



**Employee Performance
Review Process
Resource Guide**



Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Table of Contents | 2 |
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Steps in the EPR process | 3 |
| UIC Competencies..... | 5 |
| Core Competencies | 5 |
| Manager Competencies | 5 |
| Executive Competencies..... | 6 |
| Step 1: Confirm Performance Expectations | 7 |
| Planning and Expectations - Goal Setting: The “SMART” Way..... | 7 |
| SMART Goals | 7 |
| Goal Setting: The “SMART” Way | 8 |
| Step 2: Provide Continuous Feedback..... | 9 |
| Constructive Feedback | 9 |
| Praise | 9 |
| Coaching | 10 |
| Step 3: Document Performance Progress Notes..... | 11 |
| Documentation DOs and DON'Ts | 11 |
| Step 4: Annual Performance Review Meeting | 12 |
| Step 5: Individual Development Plan | 14 |
| EPR Tracking Tool..... | 15 |
| Resources | 16 |
| Appendix 1..... | 17 |
| Do’s and Don’ts of Performance Reviews | 17 |
| Appendix 2..... | 18 |
| Focusing on Job Performance: Tips for Managers | 18 |
| Appendix 3..... | 19 |
| Common Rating Pitfalls | 19 |
| Appendix 4..... | 20 |
| Employee Checklist..... | 20 |
| Appendix 5..... | 21 |
| Manager Preparing to Conduct Performance Review: Checklist | 21 |



Introduction

The Employee Performance Review Process is a collaborative process between **employees** and **managers** based on a set of established competencies. The primary purpose is to develop and enhance skills for improved employee performance. This is a yearlong process culminating with the Employee Performance Review and the creation of an Individual Development Plan for each employee. Forms, tools, and resources for each step in this process may be found on the MyCareer website: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/index.html> in the *Career Management* section.

University policy 602 refers to Employee Performance Review. This policy applies to all Civil Service and academic professional employees unless specifically exempted by an outside agency, accreditation requirements, or status.

This guide will help all employees to understand their role, their manager's role, and where to find the tools and forms needed to comply with this policy.

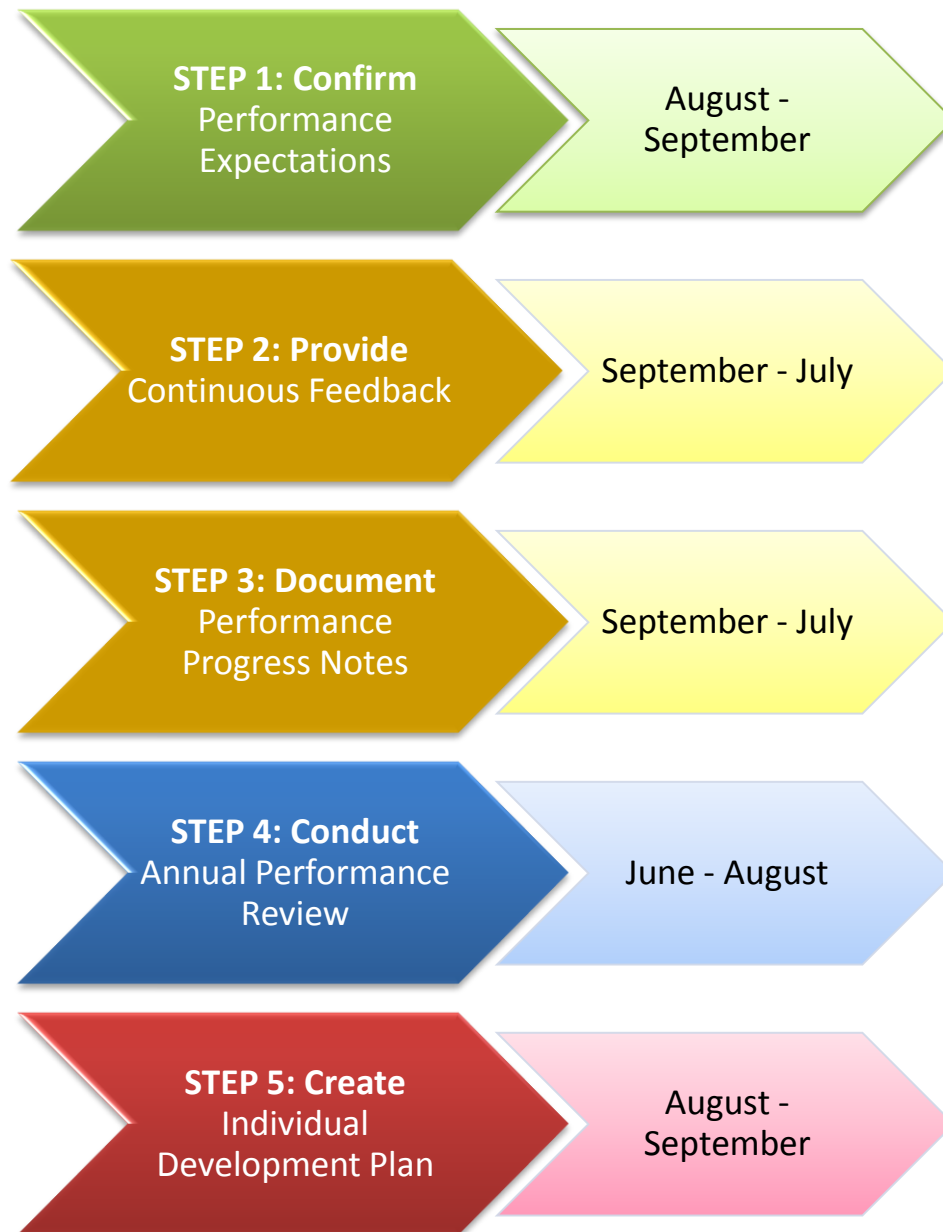
The goal of this policy for each employee to develop through giving and receiving regular feedback, coaching, and performance reviews.

Steps in the EPR process



Performance Year = August 16 – August 15

Date ranges indicated are approximate as the feedback and coaching pieces should continue throughout the year.





UIC Competencies

At UIC, Professional Development and the Employee Performance Review Process are competency-based. All employees are expected to exhibit a level of proficiency in each Core Competency. These Core Competencies form the foundation from which employees will continue to build and enhance skills, knowledge, and abilities.

Core Competencies

Accountability: While addressing job-related responsibilities, confirms established processes are followed. Accomplishes job related tasks and goals by adhering to policies and procedures. Accepts responsibility for actions and engages in appropriate behavior to address work-related issues associated with job.

Communication: Effectively expresses ideas and information in oral and written form. Facilitates exchange of ideas and fosters an atmosphere of open communication. Shares information and resources with others as appropriate in a timely manner.

Cooperation: Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with employees in all colleges/departments/units. Demonstrates flexibility and willingness to assist as needed in the workplace. Accepts challenging tasks or assignments to help the team achieve a goal.

Customer Service: Listens to internal and external customers and actively works to meet their expectations and needs. Responds to customers in a timely manner. Demonstrates respect for all individuals regardless of background, culture or organizational level.

Integrity: Instills mutual trust and confidence; creates a culture that fosters high standards of ethics; is consistent and follows through; and demonstrates a sense of university responsibility and commitment towards the UIC values: Knowledge, Access, Openness, Excellence and Collaboration.

Manager Competencies

Managers at UIC are below director level that may be responsible for guiding one or more individuals to accomplish goals associated with a specific university functional area.

Allocating Resources: Identifies and confirms staffing, training and monetary resources required for effective college/department/unit operations.

Collaborative Conflict Resolution: Resolves workplace conflict in a timely, collaborative manner, minimizing negative impact on employee work performance.

Developing Others: Encourages employees and supports their efforts to develop skills to perform well in current role and plan for career advancement.

Managing Budgets: Reviews and balances college/department/unit funds while anticipating future needs.

Results Focused: Confirms college/department/unit performance goals, identifies actions required of team to achieve defined goals within a specific timeframe, and discusses with employees.



Executive Competencies

Executives at UIC are director level and above, typically responsible for directing business operations and have overall accountability for college/administrative unit or department strategic direction and executing operational plans.

Alliance Capitalization: Confirms and builds partnerships with internal and external constituents that are needed to execute UIC's long-term strategy.

Long-Term Strategic Thinking: Contributes to the development and implementation of UIC vision by incorporating plans that are linked to future student population growth and expanded research portfolio.

Employees with different levels of experience and length of employment may be expected to have varying levels of competency development and demonstrate specific behaviors. The information in these two job aids will help you understand the behaviors each employee, based on length of time with the University, is expected to demonstrate.

Tool(s) available: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

- Behavioral Descriptors: Core
- Behavioral Descriptors: Manager



Step 1: Confirm Performance Expectations

Planning and Expectations - Goal Setting: The “SMART” Way

The first step in the Employee Performance Review Process is setting performance expectations. **Employees** and **their managers** should work together to establish clear expectations for job performance.

Form(s) Used: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

- Planning and Performance Expectations

An important part of managing performance is establishing clear expectations and setting professional goals. During the performance review discussion, the manager and employee should establish at least one goal for the upcoming year, but more may be established if appropriate.

The goal(s) should be one of the following types: operational/task, performance improvement, professional development, project or managerial.

The established goals need to be professional and directed toward improving individual performance in an effort to help UIC overall or a college or unit achieve defined goals. Employees need to understand how their goals support unit/college goals.

SMART Goals

A common approach for confirming performance goals is to think “SMART.” When employing the “SMART” process, managers and employees focus on defining goals that are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic/Relevant and **T**imely.

Specific (S) – Straightforward and emphasize end result. The goal needs to be clear and concise, providing details on what is to be achieved within a specific timeframe.

Measurable (M) – How is goal achievement confirmed? Consider documenting measures of success in one or more of the following ways:

- **Behavior:** observable actions
- **Quantity:** number or amount
- **Quality:** how well the result met the criteria (requires confirming performance criteria during the expectations meeting.)
- **Cycle Time:** time from start to finish in a process (requires documenting and confirming understanding of expected cycle time)
- **Efficiency:** how well resources (time, budget, people) are applied to achieve the result
-

Attainable (A) – Stretch within competency range, but employee and manager need to agree that there is commitment to achieve a stretch goal

Realistic/Relevant (R) – This is not a synonym for “easy,” but in this case, means “doable”

Timely (T) – Putting a time horizon on your goal gives you a clear target to work toward



Goal Setting: The “SMART” Way

When setting performance goals for the year, document the goals on the Planning and Performance Expectations form for the future year and Employee Performance Review form for the past year. This will allow for easy follow-up. Document the following:

- **Goal** – establish and document a “SMART” goal during the employee performance review discussion
- **Action Plan** – document the “how to” during the employee performance review discussion
- **Measure** – document how the manager and employee plan to measure the success of the goal during the employee performance review discussion
- **Target Goal Date** – document target goal ACHIEVEMENT date during the employee performance review discussion
- **Result** – document actions completed toward achieving goals on a regular basis; during the annual performance review discussion meeting, progress notes information may be reviewed to confirm overall goal achievement.

The **employee** is responsible for completing the goal(s) with the manager’s guidance and support.

During the performance review discussion, establish a date, time, and location to review progress toward goal achievement. This might be a quick conversation or a 30-minute discussion on a monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly basis. Continuous feedback is an important part of the EPR process.

Form(s) Using SMART Goals: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

- Planning and Performance Expectations
- Self Review
- Employee Performance Review
- Individual Development Plan



Step 2: Provide Continuous Feedback

| Constructive Feedback | Coaching |
|--|---|
| When you want to change/correct a behavior or action | A means for learning and development |
| Directing someone to take actions to meet goals | Guiding someone toward their goals |
| Being the expert or supervisor with all the answers | Mutual sharing of experiences and opinions to create agreed upon outcomes |

Constructive Feedback

Giving and receiving feedback in a professional setting is a critical part of managing people, interacting with colleagues, and listening to your associates at work. Constructive feedback focuses on **changing behavior** that is not meeting expectations. **Employees** need to be open to receiving constructive feedback and work with their manager to improve that behavior.

Occurs as soon as possible after a behavior is observed:

- State the behavior you observed
- Clarify and confirm any questions you may have
- Explore options for correcting the behavior
- Agree on steps to remedy the behavior and timeline for action
- Summarize agreements and responsibilities

Prior to the conversation, plan what you will say, do your research and focus on observed behaviors and facts.

Form(s) Used: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

- Continuous Improvement Feedback

Praise

Praise is a type of feedback that focuses on behaviors you want to see repeated.

Occurs as soon as possible after a behavior is observed.

- Be specific and include:
 - What the behavior was
 - Why it was good
 - The benefits to the employee, the team, and/or the unit/ university

Any employee can deliver praise to any other employee. Prior to the conversation, plan what you will say, do your research and focus on observed behaviors and facts.

Form(s) Used: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

Continuous Improvement Feedback



Coaching

The focus is on education. Coaching is a partnership between the coach and the coachee—helping the coachee work on improving job performance, achieving new skills, or achieving attainable goals. Employees may request coaching or managers may offer coaching. Coaching relationships are often outside of the reporting structure.

- Make sure you have a shared understanding of the purpose of the conversation
- Keep the tone positive, emphasizing sincerity in your desire to help the other person
- Share perspective on the situation or opportunity at hand
- Share relevant observations
- Listen to the coachee
- Share advice and suggestions
- Give the individual the opportunity to present their ideas and respond to yours.
- Discuss pros and cons and agree on outcomes
- Gain commitment from coachee to develop an action plan and schedule a follow-up meeting

Prior to the conversation, plan what you will say, do your research and focus on the observed behaviors and facts.

Form(s) Used: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

- Continuous Improvement Feedback



Step 3: Document Performance Progress Notes

Form(s) Used: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

- Continuous Improvement Feedback

Document all conversations regarding constructive feedback, praise, and coaching. This can be done using the form provided or in an email. The email would state what was discussed, what was decided, and when the follow up will occur. When completing the performance review this allows the employee and the manager to have first-hand information for completing both the self review and the annual performance review.

Documentation DOs and DON'Ts

| DOs | DON'Ts |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Describe behaviors | Use labels (e.g., "sloppy") |
| Be specific | Be general |
| Document observed behavior | Use hearsay |
| Keep working files on everyone | Keep working files selectively |
| Document immediately | Create files retroactively |
| Document behavior | Document personality |

Other Uses for Continuous Improvement Feedback Form

Employees:

This is an opportunity to share information with your manager for a project you worked on with others, cross-departmental projects, special projects, instances where you are not reporting progress directly to your manager. You can ask other team members and team leaders to use the Continuous Improvement Feedback form to provide information to your manager.

Managers:

This is an opportunity to document throughout the year so you have information on file while completing the Performance Review. This form is also useful when an employee has dual reporting relationships and a great way for managers to share information.



Step 4: Annual Performance Review Meeting

The responsibility for this process lies with both **employees** and **managers**. UIC has established a collaborative process that is competency based and developmental for employees. The primary purpose of the process is to develop and enhance skills of employees at all levels. At UIC, Annual Performance Review Meetings occur between June and mid-August each year.

Employee(s) complete the **Self Review** form prior to scheduling the annual Employee Performance Review Meeting. Be sure to include examples of actions taken.

The manager is encouraged to remind **employees** in May to complete a **Self Review** form in preparation for the Annual Performance Review Meeting. It is recommended that employees complete and give to their manager the Self Review at least two weeks prior to the scheduled Annual Review Meeting.

Manager completes the **Employee Performance Review (EPR)** form with behavior-based examples about job performance collected during the prior year.

Manager schedules EPR discussion meeting with **employee(s)** to discuss job performance, development, and professional goals for the next academic year. The EPR form and Annual Review Meeting should be completed by August 15 each year.

Employee and **manager** sign the completed EPR form.

Manager files completed EPR form in the college or unit confidentially and separate from employee personnel file and provides a copy to the employee.

If the employee receives an overall rating of "Does Not Meet Expectations," it is recommended that a **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)** be completed during the EPR discussion. This plan will address the performance issues and establish action required to improve job performance within 30 or 60 days.

Tips for the Performance Review Meeting

The setting for the meeting should be a private location where you are free to talk, such as the manager's office, which is free of distractions (e.g. computer, email, cell phone, desk phone, and other interruptions).

This should be a **dialog**, not a one way conversation. The meeting begins with the sharing of the Self Review and Performance Review (with the first page at the back). If an employee sees the score right away, it may be difficult to focus on the feedback provided by the manager.

This is a great time to **review** the Employee Performance Review Process, job description and clarify if there are any questions on the performance definitions (exceeds, meets, does not meet). Clarify where needed. Use the Behavioral Descriptors job aid for reference if necessary.

Share the comments sections and allow the employee to clarify and confirm where necessary. This should be a two-way conversation not a monologue from the manager.

Remain focused on behavior, issue or situations, not personal characteristics.



When presenting the Review, the cover page (with overall rating and request for signature) should be placed on the bottom.

If the discussion will include expectations and employee development for the coming year, have the **Planning and Performance Expectations** and **Individual Development Plan** forms ready and discuss those pieces after the performance review conversation. The decision to complete these three conversations at the same time or separately will depend on your business needs, logistics (field persons who are only in the office occasionally), and time.

For a difficult review, remember be direct and clear with your comments, and be attentive to (visual) feedback from the employee (i.e. body language). Both employee and manager should have an opportunity to share thoughts and information.

Form(s) Used: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

- Planning and Performance Expectations
- Self Review
- Employee Performance Review
- Performance Improvement Plan (when needed)
- Individual Development Plan



Step 5: Individual Development Plan

Each employee should have an **Individual Development Plan**. It is the **employee's** responsibility to create the plan and share it with the manager. The **manager** should help coach and guide the employee to achieve the goals indicated on the Individual Development Plan.

As an employee, this is your plan to develop and enhance your skills in areas that will help you achieve your current business goals, your college or unit's business goals, and your own professional development goals. This is a working document that should be consulted several times per year and, when applicable, revised to continuously improve your own skills.

Form(s) Used: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

- Individual Employee Development Plan



EPR Tracking Tool

It is UIC's policy (Policy 602) to complete annual employee performance reviews by August 16th each year. Campus Human Resources monitors compliance (e.g., completion of Employee Performance Reviews) with Policy 602.

The EPR Tracking Tool, designed and developed by Campus HR, provides managers or their designated proxy a place to indicate completion of each individual review in an easy to use database.



Resources

Harvard Business School Press Pocket Mentor Series

Coaching People: Expert Solutions to Everyday Challenges, 2006

Developing Employees: Expert Solutions to Everyday Challenges, 2009

Performance Appraisal: Expert Solutions to everyday Challenges, 2009

Giving Feedback: Expert Solutions to Everyday Challenges, 2007

HBR's 10 Must Reads on Managing Yourself, Harvard Business Review, January 3, 2011

The Complete Guide to Appraisal, Dick Grote, December 1996

How to Say It Performance Reviews, Meryl Runion and Janelle Brittain, December 2006

UIC HR Website <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/index.shtml>

Policies and Procedures: Policy 602

http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/relations/policies_procedures.shtml

MyCareer website: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/index.html>

Documents and Forms: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/hr/mycareer/career/forms.html>

EPR Tracking Tool:



Appendix 1

Do's and Don'ts of Performance Reviews

Top DOs of a Performance Review:

- 1) DO document facts instead of opinions.
- 2) DO play devil's advocate with yourself.
- 3) DO take plenty of time to prepare and present the review.
- 4) DO give the employee opportunity for self-review and for comment right on the form.
- 5) DO create a written plan to correct serious performance concerns.
- 6) DO have a Human Resources representative (or other manager) read the written review before you review it with the employee.

Top DON'Ts of a Performance Review:

- 1) DON'T make statements that are not job related or that delve into personal or protected areas during the review (e.g., personal life, disability, age).
- 2) DON'T provide exclusively negative feedback.
- 3) DON'T raise your voice or be belittling.
- 4) DON'T make promises you cannot deliver on.
- 5) DON'T comment on someone's poor attendance or interruption to operations if the employee was on protected leave, such as under the Family and Medical Leave Act.
- 6) DON'T miss the opportunity to give feedback, even if things are running smoothly (praise).
- 7) DON'T make statements that are inconsistent with the written review.
- 8) DON'T provide the written review without an explanation.
- 9) DON'T avoid or discount the employee's input or explanation of concerns.
- 10) DON'T use casual idioms.



Appendix 2

Focusing on Job Performance: Tips for Managers

- 1) Establishing expectations is an important component of the Employee Performance Review (EPR) Process. The Performance Planning/Expectations Form is provided as a tool for managers to document annual performance expectations for each employee. It is advised that annual expectations be established in collaboration with an employee.
- 2) Meet with employee(s) within 30-days of the completion of the annual Employee Performance Review. Review the Performance Planning/Expectations Form during the meeting. Discuss and document observable and measurable performance expectations for the upcoming year.
- 3) During the Performance Planning/Expectations meeting, communicate UIC and college/unit goals. Discuss the link between employee job responsibilities and roles and those of UIC and the college/unit.
- 4) Create a “working file” with two sub-files, including “Performance Goals” and “Employee Notes.” The “working file” can be as simple as a file folder.
 - a. The “Performance Goals” sub-file allows the manager to track the progress of the professional goals established during the annual performance review.
 - b. The “Employee Notes” sub-file allows managers to capture and collect job performance data throughout the year (e.g. letters of support, positive feedback about an employee, emails regarding opportunities to improve service)
 - c. Document progress an employee makes toward goals and performance requirements as well as an employee’s efforts to resolve performance issues.
- 5) Track an employee’s job performance throughout the year. Using the Continuous Improvement tools (Manager and Employee Feedback forms) on a monthly or quarterly allows the manager to track performance on a consistent basis.
- 6) During the year, meet informally with employee to provide **feedback** on a regular basis.
- 7) There should be **NO SURPRISES** during the annual Employee Performance Review discussion. Feedback should be consistent and continuous throughout the year to avoid surprises. If there is a job performance issue, address the issue when it happens.



Appendix 3

Common Rating Pitfalls

When reviewing an employee's job performance, it is crucial to remain objective. Document the employee's job performance with behavior-based, specific job performance examples and avoid generalizations. It is important to be aware of your own biases and how to avoid common rating pitfalls. Examples of common rating pitfalls are listed below.

Attribution Bias – The tendency to attribute performance failure to factors under the control of the individual and performance success to external cause

Central Tendency – The inclination to rate people in the middle of the scale even when their performance clearly warrants a substantially higher or lower rating

Contrast Effect – The tendency to review people in comparison with other individuals rather than against the standards for the job

First Impression Error – The tendency of a manager to make an initial positive or negative judgment of an employee and allow that first impression to color or distort later information

Halo/Horns Effect – Inappropriate generalizations from one aspect of an individual's performance to all areas of that person's performance

Negative and Positive Skew – The opposite of central tendency. The rating of all individuals as higher as or lower than their performance actually warrants

Recency Effect – The tendency for minor events that have happened recently to have more influence on the rating than major events of many months ago

Similar-To-Me Effect – The tendency of individuals to rate people who resemble themselves higher than they rate others

Stereotyping – The tendency to generalize across groups and ignore individual differences



Appendix 4

Employee Checklist

- Did I meet with my manager to discuss and agree on performance expectations at the beginning of the academic year?
- Do my expectations align with the college-unit/ department/ team goals?
- Did we confirm my job description?
- Did I meet with my manager throughout the year to discuss my progress and receive feedback and coaching?
- Did I receive follow up documentation?
- Did I prepare my Self Review and provide it to my manager at least two weeks prior to my annual Performance Review meeting?
- Did I meet with my manager to discuss my performance review prior to the August 16th deadline?
- Did I prepare an Individual Employee Development Plan to improve my competencies and skills in the coming year in relation to college-unit/ department/ team/ personal goals?



Appendix 5

Manager Preparing to Conduct Performance Review: Checklist

- Review job description (if available) and job responsibilities. Consider if the employee's work load expanded or the amount of responsibility increased.
- Consider performance information provided by the employee in the Self Review (if completed and returned to you) prior to completing the employee's annual review.
- Seek feedback from others (e.g. managers in other units that employee may work with, manager overseeing project employee is assigned) as appropriate.
- Complete the Employee Performance Review form prior to the EPR discussion
 - Consider the employee's job performance during the EPR cycle (August 16 – August 15)
 - Document the employee's job performance with behavior-based, specific job performance examples, avoid generalizations (e.g., late for work all the time, does not complete assignments)
 - Be consistent when reviewing an employee's job performance and documenting examples in the Employee Performance Review
 - Be aware of common rating pitfalls (e.g., Central Tendency, Recency Effect, Similar-to-me Effect)
- Prepare for the Employee Performance Review discussion
 - Schedule time to meet with employee (providing sufficient notice)
 - Confirm that the designated location for the performance review discussion is a private, comfortable space
 - Prepare notes for the Employee Performance Review discussion
- Consider the following before the EPR discussion with the employee
 - What's going well
 - What's not going well
 - Accomplishments
 - Opportunities for improvement
 - Training and development needs
 - Significant changes to the job (factors that may affect job performance)
 - Expectations for the upcoming year
- Confirm understanding and next steps with employee; both the manager and employee sign the FINAL Employee Performance Review Form.
- Confirm a meeting within 30 days after Employee Performance Review discussion, to complete the Planning and Performance Expectations and Individual Development Plan forms to discuss job performance expectations and professional development opportunities for the upcoming year (if not done during the EPR meeting).
- Provide a copy of the completed Employee Performance Review Form to the employee and file the original in the college or unit confidentially and separate from employee personnel files.