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2009 Performance Appraisal Time is Here!

The end of May marks the beginning of the annual Performance Appraisal Process. Performance appraisals serve as the foundation for goal setting, performance measurement and talent development. Goals are set successfully when the employee and manager have a shared understanding of the goals, behaviors and competencies necessary to execute the goals—as well as the performance measures that assess whether the goals were achieved.

The performance evaluation process also provides an excellent opportunity for coaching—a key role of managers. The "manager as coach" arrangement pays huge dividends. It helps employees set the direction for their careers. It gives both employees and managers time to communicate their expectations and concerns. It fosters employee motivation and commitment, and employees and managers an opportunity to revise performance-development goals.

Often, managers and employees believe that coaching and feedback take place only when performance is lagging. Certainly, when performance does not meet expectations, employees need constructive feedback specific to improve their performance. Coaching, however, should support all types of employee performance. When employee performance meets or exceeds expectations, they should be recognized for their accomplishments. Employees should be given feedback that helps them understand why their manager thinks their work is outstanding.

As a result, managers play an instrumental role in driving the performance evaluation process. The only way employees will understand whether they are meeting certain standards is through specific and timely feedback from their managers. Employees want to know that what they are contributing and what they are being held accountable for has value.

Employees also have a significant part in the appraisal process. Employees need to evaluate their own performance as well as develop goals and training plans. Employee comments provide an opening to discuss performance development including areas of needed improvement and resources available for improving those areas. It also provides managers with insight regarding things affecting employee's work environment, contributions, and suggestions for changes and improvements.

Managing performance is critical to the success of employees, departments and UMKC. We have developed a process and guidelines to help you succeed. More information and 2009 recommended timelines can be found at

<http://www.umkc.edu/hr/employee-relations/default.asp>

