



STAFF APPRAISAL SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

This Staff Appraisal Scheme has been written as an easy to understand working document aimed at helping you develop procedures to appraise your staff.

As part of the Personnel Services System, the Appraisal Scheme ensures that the requirements of the organisation are met by the employees and is an opportunity for the Managers to review levels of performance with a view to maximising individual effectiveness for the benefit of the company.

The system is such that it is both informative, effective and motivational for both employer and employee and is devised to be as “employer/employee friendly” as possible.

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APPRAISAL SCHEME

A) **THE PURPOSE OF APPRAISALS**

The successful operation of any company depends primarily on using the full potential of its workforce.

This necessitates certain criteria being met, which are to the benefit of both the company and its employees, and requires a strategy to be put in operation to achieve this aim.

- (i) Both Supervisors and staff have to be aware of the requirements of the individual job. This is best served by having a job description for each job.

- (ii) Supervisors have to be able to identify the development needs of the company and their employees. To meet this aim there is a requirement for supervisors to carry out a formal appraisal scheme.

B) **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Before any appraisal scheme can be put into operation it is necessary for a job description to be completed for each job.

It is essential that both the appraiser and the employee are aware of the requirements of the job as, unless both are completely aware of them, it is impossible for a fair assessment of the employee's performance to be carried out and, equally, it is difficult for the employees to be sure that they are performing within the requirements of the job.

The following are required for a job description:-

- (i) job title
- (ii) main responsibilities
- (iii) relationships
- (iv) approval

When writing a job description the following is necessary. The writer must:-

- (i) make sure that he/she is familiar with the day to day nature of the work performed.
- (ii) discuss the job with the person who is carrying out, or who has carried out, the job.
- (iii) Use simple English with short sentences.
- (iv) not use jargon or write the job descriptions in a way which can be confusing/or can have different interpretations put on its contents.
- (v) make sure that the job description does not contain any discriminatory assumptions.
- (vi) make sure that on completion the job description is approved by the job holder and signed and dated by the writer and person approving it.

It is not necessary when writing a job description to go into infinite detail when listing the main tasks of the job. It is only necessary to include what the person is required to do, NOT how they are required to do it (e.g. organise and control staff under his/her control).

An example of a job description is given as Appendix A. It is important that each task is numbered but such numbering is not expected to reflect the importance of each task.

C) **APPRAISALS (GENERAL)**

The aim of appraisals should ALWAYS be positive, even when certain aspects of a job being carried out by an employee are not up to the required standards. No useful purpose is achieved by "nit picking", ruthlessly criticising an employee or entering something in the 'debit' section on the appraisal form for the sake of it. Above all employees should not be made to view the appraisal as "that annual ordeal"!

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Appraisals should be made up of four elements, namely:-

Preparation of appraisal	- by employee
Appraisal	- by appraiser
Appraisal interview	- appraiser and employee
Action plans	- agreed between appraiser and employee

There are two basic types of appraisal schemes:

- (i) where an appraiser has a requirement to tick boxes indicating performance for certain set criteria (e.g. plans, organises, prioritises, meets schedules, etc.)
- (ii) where an appraiser has to complete sections to highlight areas of the employee's performance which have been achieved effectively or better, and those areas which have not been performed so effectively.

Both types have their merits and pitfalls:

- (i) tick boxes are a lot easier to complete because, faced with the options laid out in boxes, it demands less thought, which therefore is also its main weakness.
- (ii) the pitfalls of having to complete sections with original thought, means more writing and attention has to be paid to completing this type of appraisal, but it has the advantage of specifically identifying areas/tasks which have been performed well and not so well. It is possibly a lot harder to come to an overall assessment using this method, but it identifies for the employee more clearly his/her standards of performance.

The ideal type of system is one which can combine the best of both.

The important aspects of any appraisal scheme are that overall it is relatively uncomplicated, accurate and, above all, fair.

There are always two fundamental aspects to employment:

- (i) the employee has a responsibility for managing his/her own performance.
- (ii) supervisors have a responsibility to build on each employee's strengths and bring in constructive measures to eliminate weaknesses.

The interests of the company and its clients/customers are best served by a workforce, which as individuals and as a team, are carrying out their tasks to the most effective performance level.

This is what performance appraisals are seeking to achieve and why they can have an impact on employee and company performance.

Ideally, Supervisors should have only approximately six to ten employees to appraise. It is unlikely that a Manager/Supervisor will have sufficient in-depth knowledge of his/her employees' performance, if there are a greater number to appraise.

At the end of all appraisals the employee should not be left feeling deflated. The aim is motivation with the knowledge that through targeting objectives, Supervisors and the employee are working together to achieve the aims of that employee to be equipped better for his/her present or future roles within the company.

D) APPRAISALS (THE PREPARATION FOR APPRAISAL)

In any appraisal scheme “human nature” is bound to come to the fore.

- (i) there is a danger that the appraiser remembers poor aspects of an employee’s performance, rather than the better aspects, and those events which have happened recently rather than in the earlier part of the appraisal year.
- (ii) the employee will be trying to present the best possible picture of him/herself, when completing a preparation for appraisal form (self appraisal) and will, therefore, tend to highlight the better aspects of his/her performance and, conveniently, in the hope that the appraiser will not remember, omit the poor aspects.

This does not do anyone any good. It does not help the employee because areas which could be improved upon through target setting are omitted, and training or assistance is then not provided to try to improve the employee’s job performance or future prospects. Invariably this means that the same problems occur throughout the next appraisal year and so on. It does not help the appraiser because if there are things of which he/she is not readily aware, assistance cannot be given and identified on the jointly agreed action plan. It certainly does not help the company because that employee is not performing to his/her true potential and no action will therefore be taken to improve matters.

It is important that the whole appraisal scheme is done on an honest and unbiased basis by the employee and appraiser. The whole aim is to “IMPROVE CURRENT JOB PERFORMANCE FOR THE BENEFIT OF BOTH THE EMPLOYER AND THE COMPANY”. The aim is not to be negative and deflate the employee so that he/she becomes demotivated and perhaps loses interest in the job or company.

The employee needs to be made aware that we are looking at two areas:

- (i) how can the company build on his/her strengths?
- (ii) what do we need to do together to develop the employee?

This is the message that needs to be emphasised to employees.

Employees should be given a Preparation for Appraisal Form (Appendix B) about six weeks prior to the appraisal interview taking place. In addition, they should be given the document “Notes for Employees on the Performance Appraisal Scheme” (Appendix H), together with an Action Plan Form (ACT01) and notes (Appendices E1 and E2) for rough completion prior to the appraisal interview). The Preparation for Appraisal Form should be returned within two weeks.

This will give appraisers four weeks in which to fine tune in respect of their employees the completion of a Job Task Performance Table (Appendix C2) and Performance Appraisal Form (Form PAF) (Appendix D) prior the appraisal interview. The bulk of the appraisal should have been drafted by then.

The Preparation for Appraisal Form should be returned to the employee prior to the appraisal interview. A copy of which will be put on the employee's file following the appraisal, if he/she so wishes.

E) **APPRAISALS (APPRAISAL FORM & TASK PERFORMANCE TABLE)**

Appraisers should be given a copy of the document "Notes for Appraisers on the Performance Appraisal Scheme" (Appendix G). Appraisers will need to have a copy of the employee's job description and rate each of the tasks on it from A to E (A = consistently been outstanding in all aspects of the performance in carrying out that task) and (E = has generally performed less than effectively in most aspects of that task).

It will then be necessary on the Performance Appraisal Form (Appendix D) to highlight the main areas of performance, good and bad, with explanations of reasons and future action.

F) **APPRAISALS (INTERVIEW)**

When holding the appraisal interview, the appraiser will need the following documents:

- (i) The Job Description
- (ii) A copy of the completed Preparation for Appraisal Form (from employee)
- (iii) The Appraisal Form

Put the employee at ease and remember:

DO NOT make it the "ANNUAL ORDEAL".
DO NOT be negative and over critical

BE fair and unbiased
BE positive and constructive in criticism (if any)
BE praiseworthy (when deserving)

Advise the employee of the overall rating; show and explain how and why you rated each job task the way you did.

- 7 Remind the employee that if he/she believes the appraisal is unfair, or he/she does not agree with the appraiser's assessment, an interview can be arranged with the Appraiser's Manager.

Arrange a date when the appraiser and the employee will discuss the targets/objectives which have been set out. Send out a confirmation letter (Action Plan Letter) (Appendix F) and if necessary, an Action Plan Form (Appendix E2), for rough completion prior to this meeting.

G) **APPRAISALS (FOLLOW UP/NEW EMPLOYEES/NEW JOB)**

This covers employees in two areas:

- (i) those who need further development.
- (ii) those who have been in the job less than three months at the time the annual appraisal scheme starts (i.e. when Preparation for Appraisal Forms are sent out) and who have insufficient service to assess. Those who fall into this category will be re-appraised in three months and six months

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At re-appraisal the whole appraisal procedure outlined previously will be necessary.

TARGETS/OBJECTIVES

It will be necessary for the Appraiser to meet with the employee to finally set these targets/objectives.

At this meeting both the Appraiser and employee will jointly identify areas to be targeted and set a timetable. The Appraiser will formally complete the Action Plan Form and issue a copy to the employee, keeping a copy on the employee's file.

This is an ongoing process as further meetings will be necessary to discuss progress throughout the coming appraisal year.

The Appraiser should complete a Job Task Performance Table (Form TPT) in conjunction with the Performance Appraisal Form (Form PAF).

APPENDIX A

SPECIMEN JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Transport Manager

Main Purpose of Job: To control all transport operations and prepare and monitor the transport budget.

Relationships:

- a) Responsible to: Operations Director
- b) Responsible for: A team of Drivers, Mechanics & Office Staff
- c) Liaison with: Drivers, Managers, Clients/Customers, Security.

Main Tasks of Job:

1. Organise and control staff under his/her control.
2. Accurate completion of time sheets and tachographs.
3. Ensure that standards are maintained relative to maintenance/cleanliness of vehicles.
4. Have procedures in place to ensure that all company transport is used efficiently, economically and for the benefit of the company.
5. Maintain health and safety standards of staff under control.
6. The above is not an exhaustive list of duties and you will be expected to perform different tasks as necessitated by your changing role within the organisation and the overall business objectives of the organisation.

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Job Description approved by: **P Jones**
Transport Manager
J Brown
Operations Director

Date: 21:04:01

Date: 22:04:01

Form PREP1

Appendix B

TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEE PRIOR TO APPRAISAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Preparation for Appraisal – *Employee*

The comments you make on this form are not recorded for anyone other than yourself. They will assist your Appraiser in his/her appraisal of you. After the appraisal interview your Appraiser will discuss the completed appraisal with his/her Manager (where applicable) and if you so wish, your completed Preparation of Appraisal Form can be used at that meeting. The contents will remain confidential to the management/supervision involved, and the form will be returned to you. A copy will be filed along with your completed Appraisal Form, if you so wish.

On the Appraisal Form itself a space is provided for you to make any comment you may wish regarding your appraisal.

If you disagree with the outcome or are unhappy with your appraisal, you are entitled to an interview with your Appraiser’s Manager. You may be accompanied by a colleague at this meeting.

NAME:

Please consider your performance during the period under review and complete the following:

- 1) Which parts of the job have you performed best? How did you achieve this?

2) Which parts of the job have you performed less well? Were there any circumstances which prevented a better performance?

3) What could or should be done by you, your Appraiser, the company, or anyone else to help improve your performance in any way.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE EMPLOYEE AT THE END OF THE APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

Please copy the details of agreed action for the future, which are shown on the completed Appraisal Form, when it is handed to you for signature.

Action to be taken by Appraiser:

Action to be taken by Employee:

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Dates for review of agreed action: Week commencing:

Week commencing:

Week commencing:

Form TPT

Appendix C1

COMPLETED EXAMPLE
JOB TASK PERFORMANCE TABLE

TO BE COMPLETED BY APPRAISER IN CONJUNCTION WITH PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM.

Name:

Department:

JOB TASK (Brief Description)	APPRAISAL RATING (Tick Box)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Organisation & control of all staff	✓				
Accurate completion of documentation		✓			
Health & safety standards			✓		
Vehicle maintenance	✓				
Procedures (General)			✓		
Liaison with Managers				✓	
Compliance with company policies		✓			
Effective use of budget		✓			

RATING

A Consistently outstanding performance in all aspects of task.

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**TO BE COMPLETED BY APPRAISER AFTER RECEIVING THE PREPARATION FOR
APPRAISAL FORM (PREP1)**

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Performance Appraisal

Name:

Position: Department:

Date appointed to this position:

Period covered by this appraisal: From: To:

This is to acknowledge that this appraisal has been discussed and seen by employee.

Signed (Employee):

Signed (Appraiser):

REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

Consider the job holder's results in his/her work in general over the last year, relating, in particular, to agreed targets/objectives/standards of performance, and to existing job description.

1a. What parts of the job have been performed most effectively?

1b. How has this been achieved?

1c. What action will be taken to build on the above strengths?

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2a. What parts of the job could have been done better?

2b. Why was this?

2c. What action will be taken to overcome the above difficulties?

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3. Overall Grading of Performance

From your evaluation against the main tasks of the job description and the markings on the Job Task Performance Table, indicate the overall performance achieved by the job holder. Bear in mind particularly the definitions of the ratings. The assessment should reflect the performance actually achieved in the circumstances which prevailed. Any unusual/special factors governing the year's performance should be stated below the assessment.

Tick the appropriate box:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		□□□□□□A				□□B
		D			□□C	E
					X	

KEY:

- A:** Constantly outstanding performance in most areas of job.
- B:** Constantly more than effective performance in most areas of job.
- C:** Effective performance
- D:** Some effective performance but some improvement required in many areas of job (review in six months).
- E:** Constantly underachieving and less than effective in most areas of job (review in three and six months).
- X:** Too early to assess (review in six months).

ALL APPRAISERS SHOULD NOW COMPLETE THE AGREED ACTION PLAN LETTER.

4. The following training and other action will be taken:

5. Employee's Comments

The space below is provided for the employee to make any comment he/she may wish with regard to the appraisal:

Signed:

Appendix E1

ACTION PLAN EXPLANATION & NOTES

Background

At the present time, and increasingly in the future, it is absolutely vital that everyone in the company performs as effectively as possible. Since performance is such a key issue, an action plan is a way of setting clear performance levels both for ourselves and employees.

Definition

In a business sense, action plans are statements that describe ends to be achieved operationally.

Why have an action plan?

1. The way in which targets are addressed and the extent to which they are achieved provides information against which the Appraiser and employee can objectively measure and thereby monitor performance.
2. Setting targets improves the Appraiser's knowledge of the employee's job, and thus makes appraisal more meaningful.
3. It helps clarify an employee's interpretation of his/her job by outlining major areas of importance, and helps identify where training needs exist.
4. Targets often require forecasts for the future to be made, which means that both opportunities and setbacks may be anticipated.
5. Target setting helps to integrate overall efforts within a department/section etc.
6. The sense of achievement created when job targets are met can improve job satisfaction and thereby increase motivation.

Characteristics of an effective action plan.

1. Operational

- 1.1. Can address significant, real operational issues.
- 1.2. Looks at matters of high importance and low urgency.
- 1.3. Must be meaningful not only to the work of the department, but also to the development of the individual.

2. Achievable

- 2.1. Be attainable and realistic, but challenging.

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- 2.2. Be useful to set a range of targets from fairly straight forward - to build confidence, up to quite difficult - to stretch the high flier.
- 2.3. Allow you to space out targets over the period available, correlating time with the nature and degree of difficulty of the target.

3. Measurable

- 3.1. Precise enough to avoid arguments as to whether they have been achieved.
- 3.2. Not so precise as to be inflexible or stifle initiative.
- 3.3. The method of achievement should, if possible, be left to the individual with the responsibility for achieving the target.
- 3.4. Quantify targets whenever possible, otherwise qualify as precisely as possible.

4. Controllable

- 4.1. Hold regular reviews - fix firm progress dates.
- 4.2. Reward success and evaluate failure.
- 4.3. Learn from the methods used.
- 4.4. Amend targets or extend time limits subject to other priorities or changed circumstances.
- 4.5. Avoid accepting excuses for failure.

Setting Targets

When involved in setting targets which will be achieved by the employee, it is advisable to allow full participation, since an individual is likely to be more committed to achieving targets he/she has helped set, than any which have been imposed over his/her head.

One way of going about this is as follows:-

1. At the end of the year (e.g. at the conclusion of the annual appraisal) ask the employee to think about any key result areas in which he/she feels targets should be set for the next 12 months. Fix a meeting in approximately two weeks to discuss these.
2. At the meeting, discuss the employee's suggestions, counselling and adding information of which he/she may not be aware, where appropriate, try to arrive at a set of provisional target statements.
3. The employee should then go away and, over a two week period, consider the target statement, adding standards of performance, timescales, resources required, etc.
4. A second meeting should then be held to agree the targets, record them in writing and set review dates.

Where there is a fairly sizeable department, and especially where targets are likely to have an impact on other people, it can be very useful to hold the second meeting as a group session, which will also give some team building benefits.

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It is imperative that targets are recorded in writing, and to this end the action plan forms (ACT01 & ACT02) have been developed. The following serves as a guide to the use of the form:

Key Areas

This refers to the area of the operation in which the target will be set. It will relate to an item on the individual's job description or list of accountabilities. Most targets will be set in critical areas, e.g. an accountability which is vital to the achievement of job purpose, or an area where major changes will take place, or an area where current standards are low.

Action to be followed column

This is a brief statement of what is to be achieved and how. Care should be taken to ensure that enough information is included to make it absolutely clear what will be achieved. However, details of the strategy to be employed should not be added - otherwise the document becomes lengthy and complex.

Where a target involves the contribution of someone else, the name of the individual concerned and the part that they will play should be noted.

While there are no hard and fast rules about the number of targets that should be set for a 12 month period, normally one would not expect to see more than five or six major targets, indeed there could be fewer.

Standards of Performance

Wherever possible, standards should be quantitative, since targets so defined can be evaluated in terms of success or failure.

However, it is accepted that this is not always feasible, and in such circumstances a qualitative measure should be applied, making this as precise and observable as the situation allows.

Appendix E2 illustrates quantitative standards of performance, while Appendix E3 shows a qualitative measure. A quantitative measure is relatively straightforward to evaluate, because either it has been achieved or it has not.

A qualitative measure, on the other hand, implies a matter of opinion, and is, therefore, subjective to some extent. In both of the measures in Appendix E3, it is not easy to say whether the target has been met to the required standard of performance. However, it will be possible to observe the Team Leaders when they are conducting training sessions, and the knowledge of members of staff can be evaluated by asking them questions.

Whether you set a quantitative or a qualitative measure, the important thing is to be as specific as possible.

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Success in achieving a target depends not only on how well the target is framed and the ability of the individual concerned, but also how effectively it is monitored.

It is imperative that both the individual with the responsibility for achieving the target and his/her boss are aware of how and when the target will be reviewed, and that these reviews actually take place.

Various methods of following up targets can be used, including written reports, formal quarterly reviews, informal weekly meetings and so on.

The review method, who will be involved (e.g. employees, colleagues, boss's boss) and agreed dates for review sessions should be noted under the control column on the form.

Comments

It is useful to record any relevant points arising out of each review session.

NB.

Actions plans are subject to amendment and the action plan forms (ACT01 & ACT02) should be kept up to date.

Form ACT01

Appendix E2

Action Plan		
Name:		
Position: Department:		
Date of appraisal interview:		
KEY AREA	ACTION PLAN TO FOLLOW	TARGET DATE

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INSERT APPENDIX 3E

Form ACT03

Appendix F

ACTION PLAN LETTER TO BE SENT TO EMPLOYEE FOLLOWING APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

Dear

During the discussion reviewing your performance on (date) we each agreed to commit ourselves to an action plan aimed at improving the effectiveness of your role within the company.

I agreed to...

You agreed that you would...

This will be reviewed periodically to ensure...

We also briefly discussed what your job objectives should be for the coming year, and as indicated, I now require you to complete the enclosed Action Plan Form (Form ACT01) in light of the things we said and to meet with me to discuss them, on (date).

..... (Appraiser)