Performance Management in a Covid-19 World

All Staff Guidelines for FY20 Performance Reviews

Introduction

Covid-19 has impacted our work at Emory in many ways and remains a changing landscape, requiring all of us to adjust as best we can. We recognize that there are multiple priorities competing for your time, and participating in your annual performance reviews may not seem as high a priority as it might have been in years past.

Although there is no pool for merit increases this year, a performance review is still important since we desire everyone in our Emory community to continue to grow and develop, and because other decisions besides merit increases are based on the annual review (e.g., promotions). Recognition and feedback, even without a raise, is still motivating and fulfilling, making the evaluation in some ways even more important.

HR has assembled these guidelines to make the process for this year as easy as possible for all staff at Emory, as well as to address the change in the work environment that we experienced this year.

Suggested Guidelines for Completing Your Self-Review

Quality is more important than quantity

Some feel the need to write a comprehensive, detailed and thorough document that is voluminous in length. That is not necessarily the case. For example, while you should substantiate what you say with specifics, you do not need to cite everything you have done over the past year. Being succinct is preferred by most, provided it is clear and specific. Also remember:

1. You do not have to write comments for every competency. You can choose to (and is recommended) but is not required.
2. If you are struggling to find the words (i.e. "Writer's Block"), don't forget about the behavior examples provided for each competency. Use the tables located here: https://hr.emory.edu/eu/performance-management/behavioral-examples-non-leader.html

Provide data where possible

When discussing what you achieved for the year, try to provide data to show what you've done. Your supervisor should know what you have accomplished; but, like all of us, they are human and sometimes forget. Having numeric results to support your performance examples helps to strengthen what you assert in your self-assessment. Sometimes this is not possible so don't worry – just provide it where you can.

Share both performance and development

The annual evaluation is typically used as a review of a person's performance over the last year. While that is still true this year, don't forget to share what you've done to develop your skills. Perhaps you've taken advantage of training opportunities available online from Learning and Organization Development during Covid-19, or the many online courses through LinkedIn Learning. You may have volunteered for different projects or a-typical tasks to help others during this time – share both what you did and what you learned. This will be especially helpful for those who haven't had much opportunity to work from home during this time due to the nature of their role. And be honest without being self-deprecating in areas where you fell short. Example: instead of saying "I really messed up here…" say "Here is an area I want to improve in for next year."

Acknowledge challenges of working in this environment

Covid-19 continues to be an unprecedented time for everyone. Many have been negatively impacted by this virus in some way either directly or indirectly. The present and the future is more uncertain than it has ever been. Sources of stress right now are numerous, and everyone handles stress differently. Your supervisor has been asked to be mindful of this in his/her comments – it is ok to mention challenges you have had. Your supervisor should already be aware, but it never hurts to remind him/her.

Consider what "good" looks like in this current environment

The "new normal" we are all in also affects what good performance looks like. Some have been able to rise to the challenge, adapting and creating innovations never before imagined. Others have simply not had much opportunity to go beyond meeting expectations, which is absolutely fine! This should also be considered when making your comments. To assist, make sure you review the revised behavior examples that account for our new working environment, found here:
https://hr.emory.edu/eu/performance-management/behavioral-examples-non-leader.html

You should have more time this year

Because there are no merit increases this year, you should have more time to complete your self-review compared to previous years. In addition, Central HR will keep the forms open for 6 weeks past the stated due date on the form. Please try to complete the forms in as timely fashion as possible since the longer you wait, the shorter the evaluation period will essentially be for the following year.

Leader competencies now optional

If you supervise other managers and are at the Director level or above, you currently have review forms that utilize a new set of "Leader" competencies (https://hr.emory.edu/eu/performance-management/leader-behavioral-examples.html). Given the challenges of this year, you may not feel these are appropriate. If you deem this to be the case for you, you may discuss this with your supervisor and ask to have a new form using the manager level competences (the same competencies used last year). Your supervisor has instructions that explain how to do this, but feel free to notify HR if you need help. Note: if you did a mid-year review, this information will not automatically transfer to the new form. You'll have to refer to your other form for that information. You may also cut and paste it into your new form.

> *Training will be made available on the above guidelines and general best practices in performance management (e.g. communication tips, control of bias) as soon as possible.*