



PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Purpose and Principles

The University System expects high standards of performance from staff members in accordance with both institutional objectives and the individual's job responsibilities. The institution accepts the responsibility to provide employment conditions which foster personal and professional growth and productivity.

The University's principle of performance evaluation is factual reinforcement based upon predetermined standards. Evaluations are based upon established goals and objectives towards specific outcomes and impacts as well as other criteria, including professional competency, initiative, and positive working relationships.

Within this framework, UNH Cooperative Extension applies and practices the principles of **Performance Management** in assessing staff performance. Performance management is a continuing process which establishes and maintains the interaction between the staff member and the supervisor. The degree to which the staff member and supervisor understand, agree on, and value the elements of performance management will impact the extent to which Cooperative Extension fulfills its mission.

Performance management can be formally defined as a system comprised of an ongoing process of planning and appraising which includes the establishment of goals and expectations through (1) **performance planning**; (2) continuing year-round **performance feedback and coaching**; and (3) a formal **performance appraisal** at the end of the performance period. The three components are described as follows:

Performance planning is the process of developing an established set of objectives, behaviors and skills, resulting in a plan of work for which an individual is accountable and will be evaluated.

Performance feedback and coaching involves on-going performance-related communication that keeps the employee apprised of how he/she is doing, reinforces good performance, and helps an individual improve any problem areas. This communication gives the staff member and supervisor an opportunity to mutually assess job goals and determine any changes that may need to be made.

Performance appraisal is a formal overall appraisal of performance at the end of a performance period of how an individual performed against a set of goals/objectives and behaviors/skills. Appraisals include the evaluation of the staff member's growth in the areas of professional development and subject-matter competencies.

Process for Extension Educators and Extension Specialists

Program Leaders are responsible for facilitating Performance Management and maximizing its potential as follows:

1. Maintain knowledge and skills in the process of managing performance and function foremost as a mentor and coach.
2. Work with each educator/specialist and mutually develop an annual Plan of Work prior to the start of the performance cycle and evaluation period, which begins October 1. The Plan of Work includes clearly written inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts for the year. Program Leaders will also clarify performance standards and other organizational results expected. The Plan of Work serves as the criteria for the annual performance appraisal and can be modified as the demands of the position change, when mutually agreed by the staff member and program leader.
3. Conduct on-the-job observations, as appropriate, and acquire firsthand knowledge of educator/specialist performance using multiple sources for performance feedback.
4. Provide feedback and coaching with on-going, performance-related communication that conveys how the staff member is doing, reinforces good performance and demonstrates a genuine concern for helping the individual improve performance and better serve clients. Formally conduct a midyear performance update.
5. Conduct an annual performance evaluation of each staff member at the end of the program year. Evaluations will be based on appropriate input from: self-evaluation, county office administrator, leadership team, educators, specialists, program associates, advisory council members, clientele, department chairs (where applicable) and other sources.
6. Facilitate the peer review process. County staff will evaluate all specialists in their program areas as well as other specialists with whom they have a working relationship. County staff and specialists have the option to evaluate any other county staff or specialist with whom they have worked during the year.
7. Develop a written evaluation summary following the annual performance evaluation. The summary will be provided to and signed by the staff member and include a section for response comments by the staff member. Copies of completed and signed evaluation summaries will be submitted to the Associate Director by January 1.
8. Base decisions regarding salary adjustments and professional development and training on performance evaluation objectives and outcomes. Performance

Process for First Year Extension Educators

Program Leaders are responsible for the following procedures for newly hired Extension Educators during their probationary period:

1. During the first weeks of employment, clearly establish measurable outcomes expected to be achieved during the probationary period. As soon as appropriate develop a mutually agreed upon Plan of Work upon which the first year's performance will be evaluated. During this first year evaluation period, the Program Leader will make every effort to help the new educator perform at a satisfactory level and will provide guidance on needed performance improvement.
2. Conduct and document an informal 6-month performance review.
3. Before the end of the probationary period, the Program Leader will conduct a review of the educator's first year performance. This will include consultation with the County Advisory Council for county-based educators. The Program Leader will make the final determination of the educator's suitability for continued employment and inform the Associate Director. In cases where it is fully agreed the educator is not suitable for continued employment, the Program Leader and Associate Director will consult with the UNH Office of Human Resources to determine the most appropriate course of action.
4. Immediately at the end of their first year of employment, the Program Leader will inform successful educators in writing of the satisfactory completion of their probationary year and permanent appointment status.