

Performance Review & 1:1 Conversation Tips

At UVA, performance management is a collaborative, ongoing feedback process between the manager and the employee. Before writing your evaluation, remember that ***the most important part is the conversation.***

Five tips for writing an effective performance evaluation:

1. **Use a Word Doc to create your first draft:** It's easier to edit and you can copy and paste your final version into the evaluation when ready. If you keep notes throughout the year, combine them and then review and edit as needed.
2. **Start with what you know:** Write down accomplishments, strengths, and behaviors that you are proud of, or that you value in the person.
3. **Reflect on areas to develop:** What behaviors or blind spots created barriers? What could help amplify performance next year (or next quarter if participating in quarterly check-ins)?
4. **Include examples:** Always cite specific (where and when) examples to show how your or your team member's behaviors made an impact (positive or negative).
5. **Be concise:** Edit your notes to be concise and (ideally) keep your evaluation less than a page long. Save the finer details for the conversation and focus on the items that have the most significant impact on the team and organization.

Five tips for having an effective 1:1 performance conversation:

1. **Conduct the meeting in private.** Always meet in a space where you and the person will not be easily overheard or interrupted, even if you're having the 1:1 virtually.
2. **Ask questions and listen:** For managers, simply start the conversation with a question such as, "What are we talking about today?" or, "What would you like to talk about first?" Then let the person drive the conversation without interrupting. For individuals, be sure to ask your manager's feedback after sharing your notes from your self-evaluation.
3. **Make it a two-way conversation:** Sometimes it is necessary to be clear and explicit. However, directly telling someone what to do or that you disagree could make the conversation difficult. So instead, use phrases like, "Have you considered...?" and ask for more information and examples.
4. **Give and ask for feedback that is specific and objective:** Discuss what behaviors led to success or not and provide examples of the impact on the work, the team, and the organization.
5. **Set expectations for the next three months:** The conversation shouldn't end here. What are your or your manager's expectations for performance moving forward? Ideally, performance is discussed on a quarterly basis, while feedback is sought after and given on a regular basis.