



The Manager's Guide to Performance & Development at Northeastern University

This guide provides new managers with an overview of the performance & development process. Managers can reference this guide to inform their performance & development conversations with their employees.

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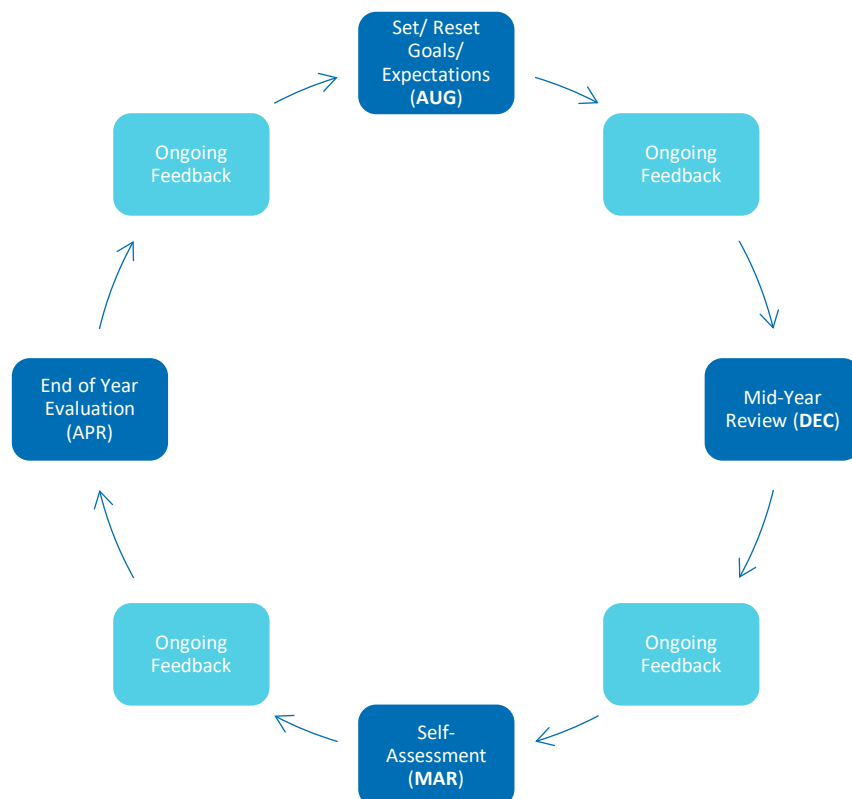
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Overview of Performance & Development

Northeastern uses a goal-based performance process for most employees. This means that the achievement of goals is the foundation of measuring performance. As a manager, one of the most important parts of your role is setting goals/ expectations and assessing performance. Performance & Development at Northeastern seeks to create and foster regular communication between managers and staff about opportunities for ongoing development to support and advance the University's mission. Performance & Development is a continuous and ongoing process, as can be seen in the cycle below.

The Performance & Development Cycle



The performance & development cycle starts with setting goals/ expectations for the year, a mid-year review, performance self-assessment and end of year evaluation. Throughout the cycle, feedback and review of goals should be ongoing.

Performance & Development Timeline



Setting Goals and Expectations

As a manager, you will work with your employees to set goals and expectations. Set expectations with your skills based employees each year to get aligned on job expectations and to discuss with your employee how their role supports Northeastern's mission and the department's goals.

For goals based employees, collaborate to create performance and development goals. Performance goals are results-based goals related to the employee's job, while development goals focus on the employee's growth and development.

During the goal setting phase of the cycle, you will:

- Establish annual goals
- Link those goals to the college/ division goals
- Set appropriate metrics
- Clarify expectations
- Plan professional development

When writing goals, try to make sure they are SMART.

S	• Specific	Goals are concrete, detailed focused and defined.
M	• Measurable	Identify how you will measure the progress towards the goal.
A	• Achievable	Goals should be within reach given the timeframe and constraints.
R	• Results Oriented	Align goals with the University, department, and other team members.
T	• Time Bound	Set deadlines for achievement.

Tips for Writing Goals:

- Focus on the individual's work to ensure their actions are directed at achieving results critical to the organization's success.
- Set 3 to 5 goals & at least one professional development goal each year.
- Do not encapsulate the entire job, only the key goals, projects, and accountabilities.
- Start each goal with a verb and focus on end results

Measuring Results

Metrics outline the details on how results and performance will be measured. Measurements typically include the following:

- **Completion:** on time, on budget, exceeded need
- **Customer:** who did you reach? how was the project received?
- **Financial:** costs, savings, revenue, etc.
- **Quality:** accurate, excellent, delights the customer
- **Process:** creative, efficient, less steps, more automation, etc.

Development Planning

Below are key tips for leaders in development planning.

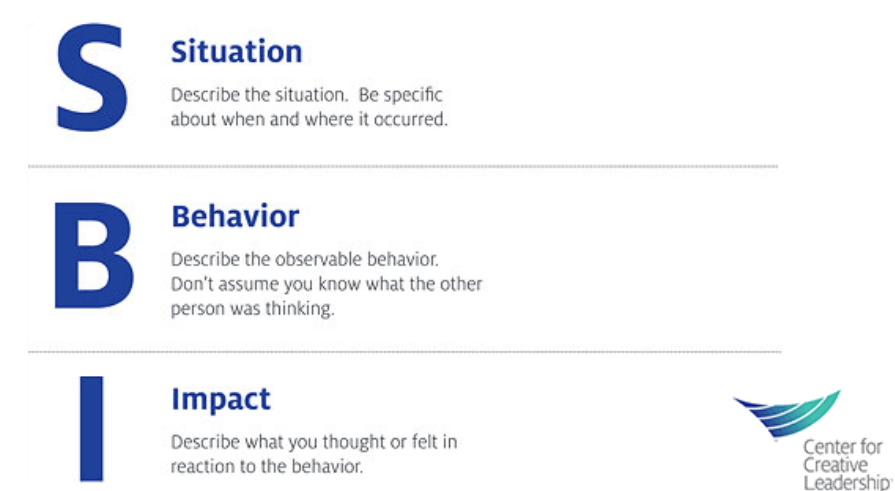
- Be engaged in the development process
- Identify development opportunities that leverage an untapped strength or close a performance gap
- Outline the results expected to be achieved; monitor activities and provide feedback and coaching on performance and development
- Specify key development activities or additional support needed to promote growth and development
- Provide a consistent message to all regarding development

Remember: Development plans should be customized and integrated into the day-to-day job in order to be impactful.

Delivering Feedback

Feedback is an essential component of a performance culture. Feedback should support staff performance and development, and applies to both positive and constructive situations. *Feedback is most beneficial when it is on-going.* This ensures that there are no surprises come review time.

The below framework assists in preparing to deliver feedback effectively.



Performance Ratings

The chart below details Northeastern's performance ratings for mid-year and year-end performance reviews. The core standard of "Fully Meets" describes a competent, valued contributor. It is expected

that there will be staff at each of these additional ratings, but the majority should be performing at “successfully meets expectations.”

Above Standard	Consistently Exceeds	Clearly and consistently exceeds all performance expectations
	Frequently Exceeds	Frequently exceeds performance expectations
CORE	Successfully Meets	Consistently and completely meets performance expectations
Below Standard	Partially Meets	Does not consistently meet performance expectations
	Does Not Meet	Does not meet performance expectations <i>*Must consult HRM – cannot be the first discussion of poor performance</i>

Mid-Year Review

The mid-year review is a check-in with your employees to discuss their current level of performance. This is an opportunity to make sure they have the resources they need to be successful and check on their development goals. Review the employee’s goals and amend the goals and/or timeframes if needed. It’s also a good time to add additional goals. The mid-year review also allows the employee to share what they have accomplished to date.

Self-Assessment

The self-assessment form helps foster greater employee engagement in the performance process. Like the mid-year check-in, it provides an opportunity for the employee to share their viewpoint. The form is encouraged to help individuals gather their thoughts around their past performance and think about goals for the upcoming year. The form is strongly encouraged across the university as a way to engage performance discussions. Employees can also share this form with their manager as input into the end of year evaluation.

End of Year Evaluation

When **evaluating** the employee, the manager is responsible for:

- Reviewing the employee’s self-assessment

- Reviewing the employee's goals and outcomes
- Evaluating results against the goals and metrics
- Assessing performance of key job responsibilities
- Remembering to address any additional work or results (i.e. unplanned projects or extraordinary contributions beyond the role)
- Identifying areas of development

It's important to clearly measure and rate the overall contribution of each member of your team. Look at the relative contribution of each member. Use the whole set of ratings, as needed. Reward decisions are a major part of any manager's role, and differentiating will help you come to this decision.

Probationary Period Review

It is important to meet with your new hires about expectations as part of the onboarding process. Most positions follow the 90 day probationary period. This is an opportunity for both parties to validate the fit and success of the new hire.

A 90 day review is encouraged. While it is not required to be in writing, it can be if that is your preference. Writing may be preferable if any concerns arise regarding the employee's performance. The 90 day review period can be extended if more time is needed to make a determination on the success of the new hire. Contact your HR Business Partner if you find yourself in this situation.

Resources

[Performance & Development Course in Canvas](#)

[Performance & Development Forms](#)

[L&OD Website](#) for Live Courses on Delivering Feedback and Difficult Conversations

[LinkedIn Learning](#)

You can always contact your [HR Business Partner](#) if you have questions or require additional support.