

**Guide to the performance appraisal
process and the appraisal tool,
HRXpert.**

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A. General Principles underlying the Performance appraisal program

The Performance appraisal program is based on the evaluation of two components at the end of each year: the competencies and levels identified for the position and the key objectives established between each manager and their staff members for the period covered by the appraisal cycle.

The program therefore seeks to establish and recognize the activities undertaken in a cycle of one year, as well as have some benchmarks for competencies in positions at the University. Both are integral parts of the appraisal process.

As it is important to link the results of the appraisal process to other management tools, the performance appraisal program is also paired with development/training activities that can be undertaken by staff members to increase their competency levels.

New University staff members may not be aware of the basis of the program, the details of its application and the goals that it seeks to accomplish. We therefore ask that members of staff who have not already participated in a workshop on the Performance Appraisal Program be registered in the training sessions offered throughout the year, and particularly during this period of appraisal. The schedule of training sessions can be found in Appendix 1.

B. Preparing for and completing the performance appraisals

The management of performance appraisal at the University uses the HRXpert software. This is a computer-based management tool developed primarily for supervisors, to manage the performance appraisals of their staff in a simple and efficient manner.

The software is accessible from the Human Resources Service Web site (www.uottawa.ca/services/hr/), from a personal computers throughout the campus (this option is preferred, but if you need to access the software from computers off campus, this is possible as long as you use the University dial-up networking facility, using a personal user code and password). Once the site has been accessed, each person can only see the files of individuals they supervise and the profiles associated with these families of positions.

All managers and supervisors should already have in hand their user code and password. Changes in supervisory responsibilities have generally been kept up-to-date. However, to ensure that the data is correct, an updated list of supervisors and staff is sent to the coordinators in faculties and services at the beginning of every evaluation cycle to verify the reporting relationships and identify any supervisors who do not have accounts for access to the software. The documentation provides details on who to contact in order to make changes or ask for access for a new supervisor.

Among the responsibilities of a supervisor, one of the most important ones is to ensure the strong development of staff who report to them. The performance appraisal program is one of the tools to help achieve this. Any supervisor who does not feel confident in completing this process and who would like to attend a refresher session on the performance appraisal program may register with the Training and Development Sector. Information is provided in Appendix 1.

Although we are assuming that the key result objectives covering the period of January to December of each year were established and agreed upon early this year (or when the employee first started working in a new position during the year) the general instructions below provide information on the complete process of evaluating the performance of members of the support staff as a reminder of the principles surrounding performance appraisals.

At the beginning of the cycle (January-February of each year)

1. Establish key objectives

The first goal of the beginning of the year meeting is to discuss the key objectives for the coming year and come to an agreement on the most important ones. Employees are encouraged to participate in the process. A maximum of five key objectives (Key Result Areas) are established. After the employee-supervisor meeting, the objectives are entered into the HRXpert application.

2. Discuss the competency levels

The second goal of the beginning of the year meeting is to discuss the employee's CURRENT competency levels, compared to the individual's competency profile. It is very useful to use behavioural examples which match the level of the profiled competencies (refer to the Directory of *Competencies* on the Human Resources Service Web site).

3. Give a copy to the employee

Make a copy for the employee for consultation throughout the year. The supervisor also keeps a copy as a working tool for the year.

Throughout the year

Periodic meetings allow:

- Adjustment to the objectives as needed,
- Discussion of competencies, satisfactory or in need of improvement,
- Identification of training or steps towards improvement,
- Use of the Core Competency Development Guide (on the Human Resource Service Web site).

At the end of the cycle (January- February of the year following the evaluation period)

STEP 1 Set a date for meeting with the employee

- Ensure that the employee has a copy of his or her *key objectives, competency profile* and of the competency listing (*Directory of Competencies*).

STEP 2 Employee self-evaluation:

- The employee reviews the key objectives, and finds examples illustrating both the basic and the required levels of the profiled competencies. The employee identifies areas for improvement, training requirements and future development.

STEP 3 Supervisor preparation:

- Review the objectives and see how they were actually achieved.
- Read the required levels of the competencies and see the extent to which they were achieved, relative to the employee's behaviour. Establish the links between the competencies and the objectives.
NB: Ensure that the required level AND the previous basic level(s) within each competency have been met.
- Consult the upper hierarchical level, when and where appropriate, (within faculties, the evaluation of members of the support staff reporting to academic staff is done in cooperation with/or by the Dean's Office).

STEP 4 The meeting between employee and supervisor:

- Verify that the employee understands the process.
- Encourage the employee to participate with you in a self-evaluation.
- Discuss the objectives and competencies with the employee.
- When appropriate, suggest ways to develop the competencies, show improvement, or develop skills. The *Core Competency Development Guide* will be useful here. It was previously distributed to all members of staff and is also available on the Human Resources Service Web site (www.uottawa.ca/services/hr/) under Performance Appraisals.

STEP 5 Enter the evaluation in HRXpert software:

- Enter the information and print.
- Sign and submit the report to the employee for signature and comments.
- **Once the appraisal has been completed and given to the employee for signature, its status on HRXpert must be changed to Final** (this is explained in more detail in the next section)
- Print a copy of the **Gap Analysis**; sign and give the report to the employee for signature
- Send the performance evaluation report and the signed **Gap Analysis** to the upper supervisory level for their signature and comments
- Have the performance evaluation report and the signed **Gap Analysis** signed by the Director of the Service or the Dean of the Faculty
- Prepare a copy of the performance evaluation report and Gap Analysis, for the employee to keep for future reference.
- **Before February 28**: Send all signed evaluations and gap analyses to Human Resources Service (*official* copy with signatures); the official copy is the *paper* copy.

Should the immediate supervisor be absent or unable to undertake the appraisal, it should be completed by the next level of management.

We will be monitoring the appraisals received and submitting bi-monthly reports to the coordinators in faculties and services in order to help complete the process within the time frame established.

C. Use of HRXpert and system update

For those who have never used the HRXpert software or who wish to follow a refresher session, please contact the Training and Development sector (please refer to Appendix 1).

A guide to help in the use of the software has also been developed and can be accessed on the Human Resources Service Web site (www.uottawa.ca/services/hr/) under *Performance Appraisals*

The application requires a user code and password. Should a supervisor need access to the application and does not have a user code (or has misplaced it), please contact Human Resources Service (inforh@uottawa.ca , or at extension 5832).

Managers who have used the application software previously will remember that some delays were experienced in the response time. Although the efficiency and time delays have been improved, **please note that if all supervisors use the system at the same time, some slow periods are likely to be still experienced.**

We ask that you encourage all supervisors to undertake their appraisals as soon as possible, thereby improving the response time that they will experience. In the past, the last weeks in February were the slowest.

Before logging on to HRXpert, we suggest that you update to the latest version of **Internet Explorer** (version 5).

You might receive a few error messages when logging in HRXpert using certain older versions of **Internet Explorer** and updating to the current version fixes these problems.

Should you need help with this step we suggest that you contact your systems administrator

In order to complete this appraisal, one of two options may be chosen:

1) If key objectives were prepared at the beginning of the year:

In this case, the appraisal document initiated at the beginning of the year is retrieved and the performance for this year uses this initial document. Instructions for using the application software may be obtained in the *User Guide*.

2) If key objectives were not prepared at the beginning of this year:

In this case, since there are no appraisal documents for this person for the present year, a copy of the final document from the year before may be used as a starting document for this year. Although it is likely that the objectives will need to be adjusted for the current period, there are some aspects of the competencies that could still apply.

Final Appraisal Indicator:

In order to ensure that the final electronic documents can be tracked on the HRXpert software, we have asked the consulting firm to add a "Final appraisal indicator".

Once the indicator has been checked, the appraisal **cannot** be changed (information in the appraisal can, however, be cut and pasted to another document/year). It is therefore important to activate the indicator only when the appraisal has been finalized.

Very important when using the software:

- a) Be sure to select "**Individuals**" and not "**Jobs**" to initiate the evaluation process.
- b) When preparing to input an appraisal, (after selecting, "**Individuals**", "**Last Name**", "**New Assessment**" and "**Go**") make sure you select the appropriate family/competency profile corresponding to the position (it appears on the competency profiles distributed to all members of staff); select the "Relation: manager" on the same window.
- c) **REMEMBER TO SAVE OFTEN:** scroll down to the bottom of the report "questionnaire" and click on "**Save Assessment**" before closing or moving to another computer application. If not, because the HRXpert application software uses Web technology, you will lose whatever changes you have made to the appraisal document.

D. Gap Analysis

When sending the performance evaluation report to Human Resources Service (official copy with signatures), please attach the **Gap Analysis** (signed by the supervisor and employee); the *official* copy is the *paper* copy which will be inserted in the employee file.

In order to print the *Gap Analysis*:

- 1) From the index on the left, select "**Individuals**"
- 2) Press FIND or Click on the radio button "**LAST NAME**", enter the employee's surname and press FIND
- 3) Select "**Gap Analysis**" from the scrolling list, then **GO**
- 4) Select the job, position number and the appropriate model and then, from the "**Assessments**", choose the assessment for the period of evaluation you are currently completing, and press NEXT: the **Gap Analysis** will appear on the screen
- 5) At the top of the screen, click on PRINT and close

The table below shows an example of the format of the **Gap Analysis**, for information purposes.

GAP Analysis Processed on: 12/17/2004

Job: 10XXXX - Job Title
Assessor Relation: Profile
Assessment Date: 12/11/1998

Individual: Employee number - Employee Name
Assessor Relation: Manager
Assessment Date: 12/20/2004

Competency	Position Number (Level required in the job)	Employee Number (Level obtained)	GAP
1 - Expertise (Partage d')/Expertise (Sharing of)	2	3	1
2 - Planification et Initiative/Planning, Initiative	2	2	0
3 - Motivation personnelle/ Personal Motivation	2	2	0
4 - Recherche d'information/ Information Seeking	2	1	-1
5 - Souci de la satisf de la clientèle/ Client Serv Or.	1	2	1
6 - Souci de l'ordre et qualité/ Concern for Ord,Qualit	1	2	1
7 - Souplesse/Flexibility	1	2	1
8 - Travail d'équipe et collaboration/Teamwork,Coop	1	2	1

LEGEND

TEAL: Over Qualified BLACK: On Target RED: Need Improvement GRAY: N/A

E. Available documentation

To facilitate the use of the software and access to reference documents, the Human Resources Service Web site includes a number of reference documents on the software and on the performance appraisal program based on competencies and key objectives. Its address is:

www.uottawa.ca/services/hr , under the section entitled *Performance Appraisal*. The following documents are available:

- ❖ the access link to the *HRXpert* software through the *HRXpert Online* interface from Hay (limited access according to the security levels)
- ❖ questions and answers on the performance appraisal program based on competencies and key result areas
- ❖ the *Dictionary of competencies* adopted for all families of positions at the University of Ottawa (generic format and helpful appraisal format under *Self evaluation tool*)
- ❖ *Competency Development Guide*

F. **Evaluation of staff whose positions have been reclassified, declassified or who have been promoted or transferred**

1) Recent reclassifications and declassifications

When a position is reclassified or declassified, a new competency profile is prepared and sent to the employee and to the faculty/service, and the HRXpert application is updated. The employee is therefore evaluated on his/her current competency profile, reflecting the current job description.

If this has occurred less than six months prior to the official appraisal, the comments section of the evaluation should note that the position has changed recently and the salary grade and competency profiles are recent. The effective date should be included.

2) Members of staff recently promoted or transferred in new positions (less than three months prior to the official appraisal)

When an employee is promoted or transferred in a new position three to twelve months prior to the official appraisal, the appraisal should include the objectives established at the beginning of the new assignment, with their appraisal, as well as the levels of the competencies. A note to that effect should be included in the comments section of the appraisal report.

When the new assignment is less than three months prior to the official appraisal, the performance appraisal report should be sent with no evaluation data, with a note in the comments section of the performance appraisal report. **In this case, the annual appraisal for this employee will be based on the previous work assignment/position and will have been completed before the employee left the previous position.**

G. Evaluation of newly hired staff or those on temporary assignments or on leave

1) Newly hired staff

The competency-based appraisal is also the tool used for newly hired staff that must complete a probation period. In that case, the appraisal period corresponds to the probation period and the appraisal is sent to Human Resources Service as a confirmation of the probation period having been completed satisfactorily.

The key result objectives are set when the person is hired, and the competencies are assessed at the end of the probation period. Regular key result objectives are then entered on a “new assessment” document in HRXpert in preparation for the next official appraisal.

2) Temporary assignments

In the case of regular employees on temporary assignments of six months or more, the temporary assignment period is subject to an appraisal. If the temporary assignment is for less than 9 months in the calendar year preceding the official appraisal, **there will be two appraisals, namely one for the regular position and one for the temporary assignment.**

Temporary assignments are included in the HRXpert application. They are identifiable by the position number assigned to the temporary assignment, that is: the first two digits are 77 and the last four digits are those of the position number of the temporary assignment. For example, for temporary assignments to position numbers 100123 and 101345 the employee would be placed in position numbers 770123 and 771345 respectively. Because the individual also needs to be tracked in two positions, the employee number is also preceded by the digits 77 in the temporary assignment position.

3) Maternity leaves and other leaves

For those who will have been on maternity or other leaves during any one calendar year period, the appraisal will cover only the period worked during the year. If the period worked just prior to the official appraisal is less than three months, a performance appraisal is not mandatory. In that case, the appraisal document is created in HRXpert, but only the comments section is completed, indicating the period of absence.

H. Establishing key result objectives for next year

The performance appraisal program continues to include the process of establishing objectives as key result areas or activities. They usually reflect the essential nature of the position (and often appear in the Job Summary of the functions) or reflect special or critical projects for the next year.

After the process of appraisal has been completed for the present year, new objectives the next year must be set and included in a new assessment directly on *HRXpert*. A copy of the objectives should be given to the employee for reference purposes during the year.

The steps detailed in section B of this document are also followed for this new appraisal cycle.

I. **Human resources staff and their responsibilities under the new performance appraisal program and the HRXpert application software**

We will be pleased to provide you with any help and support you may need to make this program a success, whether it is to help initiate a process for communicating to your staff their competency levels, to help your managers undertake and complete performance appraisals or to establish key objectives for the period of January to December.

The names and responsibilities of members of Human Resources Service staff appear in the table below:

Responsibilities	Name	Telephone number and e-mail address
HRXpert software access and password information	Information Officers	Ext. 5832 inforh@uottawa.ca
Competencies Profiles and changes in hierarchy	Nicole Gendron, Classification Assistant	Ext. 1537 ngendron@uottawa.ca
Training in HRXpert and content of the program	Madeleine Nault, Training and Development	Ext. 1543 formatio@uottawa.ca
Administration of the program	Rosanna Carreon, Assistant-Director, Staffing and Employment Equity	Ext. 2315 nmorin@uottawa.ca
General questions	Louise Pagé-Valin, Director	Ext. 5936 lpvalin@uottawa.ca

The general e-mail address of Human Resources Service can also be used. We will provide an answer within 24 hours (inforh@uottawa.ca).

J. Training

1) Training for staff newly hired at the University of Ottawa

All new regular employees should attend the general information sessions on the performance appraisal program offered by Human Resources Service. The sessions are entitled “*Competency-based performance appraisals, Module 1*”. They offer a general overview of the program as well as the role of the employee in the appraisal process. These workshops are mandatory. To register, call extension 1543 or by e-mail: formatio@uottawa.ca

2) Training for new supervisors, HRXpert Software and Annual Performance Interview

All new supervisors should attend this workshop in order to be trained in the use of the HRXpert software and how to prepare and manage the annual performance appraisal interview. To register, call extension 1543 or by e-mail: formatio@uottawa.ca

Details on the workshops are included in Appendix 1 of this document. You may contact our Training and Development Sector at extension 1543 or 1544 for more information.

TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR 2004 PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Module 1 : Competency-based Performance Appraisal

Clientele: All staff with no supervisory duties (mandatory)

Objectives:

- ✓ Objectives and core competencies
- ✓ Self-evaluation
- ✓ Employee's role and supervisor's role
- ✓ Additional tools
- ✓ Questions and answers

Dates:

- ✓ December 9, 2004 (1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.), TBT 012A

Module 2 : Performance Appraisal: HRXpert Software and Annual Performance Interview

Clientele: All supervisors (mandatory)

Objectives:

- ✓ Objectives and core competencies
- ✓ Steps to follow
- ✓ Using the *HRXpert* software
- ✓ Additional tools
- ✓ Your responsibilities at the end of cycle
- ✓ Preparation and process of the interview
- ✓ Case studies & difficult situations

Dates:

- ✓ December 8, 2004 (1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.), TBT 012D