GBAS Workshop: “Making Performance Appraisals Work for my Unit”

Presenter: Robin Bielling – Human Resource Manager

Process

- In the February monthly meeting a reminder and discussion of the performance appraisals process takes place.
- Emails are sent to the appropriate departmental contact and college supervisors about the process with dates and deadlines and reminders of the purpose of the appraisal.
  - Useful tool for career and growth development of staff
  - An opportunity to recognize great performance
  - An opportunity to address concerns and redirect employees (should be doing throughout the year not just once a year)
  - Supervisors are encouraged to help staff set goals for the upcoming year
  - A tool for workplace feedback
- Supervisors who may have employees with performance concerns seek advice for the appropriate way to handle the appraisal process.
- Completed PA forms are reviewed at the College level prior to sending them to Employee Relations for accuracy and appropriate feedback.
- Position descriptions are reviewed for accuracy.

Notes:
Cultural Impact

- Communicate proactively throughout the year. If you do so, the anxiety of the performance appraisal process will be less for supervisors and staff.
- Follow-up in writing (email) on conversations that have taken place. This helps employees understand expectations and helps the supervisor when preparing an appraisal. These follow-ups are informal types of documentation.
- Seek guidance from the appropriate resource if you have an employee with performance/behavioral problems.
- The performance appraisal is a useful tool for the employee and supervisor
  - Feedback to staff on a job “well done”
  - Provides an opportunity to be honest and give constructive feedback regarding areas where improvement is needed.

Best Practices

- Meet with staff throughout the year, do not wait to provide an entire year’s worth of feedback during performance appraisals.
  - Quarterly or biannual meetings provide staff with feedback on their performance and if redirection is needed it allows the employee the opportunity to do so and be more successful.
  - Allows the employee to share concerns or challenges they may have about their work assignments to determine if redirection is needed.
- Maintain a folder for each employee
  - Doing so, helps you see a balanced picture of the employee’s performance throughout the year and not just the last month or two.
  - If employee was given constructive feedback, saving emails can help you track his/her progress.
- Prior to writing a performance appraisal
  - Review job description
  - Analyze the expectations communicated to the employee
  - Assess your follow-up with the employee
- Appraisal Session
  - Schedule
  - Prepare
  - If possible don’t use the supervisor’s office, choose an area that provides privacy and is away from the work area
  - Inform employee of the purpose
  - Begin and end the session with positive feedback
  - Encourage open discussion
  - Discuss growth and development
- Refrain from joking, keep it professional

**Challenges**

- When performance appraisals are done incorrectly or are inflated
  - Can affect the employee being appraised; prevents the employee from receiving a true assessment on the quality of their work
  - Negative impact on other employees
  - The department does not utilize the full potential of its employees
  - The university as a whole can be affected by lack of documentation of challenging employees

**Additional Benefits/Uses of Performance Appraisals**

- At the college of Engineering, it is customary to review past performance appraisals when hiring.
  - Vague appraisals are detrimental to this process

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