

Personnel Performance Evaluation Motivates Academic Excellence

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How do you motivate a person concerning his institutional responsibilities to such an extent that he will progress above and beyond what might "normally" (average) be expected? When enthusiasm can be renewed in one person, it has a distinct habit of "rubbing off" on colleagues and can result in increased energy and accomplishments from others.

One of the most effective methods of motivation is through rewards for meritorious service. How does one evaluate the performance of an individual in professional as well as administrative positions in institutions of higher learning? The person doing the evaluating must accept the notion that performance evaluation leads to better development of the individual being appraised. An improved performance is a more valuable performance.

There are numerous performance factors which are used widely and their relative importance can vary from position to position and are functions of the type of organizational activity. Obviously, the nature of the activity of a department chairman will be different than that of an associate professor. Some of these performance factors can be modified to fit specific situations, but in general may include:

Adequacy of knowledge. What is the person's degree of knowledge of his positional responsibilities? Is he a specialist in his field? How well is he recognized for his professional and/or administrative activities by his colleagues within and outside the institution? Does he grasp new ideas and responsibilities quickly?

Initiative and drive. Is the person a self-starter? How much does he have to depend on his superiors to put him in motion? Are his professional goals and performance standards high, realistic, and properly defined?

Enthusiasm. Enthusiasm to see a job well done can be almost as important as the skills and knowledge required for that performance.

Quality of performance. The quality aspect will have to be evaluated in terms of the responsibilities of the particular position. Teaching, research, and administration can have some common factors of appraisal but individual criteria will be required in most cases. Department chairmen should develop their own criteria upon which they can evaluate those in the department involved in teaching and/or research. Likewise the academic deans should develop criteria for evaluating department chairmen, directing their primary attention to administrative performance, and where applicable, teaching and/or research activities.

Quantity of performance. Evaluate the quantity of work performed to meet the necessary criteria for the position. Items such as publications (and their various types), teaching,

committee, administrative, and public relations activities must be weighed. How well does he shoulder his responsibilities?

Creativity and imagination. Does the person offer refreshing new ideas to attack both old and new problems? Is he resourceful or does he prefer to cling to tested procedures? Can he contribute to a better way of doing things and will it work?

Judgment. The ability to organize work, establish priorities, and then follow the projects to completion is essential. An evaluation of the person's decisions in both routine and non-routine situations is extremely helpful. Is his judgment sought by others?

Ability to communicate. A person should be able to effectively communicate his thoughts and actions to others. Does he differ in his effectiveness with respect to oral and written communication? Can he express himself successfully and at the same time be understood? Does his style of communication inspire others?

Ability to work with others. Can this person work well with superiors, colleagues, and subordinates? Is he respectful of the views of others no matter how much they may conflict with his own views? Do students feel he is interested in them?

Leadership and maturity. Can he organize, motivate, and channel the energies of others to surpass their individual expectations? How well does the person accept suggestions for his own improvement? Can he delegate both authority and responsibility? How does he respond to intense pressure?

As stated earlier, the primary function of the performance evaluation is to develop better the individual being evaluated. The evaluation and interpretation should be well in mind before discussing it with the individual concerned.

The dialogue should emphasize that the person does well and then should introduce the subject of areas which could be materially improved. The latter can be accomplished by asking the person where he thinks he can improve his performance. In discussing the deficiencies, the superior should be prepared to cite examples and offer concrete advice. *Criticism* should be directed, not wandering, and should be positive, placing emphasis on the person's improvement and development. Promotion is a valuable motivational technique and can be discussed in terms of the performance evaluation.

The best administrative intents of the institution can be relatively ineffective unless there is adequate evaluation of all personnel. It has been said that an intelligent mind is looking for challenge and the more intelligent the mind, the greater the capacity for challenge. Performance evaluation motivates the intelligent mind.

The Teacher And Teaching — Mechanization

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Good teaching is largely a matter of good communication! The instructor in agricultural mechanization or in agricultural engineering technology (both terms currently are being used) is indeed fortunate to have available a wider variety of instructional methods than an instructor in the social sciences.

Oral and written communications are but two of several methods which can be used to advantage by instructors in the physical sciences. This paper is an outline of some useful techniques concerning some of these methods. In this

scientific age, we must consider carefully what we teach and how much of it we can communicate in the time allotted. Information available on many subjects is increasing almost faster than we can file it, let alone read it.

Written material is but one of the many visual methods which are becoming so important in classroom instruction under the general heading of graphics. The chalkboard is still useful, but the overhead projector can do everything that the blackboard can do with the added advantage that the instructor can always face his students and remain at his desk. The important thing is to work out techniques to minimize setup time before and after class. The overhead projector is the