

Employee Performance Discussions Course

Group classes in Washington, DC and onsite training is available for this course.

For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: <https://www.graduateschool.edu/courses/employee-performance-discussions>



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Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction to Employee Performance Conversations

- Define the supervisor's role in achieving unit goals and set a blueprint for success.
- Explain the basis for performance decisions and why productive discussions matter across the cycle.
- Differentiate performance issues from conduct issues and choose the right path for each.
- Establish a results-oriented culture that links individual work to mission.

Module 2: Communicating Expectations to Employees

- Prepare for the meeting, set a private, low-distraction setting, and confirm the purpose.
- Present and explain performance elements and standards; tie expectations to organizational goals.
- Use attending behavior and skillful listening to invite input and ensure understanding.
- Document expectations clearly and secure acknowledgment to prevent surprises later.

Module 3: Providing Effective Performance-Focused Feedback

- Analyze performance against established standards and document concrete examples.
- Provide ongoing informal feedback and conduct formal progress reviews throughout the year.
- Use active listening and clear presentation to communicate progress and next steps.
- Negotiate performance agreements and follow up to reinforce improvements.

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Module 4: Addressing Employee Development Needs

- Identify competency/skill gaps that affect goals; refine the earlier performance analysis.
- Select development methods (training, coaching, assignments) that target measurable outcomes.
- Align development plans with mission needs and performance standards.
- Monitor progress and adjust development actions as requirements evolve.

Module 5: Conducting Performance Reviews

- Review documentation, observe performance, and compile results throughout the appraisal year.

- Compare evidence with standards; rate elements and assign a supported summary rating.
- Hold appraisal discussions that clearly convey where the employee stands.
- Maintain required official documentation and sound supervisory notes.

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Module 6: Following Up with Performance Consequences

- Apply consequences—formal/informal and positive/negative—to reinforce desired behavior.
- Reward excellent performers, motivate marginal performers, and act on poor performance.
- Know requirements and alternatives for performance actions; coordinate closely with HR.
- Plan recognition and performance actions that comply with policy and drive results.

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