices this, it is their responsibility to provide feedback to the manager/supervisor. Both supervisors and reviewers will be held accountable for the evaluations they submit and the ones they review.