



Dear New Beginnings Department Head,

You have been asked to oversee the Internship of the following Bible School Student:

To that end, I have some Performance Evaluation Tips that you may find helpful as you fulfill that role.

We ask that you send an evaluation to the main office by the first Friday of each month for the previous month.

But before we get started, let me also thank you for your assistance as we work together to raise the next generation of leaders here at New Beginnings.

God Bless,

Pastor Gerry Ball
Dean of New Beginnings Bible School

Performance Evaluation Tips

We are all human. We make mistakes in judgment all the time. One area in which you want to try and minimize mistakes is in the performance evaluation process. Often, we have unconscious biases toward employees – giving them an advantage or a disadvantage within that process.

Here are Six common biases that we want you to be aware of:

1) The Halo Effect

The halo effect happens when the person doing the performance evaluation positive or negative impression of an individual leads to rating him or her the same across all rating categories. Typically, this is seen when a manager likes or dislikes an employee and is allowing their personal feelings to influence the employee's actual performance.

2) Leniency Error

Leniency error refers to a rater's tendency to rate all employees at the positive end of the scale (leniency) or the low end of the scale (negativity). This can happen when a manager over-emphasizes either positive or negative behavior.

3) Central Tendency

Central Tendency refers to a manager's tendency to avoid making extreme judgments of employee performance. This results in rating all employees in the middle of the scale for everything. Typically, this is seen with managers who are not comfortable with conflict so they avoid low marks to avoid dealing with the behavioral or performance issues of the individual.

4) Recency

Recency is the manager's tendency to allow more recent incidents (positive or negative) of employee behavior to carry too much weight. This can be an extreme on both ends of the spectrum.

For example: An employee just finished a major project or task successfully and so they receive rave reviews from the manager because of that recent accomplishment. This may or may not be a true reflection of the entire review period.

5) First Impression

This is usually seen more with a newer employee. The new employee makes a great first impression and so the manager allows that to subconsciously carry a lot of weight. Even though the employee's performance may have dwindled over the evaluation period.

6) Just like the Boss mistake

This mistake or bias happens when a manager sees an employee in the same light as themselves and so they rate the person well (because they think highly of themselves). We need to be careful about letting our ability to connect or relate to someone influence our evaluation of them.

Performance appraisals should be fair, pertinent/relevant, and comprehensive to the best of our ability.

Treat all volunteers the same, and track and measure behavior/performance the same way for all.

Questions to ask yourself:

Would I have made the same note on a different employee?

Are my observations the same, or am I overemphasizing a single event?

Have I been giving important and immediate feedback to employees so that they have an opportunity to change his/her behavior or performance?

Always keep the performance appraisal pertinent to communicated job expectations.

During the evaluation period keep records of a job well done as well as the screw-ups and verbal warnings/written warnings.

I would suggest writing up the employee's performance review – sleeping on it – review it again and see if it still is fair and true.

If needed, share it with a second-level or up-line supervisor for their thoughts on it.

Always be prepared to give examples of the good or bad.

This really should not be a time for surprises to the employee. That is why it is so important to use verbal and written warning documents as well as documenting the successes.

Finally, take the time during the performance evaluation to listen and understand differences in points of view. Some moments will present themselves for clarification of expectations to the employee. It is during these moments that you can map the course of expectations for the employee. Remember, most employees want to do a good job. Give them the tools.

Thanks again for your assistance! | Dr. Gerry Ball , Dean New Beginnings Bible School