UAB’s commitment to Performance Management creates an environment where all employees can excel.
FOR LEADERS, Performance Management is an on-going and individualized process. You may manage and work with each employee differently depending on their strengths. Throughout your career as a leader, we encourage you to continue to enhance your skills and educate yourself on the latest performance management research.
**Performance Management at UAB**

Performance management at UAB is designed to ensure that leaders and employees understand and communicate openly about performance expectations and goals and that employees have opportunities to develop the skills and abilities needed to contribute to UAB’s mission successfully. Rather than focusing on an annual appraisal, UAB’s approach to performance management process emphasizes ongoing feedback as the most critical part of the process.

**What is Performance Management?**

Performance management is a process by which leaders and employees work together to plan, monitor and review an employee’s work objectives and overall contribution to the organization. More than just an annual performance review, performance management is the continuous process of setting objectives, assessing progress and providing on-going coaching and feedback to ensure that employees are meeting their objectives and career goals. The fundamental goal of performance management is to promote and improve employee effectiveness. Performance management should do the following:

- Define for employees what contributions they are expected to make and how those contributions relate to the broader mission
- Provide ongoing feedback and support for employees as they work to meet those expectations throughout the year
- Document and recognize employees’ progress
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Why should you care about performance management? Ultimately, performance management done well helps UAB to achieve our goals. An effective performance management process creates engaged employees. Engaged employees are productive, enthusiastic, profitable and positively affect their customers. This, in turn, leads to world-class outcomes for UAB.

To create engaged employees, the Gallup organization says you should create an environment where your employees agree with the following statements:

- I know what is expected of me at work.
- I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.
- At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.
- In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
- My leader, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.
- There is someone at work who encourages my development.
- At work, my opinions seem to count.
- The mission or purpose of my organization makes me feel my job is important.
- My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.
- I have a best friend at work.
- In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.
- This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.
**UAB Success Model**

Despite the wide range of work employees do at UAB, some universal themes are critical to every employee’s success. We refer to these themes as the UAB Success Model. The Success Model provides a framework for leaders to think about performance, and for all employees to think about their individual development. For UAB to achieve its goals, all employees need to:

- Understand UAB
- Achieve Results
- Build Relationships

We hope that the Success Model will help employees:

- Assess their performance and that of their direct reports
- Provide feedback to others
- Allow employees to focus on professional development
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Leaders
As a leader, performance management is arguably one of the most important parts of your job.

☑️ Deliver regular positive and constructive feedback in a way that strengthens two-way communication and reinforces desired behaviors.

☑️ Determine an appropriate schedule for regular performance conversations with those you manage directly to check-in on goal progress.

☑️ Improve your management and leadership skills.

☑️ Support employees’ professional development while making them accountable for it.

☑️ Submit your completed employee evaluations by the designated deadline.

Employees
The performance management process is designed to help you succeed at UAB.

☑️ Work towards achieving your individual goals, which help UAB reach its goals.

☑️ Take responsibility for your professional development.

☑️ Be open to feedback, accept constructive feedback, and take steps to improve.

☑️ Give others feedback.

☑️ Keep a record of your performance achievements, successes, and challenges.

☑️ Complete a thorough self-evaluation.
UAB’s Performance Management Process

There is a common misconception that performance management is a one-time event that happens annually during the performance review meeting. Because of this, many people have a negative perception of performance management. They associate it with having to evaluate a difficult employee or get a negative review.

With UAB’s continuous performance management process, however, you are always communicating about performance. Ongoing feedback becomes a part of the way that you communicate with your colleagues. To support ongoing feedback, we recommend scheduling multiple check-in points throughout the year:

- **Expectations and Goals**: This meeting should focus on understanding the role of each employee, what the expectations are for that role, and what goals the employee should work toward over the course of the year.

- **Regular Check-ins**: This component will consist of on-going communication between the leader and employee. Open lines of communication ensure that there are no surprises during the annual evaluation and that the employee is on track throughout the year.

- **Evaluate and Recognize**: On an annual basis, employees conduct a self-evaluation of their progress throughout the year. Leaders use the self-evaluation as the basis for a one on one conversation with that employee to evaluate their performance for the year. Leaders document that conversation and determine next steps for rewarding and recognizing employees who are on the right track and helping those who are struggling to get back on track.
• **Input from Others**: Employee seeks input from customers, clients, co-workers, etc. on performance to grow and develop (optional).

**Performance Conversation Questions**

Listed below are conversation “prompts” to assist you at work. Enjoy your conversations!

• What successes have you experienced lately?

• What challenges are you currently facing?

• Where do you need help/assistance?

• What do you want to start doing differently?

• What do you want to stop doing that is impeding your success?

• What do you want to continue that is encouraging success?

• Where do you see yourself going in your career?
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR LEADERS

This section is intended to give leaders some basic tips related to important performance management skills.

Listening

Listening helps us understand UAB, achieve results, and build relationships. Steps to effective listening include:

1. Listen first to understand
2. Avoid the temptation to argue or be right
3. Pause to reflect
4. Restate what was heard

Feedback

Ongoing feedback is the most critical part of the UAB performance management process. Providing and receiving feedback is not always easy. But it is important to remember that feedback is a gift. It helps all of us improve and learn. Below are a few suggestions to consider when providing feedback.

1. Ask yourself: “What useful information does this employee need? What information would help them be more successful in their job?” Your goal for giving feedback is to encourage future positive behaviors and also to let employees know how they are doing and the impact they have on others or the organization.

2. Assume positive intent. Approach others from the standpoint that you recognize their desire to perform effectively in their jobs. Whatever it is that they have done, consider your response from the standpoint that their intent was positive. So, you might start out by saying: “Alex, I know that you’re committed to providing exceptional customer service.” Or, “Alex, I know that efficiency is very important to you.”

3. Address specific, observable behaviors instead of making broad judgments. Consider the difference between: “Alex, I just observed you walk past a student who looked lost,” and “Alex, you’re insensitive to students’ needs.”

4. Act immediately. Feedback should be provided as soon as possible after the behavior was observed. The closer to the actual situation, the more pertinent and relevant your feedback will be.

5. Make sure your message was received. As part of your discussion with your employee, you should make sure that they heard, and understood, the message you sent. So you might say something like: “Just so I know we’re on the same page, could you tell me what you understand our next steps to be?”
Rounding

As a leader, you need to schedule time in your day to visit with employees, talk about progress and provide feedback. You should also create opportunities for employees to approach you with questions or concerns regarding performance. This concept is referred to as rounding. When checking in with employees, this conversation formula works particularly well. Ask the following questions in order:

1. **Care and Concern** – Always start with a personal question. Ask how the employee is doing or how a family member is. Ask about a particular interest they have or comment on something you have talked about in the past.

2. **What is Working Well** – Tell me what is working well today?

3. **People to Recognize** – Is there anyone I should be rewarding and recognizing today?

4. **Systems to Improve** – Is there anything we can do better?

5. **Tools and Equipment** – Do you have the tools, equipment, knowledge you need to do your job?

Just as important as it is to check-in with your employees, it is equally important to follow-up on any actionable items you find during these conversations.

Coaching

Coaching goes hand in hand with feedback and is part of your regular and ongoing communication. Coaching involves helping employees identify solutions to their performance barriers. Coaching is not simply telling your employees what to do.

You coach your employees when you:

- **Observe and support** an employee’s progress
- **Affirm and reinforce skills, knowledge, and behaviors** that contribute to employee progress and goal completion
- **Engage in problem-solving** to identify challenges that are preventing your employees from achieving goals. Suggest ways employees can modify and improve.
Developing Others

Employees want to develop, grow and enhance their skills. By providing these opportunities, you create engaged employees that are devoted to their work and the success of the organization. Professional development does not necessarily involve sending employees to training classes. In fact, research shows that 70% of learning happens on the job, 20% of learning happens through relationships with others, and 10% happens through traditional training. With that in mind, here are some ways you can help employees grow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On the Job (70%)</th>
<th>Relationships (20%)</th>
<th>Training (10%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Provide the opportunity for employees to cross-train in other roles and responsibilities</td>
<td>• Develop a small mentoring program within your team or department</td>
<td>• Encourage employees to participate in UAB training opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Invite employees to participate and contribute to department planning and decisions</td>
<td>• Connect your employees with others at UAB who have a certain skill, and set up a shadowing schedule</td>
<td>• Allow employees to pursue online training opportunities</td>
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<td>• Assign employees to lead projects or teams</td>
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<td>• Provide a flexible schedule so your employee can take advantage of UAB’s tuition assistance</td>
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Setting Goals

Performance management is about achieving positive outcomes for UAB based on meeting individual goals. This, in turn, helps us achieve departmental goals and ultimately the UAB Strategic Plan. For this to be achieved everyone must know how to create “smart” goals. To do this UAB will use S.M.A.R.T. criteria to create goals that are clear and measurable. The leader and employee work together to develop goals.

<table>
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<th>Definitions of SMART Criteria</th>
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<td>Specific</td>
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| Measurable                    | If you can’t measure a goal, you can’t manage a goal. Choose a goal with measurable progress and establish concrete criteria for measuring the success of your goal, Goals can be:  
  • Quantitative – Measure amount of output or how much should be done  
  • Qualitative – Measure how well the task is done |
| Attainable                    | Goals should be challenging but also realistic and able to be accomplished with available resources. |
| Relevant                      | Goals should be consistent with your other goals and aligned with the goals of the company, your leader, and your department. |
| Time-bound                    | Set a time-frame for the goal. Putting an end point on your goal gives a clear target to works toward. |

**Important Note about Goals**

Gallup research confirms that monthly goals are more effective than yearly goals. If you set annual goals during the annual performance meeting, work with your employee to break this annual goal into monthly SMART sub-goals.

**Example**

Not - SMART: I want to be more productive.

SMART: Increase number of customers served over a six month period by 15%.
**Reward & Recognize**

Reward and recognition is an essential ongoing part of performance management. Everyone likes to be recognized for a “job well done” even if it is a simple “Thank You.” Great leaders create a culture of reward and recognition where it is simply a part of their management style and is also encouraged between co-workers.

**Recognition**

- **Be specific when recognizing your employees**
  Recognition can be either formal, such as in a department meeting, or informal, during daily interactions. Recognize great performance or achievements and be specific about the behaviors or outcomes that impressed you. Telling your employee “you did a great job” is not enough. Exactly what did they do and how great was it? One of the goals of recognition is encouraging people to repeat good behaviors and results. To do that we must be specific about those behaviors.

- **Be timely when recognizing an employee**
  Recognition is best received when it comes as soon as possible after your employee demonstrates a desired behavior or accomplishment. This requires leaders to anticipate accomplishments and improvements and be prepared with appropriate reinforcement.

**Reward**

- **Always match the reward to the individual**
  Rewards are most effective when they are thoughtful and customized to what an employee truly finds rewarding. Ask your employees how they like to be rewarded and individualize your rewards to each employee. Rewards can be:

  - Personal or official
  - Informal or formal
  - Public or private
  - Gifts or activities

- **Financial and non-financial rewards**
  Financial incentives great to reward people for hard work. Everyone loves a raise. However, studies show that non-financial rewards may be more effective to retain employees. Providing employees with additional responsibilities, new assignments, and various development opportunities increases employee motivation, engagement, and performance.
# Performance Management Learning Resources

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