Performance Evaluation Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When should performance evaluation take place?

A: Performance management is an ongoing process. Throughout the year, supervisors are encouraged to engage with employees to establish goals, notice progress, provide feedback, seek feedback, appropriately reward and recognize excellent performance, and agree upon plans to correct any deficiencies.

The university has defined the annual performance evaluation cycle as a focal point for documenting performance expectations, feedback, and development planning. Supervisors and employees have a shared responsibility in completing the evaluation. The tool is designed to capture the employee’s self-evaluation first and then feedback from the supervisor. The process culminates in an evaluation meeting and discussion, held between August 5 and November 15.

Q: What are the benefits of the performance management and evaluation process?

A: The performance management process is one of the ways we recognize the commitment and contributions made by our employees to further the university’s vision in a manner that supports our values. When done well, performance management and evaluation fosters increased employee engagement through increased commitment to:

- Virginia Tech through a stronger alignment to goals and values;
- The supervisor through a belief that the supervisor cares about the employee and their development;
- The job due to clearer and shared expectations; and
- The department or unit through appreciation of the importance of shared contributions.

Q: How do I access the Performance Management System?

A: Go to the Compensation and Performance Management page and click on the Performance Planning and Evaluation Tool icon. A short video tutorial is also available.

Q: How can I, as an employee, prepare myself for the performance evaluation?

A: For the performance evaluation, the employee completes a self-evaluation by filling in the appropriate sections of the online Performance Evaluation Form and providing supporting comments as needed. Once their part of the form is completed, the employee sends it to their
supervisor for review, ratings, and comments. A few tips for employees to prepare a self-evaluation:

Review the performance goals established with your supervisor at the beginning of the performance cycle, which is your performance plan. Reflect upon the most important contributions you were expected to make to the university or department’s success.

Not everything you did in the performance cycle was related to a goal. Review your job description or key job responsibilities. Consider aspects of your overall job responsibilities that affect how you feel about your overall performance. When did you go “above and beyond” in a way that enhanced the performance of your department and/or unit? Were there missed opportunities when your results limited the overall success of others in your department or unit?

Consider professional development opportunities for the next performance cycle. What strengths can you use more frequently on the job? What competencies might you develop to improve your performance or prepare for future roles? What opportunities do you notice to use strengths more frequently or improve development areas? How can your supervisor support your development?

Q: What is the purpose of a self-evaluation?

A: To provide an opportunity for you to have an active role in the evaluation process, rather than simply being the recipient of feedback from your supervisor. Following are other reasons for a self-evaluation:

- To help open up the conversation between you and your supervisor during the performance evaluation meeting.
- To allow you the opportunity to highlight any obstacle you overcame to improve your performance from a prior review period.
- To allow you a chance to address any concerns and struggles you may have as you relate to the job.
- To provide you an opportunity to document your accomplishments and strengths.

Q: Can I decline to complete a self-evaluation?

A: Yes; however, your supervisor will still complete the evaluation of your performance without your input. Refusal to complete the self-evaluation must be your decision.
Q: What is the goal of the performance management and evaluation process?

A: The objective of performance management is to improve performance through:

- Specific and meaningful goals.
- Clarity about ongoing job responsibilities.
- Understanding behavioral expectations at Virginia Tech.
- Ongoing, motivational dialogue to understand personal progress.
- Evaluation of results.
- Reflection on future development needs.

Q: What if I disagree with my supervisor’s evaluation?

A: A comment section is provided at the end of the form to explain your disagreement.

Q: Who should I contact if I have concerns about the fairness of the rating I received on the performance evaluation?

A: You should first try sharing your concerns with your supervisor. You may also appeal your evaluation to the reviewer within 10 business days after it has been signed. Contact university Employee Relations for guidance.

If you have additional questions, please contact university Employee Relations at (540) 231-5303, (540) 231-2850, or email: employeerelations@vt.edu.