Performance Management and Development Cycle

Performance Management and Development is a process in which supervisors and leaders are accountable for establishing and adjusting performance expectations and job goals, identifying development opportunities, giving ongoing feedback and coaching regularly, recognizing and evaluating performance results. In other words, it is a continuous practice of planning, coaching, and engaging, evaluating, and developing employee performance.

Performance Management is often illustrated as a cycle, but it is important to understand that most performance management practices need to take place daily. The State of Ohio’s new Performance Management and Development Cycle consists of three major phases.

**Plan:** During this phase, a collaborative effort between the supervisor and employee occurs which involves reviewing the job description, identifying critical performance objectives, developing goals, setting expectations, explaining how an employee can meet standards, and discussing training objectives to help the employee develop competencies or identify career development objectives.

**Engage:** Supervisors are expected to engage employees as much as possible in their performance by providing scheduled as well as “in-the-moment” feedback and recognition to ensure positive behaviors are reinforced and the right skills are acknowledged consistently. When employees are noticed, appreciated, and empowered, they are more likely to become and remain engaged, which results in a higher level of performance. Remember, the “in-the-moment” feedback discussions should be documented to support completing the Evaluate phase. Feedback can be either positive or constructive; both types of feedback should be provided to employees as appropriate. Contrary to popular practice, performance management and development is not just a quarterly or annual evaluation exercise, but rather an ongoing communication practice that occurs throughout the year to ensure employees are engaged and productive.

**Evaluate:** During the year-end evaluation phase, supervisors gather specific examples that support the final evaluation, assessing overall performance observed throughout the entire evaluation period, referring to notes collected on the employee’s performance. Also, during the Evaluate phase, the supervisor presents the overall evaluation to the employee during a formal one-on-one meeting.

Notice that there are two (2) additional components within the cycle: *Coach and Develop*.

**Coach:** In the Coach phase, this involves observation, feedback, and documentation of each employee’s performance. Coaching is an ongoing component of strong performance management that addresses concerns and issues so that employees contribute positively to the organization. During this phase, the employee and supervisor meet regularly to assess progress, identify performance barriers that may prevent the employee from achieving a goal, share feedback on goals, discuss changes in expectations and/or goals, and determine if additional support is needed. The ongoing nature of this phase helps engage employees in their performance and development. The greater part of the Performance Management and Development Cycle should be invested in coaching-related discussions and feedback, which should be routinely documented to support and aid in completing the Evaluate phase.

**Develop:** This phase provides opportunities for supervisors and employees to collaborate in developing new skills or competencies. Development is a critical, yet an often-overlooked part of the cycle that can result in an employee’s increased level of engagement and motivation. It is important that supervisors begin to shift from a corrective approach to one that supports the development of employees by creating Performance Improvement Plans or Career Development Plans.

Keep in mind, development can occur at any point throughout the entire performance management and development cycle.