

Preparing Performance Evaluations

February 2024



Human Resources



Performance Management at Georgia Tech

- Performance Management Philosophy
- Living Our Values Every Day (L.O.V.E. GT)
- Competencies
- Performance Cycle Phases
- Performance Cycle Timeline

Our values are foundational in everything we do.

“The mission and the values are not just words on paper. They describe who we are and who we aspire to be every day.”

— President Ángel Cabrera

Performance Management Philosophy



Georgia Tech strives to provide an environment where all employees understand the impact their contributions have on the achievement of Institute goals and are provided the opportunity for ongoing professional growth.

We reinforce this belief through strong performance management that culminates in a review of annual performance.

Living Our Values Every Day (L.O.V.E. GT)



Share the L.O.V.E.

The Living Our Values Every Day (L.O.V.E. GT) campaign advances the values that are central to the Georgia Tech strategic plan, which drives us to increase the impact we have in the world – through ambitious goals and bold actions.

To reach our goals, our community's actions must be firmly grounded in our shared values, including behaviors, practices, policies, processes, and rewards that demonstrate our commitment to Georgia Tech.

1. Students are our top priority
2. We strive for excellence
3. We thrive on diversity
4. We celebrate collaboration
5. We champion innovation
6. We celebrate freedom of inquiry and expression
7. We nurture the well being of our community
8. We act ethically
9. We are responsible stewards

Staff Competencies



Leadership Competencies



Georgia Tech Performance Management Cycle



Establish S.M.A.R.T goals

- Performance Values Based Goals
- Leader Competency Goals
- Career Development Goals



Year-Round Activities
Engagement between the managers and employee on progress towards successful completion of goals and expectations.



Employee self-assessment and yearly performance evaluation discussion.



Year-Round Activities
Recognition and support of the employee's achievements
Reward through merit increases. When they are available, employees may receive an increase to their annual base pay in accordance with their overall performance rating.

Staff Performance Management Annual Cycle

2023

Self-assessment

Dec. 1 to Feb. 5

Annual Performance Evaluations

Feb. 5 to April 5

2024

Goal Setting

Mar. 1 to Apr. 30

Continuous Coaching and Feedback

Jan. 1 to Dec. 31



hr.gatech.edu/performance-management



Performance Evaluation Process

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Competencies
- Understanding Ratings
- Performance Evaluation Preparation
- Common Pitfalls | Tips for Writing Effective Evaluations | Preparing for the meeting | Difficult conversations

Roles & Responsibilities



HR Professional

- **Assist in creating an environment that promotes effective performance management,**
- champion performance management best practices,
- encourage managers to establish and build trust relationships with their employees,
- assist in communicating performance management information and important dates,
- provide guidance and coaching to employees and managers throughout the process,
- ensure every eligible classified employee and manager has a performance discussion (at least once a year) and that the discussion is documented.



Managers

- **Build trusting relationships with employees,**
- create opportunities for feedback sessions throughout the year,
- meet with employees at least quarterly to assess progress and revise goals if necessary,
- have or obtain firsthand knowledge of employee contributions to make a fair and equitable evaluation decision,
- have an annual conversation with each employee on the past year's performance, complete performance reviews on time,
- establish goals and expectations with each employee in order to plan for success,
- align individual goals with those of the department/unit,
- provide timely and constructive feedback and ongoing coaching and development opportunities,
- work with employees to create professional development plans,
- provide opportunities to support professional development plans.



Employees

- **Seek continuous feedback from manager,**
- participate in annual conversation regarding past performance,
- establish performance and career development goals to discuss with the manager,
- document accomplishments and contributions throughout the year,
- determine areas for improvement and potential development opportunities,
- prepare for the one-on-one performance review meeting,
- work with manager to set goals and to understand performance expectations,
- work with manager to set target dates for goal completion and inform manager of any problems or concerns along the way,
- continue to seek constructive feedback throughout the year,
- participate in meetings with manager at least quarterly to assess progress and revise plan as necessary.

The Discussion



Understanding Ratings

Applying the Ratings

Rating	Description of Performance
Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Both what is produced and how it is produced far exceed expectations of the position.• The employee is often sought out by others for counsel and assistance and is widely recognized as a role model. Examples of the results and sought-after expertise must be given to receive this rating.• This rating should be rarely granted and reserved for truly outstanding performance throughout the review period.
Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Both what is produced and how it is produced meet and often exceed expectations of the position.• Results add value beyond the scope of the current role, often benefiting the division/department. Examples of these results must be given to receive this rating.• This rating should be reserved for employees with strong, commendable performance.
Meets Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Both what is produced and how it is produced meet expectations of the position.• The employee is a dependable, competent, knowledgeable individual who meets and occasionally exceeds expectations of the position.• This rating conveys solid, effective performance.
Needs Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Either what is produced or how it is produced require improvement in one or more areas to meet expectations of the position.• Such performance shortfalls may be attributable to newness on the job, missing or undeveloped skills, and/or experience. Regardless, the rating conveys that performance is below expectations in one or more areas and must be improved.• A performance improvement plan and review by HR is required.
Unsatisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Both what is produced and how it is produced are below expectations and clearly unacceptable.• Unless there is obvious and immediate improvement, earning this rating should cause the City and the employee to seriously consider whether continued employment is appropriate.• A performance improvement plan and review by HR is required.

Ratings Definitions

Rating	Definition
Exceptional	Outstanding performance that considerably and consistently exceeds expectations .
Strong	Good, solid performance. Fully meets expectations and may, on occasion, exceed expectations in this area.
Meets Expectations	Performance meets the standard requirements or expectations of the position
Needs Improvement	May partially meet performance expectations but needs improvement . Steps to improve performance must be clearly detailed in the Action Plan section below.
Unsatisfactory	Performance is well below an acceptable level . A formal Performance Improvement Plan must be developed.

General Competency Matrix

General Competency Matrix				
EXCEPTIONAL	STRONG	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
Consistently Exceeds	Consistently Meets/ Occasionally Exceeds	Consistently Meets	Inconsistently Meets	Consistently Fails to Meet
Consistently demonstrates advanced competence in achieving performance objectives	Consistently demonstrates competence in achieving performance objectives and sometimes exceeds	Consistently demonstrates competence in achieving performance objectives	Inconsistently demonstrates competence in achieving performance objectives	Consistently fails to demonstrate competence in achieving performance objectives
Consistently demonstrates advanced competence in subject matter expertise	Consistently demonstrates competence in subject matter expertise and sometimes exceeds	Consistently demonstrates competence in subject matter expertise	Inconsistently demonstrates competence in subject matter expertise	Consistently fails to demonstrate competence in subject matter expertise
Consistently demonstrates advanced competence in strategic agility	Consistently demonstrates competence in strategic agility and sometimes demonstrates advanced strategic agility	Consistently demonstrates competence in strategic agility	Inconsistently demonstrates competence in strategic agility	Consistently fails to demonstrate competence in strategic agility
Consistently demonstrates advanced competence in working independently	Consistently demonstrates competence in working independently and sometimes demonstrates advanced competence	Consistently demonstrates competence in working independently	Inconsistently demonstrates competence in working independently	Consistently fails to demonstrate competence in working independently

Performance Evaluation Preparation

Prepare: Best Practices

Manager

Review prior year goals:

- Ask employee to complete Self-Assessment form
- Collect feedback from peers and internal clients

Rate goals based on actual results:

- Use specific data (experiential and analytical) if available
- Determine overall performance rating
- Schedule time to meet with the employee
- Allow time for employee questions
- Provide balanced feedback:
- Identify strengths, weaknesses, and any performance gaps and tie to Institute Performance Competencies
- Review resources to enhance performance
- Discuss upcoming goals
- Sign and submit evaluation form

Employee

Review prior year goals:

Complete Self-Assessment:

- Prepare a list of accomplishments
- Identify strengths, weaknesses, and/or any performance gaps
- Describe any limitations that prevented you from accomplishing goals
- Gather any feedback and/or recognition received during the performance cycle
- List completed training and development opportunities
- Provide this list to your manager prior to the performance evaluation meeting
- Identify career aspirations and potential development goals for the upcoming performance cycle

Preparing for Performance Evaluations

- **Consult relevant documents:**
 - ✓ Employee's job description and department job standards
 - ✓ Prior annual review and goals set for this year
 - ✓ Notes you have kept to track contributions
 - ✓ Written input from others (e.g. commendation emails)
- **Solicit feedback** from employee's team members as appropriate
- **Review** the employee's self assessment
- **Reflect** on strengths, challenges, progress, and pathways for growth. Record ratings and descriptive, behavioral comments
- **DO NOT** include reference to employee's time on leave (FMLA), military leave or medical/religious conditions (ADA). Focus on job performance while at work.

Self-Assessment

- **The purpose of the Employee Self-Assessment is to reflect on your accomplishments and summarize any areas of opportunity or challenges that may have prevented you from achieving your annual goals.**
 - The Self-Assessment is available to all employees
 - As a best practice, the self assessment should be completed timely to prepare for the annual evaluation
 - Additional information: hr.gatech.edu/performance-management



Performance Evaluation Meeting



Common Pitfalls To Avoid

Halo	Allowing one good thing to rate the employee higher.
Horn	Allowing one bad thing to rate the employee lower.
Promise	Making any promise about promotions or salary increases until requests have been submitted <u>and</u> approved by Compensation.
Friend	Allowing friendships to lead to a good rating.
Foe	Allowing the dislike of an employee to give a bad rating.
Being Nice	Glossing over areas of concerns/not being clear and direct.
Unilateral	Making the conversation a one-way conversation.
Back and Forth	Getting into debates about ratings. Allow input and opportunity to provide written rebuttal, if desired.
Critique	Being critical without specific examples of ineffective behavior and its impact.

Planning the Performance Review Meeting

- Schedule meeting 3-5 days in advance. Confirm if in person or via Teams/Zoom.
- Print two copies of the performance evaluation.
- Bring copies of self-assessment and other documents to support the conversation.
- Clarify commitment to employee and their performance.
- Before closing out the meeting, summarize the key points you want the employee to understand.
- Ask the employee to recap what they heard you say. This will help avoid miscommunication or lack of understanding.
- Follow up on any actionable items.



DO

- Be positive. Acknowledge accomplishments.
- Link employees' contributions to the goals of the department.
- Use behavioral language and **specific** examples.
- Provide **specific** input on desired improvements.
- Explore avenues for professional growth.
- Promote a two-way dialogue with open-ended questions.
- Follow up on issues raised.

DON'T

- Allow interruptions.
- Surprise people with unexpected feedback.
- Be critical without examples of ineffective behavior and its impact.
- Use subjective language or labels (e.g. lazy).
- Gloss over areas of concern or inflate ratings.
- Do all the talking.
- Get into debates about ratings. Allow input and opportunity to provide written remarks, if desired.

Performance Conversation Techniques

Technique	Description	Example
Fact finding	Collecting information	What events led up to the situation at hand?
Active listening	Asking questions to prompt more disclosure and analysis	What was motivating that behavior?
Paraphrasing	Confirming and demonstrating understanding.	Sounds like you are frustrated because you felt your work went unrecognized.
Empathizing	Acknowledging another's experience	That must have been hard.
Giving feedback	Helping others understand the actual impact of their behavior	That was smart to preview your approach
Reframing	Looking at a situation from another, more positive perspective	How might this be an opportunity to shine?
Exploring options	Considering courses of action to achieve desired results	What two things might make a difference right away?
Advising	Making recommendations	To increase your confidence, rehearse your presentation
Securing Commitment	Agreeing on actions to be taken	What results will you achieve by the end of the quarter?

How to Handle Difficult Conversations

- **If the employee becomes defensive or makes excuses:**

- Remain neutral. Maintain eye-contact.
- Listen to his or her point of view and paraphrase back.
- Ask for specifics with open-ended questions.
- Ask how the employee might resolve the problem.

- **If the employee becomes angry:**

- Stay calm and centered. Maintain eye-contact.
- Ask open-ended questions to enable the employee to let off some steam. Paraphrase back what you heard. Add clarifying facts and perspective.
- Bring discussion and focus back to performance and standards.

- **If the employee is unresponsive or withdraws:**

- Be patient and friendly. Show concern.
- Ask open-ended questions. Wait for the employee to say something.
- Note that the employee is unresponsive.
- Encourage the employee that you want to hear his or her input, and this input is important to you.

Taking a step back and rescheduling the meeting is also a viable option.

How to Handle Difficult Situations

- **If the employee does not wish to participate in the performance evaluation meeting:**
 - Advise that a performance evaluation is required for all non-probationary Georgia Tech classified employees.
 - Ask questions to understand the concern. Solicit written statement from the employee.
 - If the employee refuses to meet, make a note in the comments.
 - Send the employee the evaluation to sign. If the employee refuses to sign, make note on the evaluation.
- **If the employee does not agree with the evaluation rating:**
 - The employee should discuss the concerns with the evaluator.
 - The employee should document their concerns in the comment section of the performance evaluation
 - If there continues to be a high level of disagreement, please consult your unit's HR Partner or Employee Relations Consultant.
- **What to do if you are the new team leader (1-2 months in role) with limited knowledge of employee group:**
 - Partner with the previous leader to complete the evaluation
 - If the previous leader is not available, work with your manager to complete the evaluation.
 - Review supporting documentation (self-evaluation, noted accomplishments, etc.)



Performance Evaluation Best Practices

- Performance Evaluation Training Resources
- Performance Improvement Follow Up
- Balanced Feedback

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT @TECH



Human Resources

PLAN

MANAGE

REVIEW

REWARD

Learning & Development Support

For additional learning & development support, contact Workplace Learning & Professional Development at training@gatech.edu. Additional guidance and support can be found at the [Performance Management @TECH Website](#) and from your HR Representative.

PLAN

MANAGE

REVIEW

REWARD



Mindset

- [DiSC: Flexing Your Style to Achieve Results Workshop](#)



Skillset

- [Conducting Performance Reviews LinkedIn Learning Module](#)
- [Navigating Conflict and Challenging Conversations Workshop](#)
- [POWER of Writing Workshop](#)



Toolset

- [Self-Assessment and Annual Evaluation Online Module](#)
- [Probation Evaluation Online Module](#)
- [Performance Management @Tech Website](#)

Additional learning & development courses and resources for the **MANAGE** and **REWARD** phases of the Performance Management Cycle can be found here.

<http://tinyurl.com/PMatTechLDSupport>



Workplace Learning & Professional Development

Learning Resource Catalog

Your Guide to 2024 Learning Opportunities



WLPD 2024 Learning Resource Catalog

Explore the catalog for courses and programming offered throughout the year.

[WLPD Website](#) | [WLPD Email](#)

Trust, Clarity, & Ownership *

Explore the three key ingredients that leaders need to support productive working relationships with their direct reports.

* Contact WLPD to register for this course

[Giving and Receiving Feedback](#)

Mar. 12 | 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | In Person

Build skills and knowledge and around giving and receiving feedback.

[Managing Your Performance](#)

Mar. 12 | 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Virtual

Learn the foundation of Georgia Tech's performance management approach.

[Conflict Management: An Exercise in Enriching Relationships](#)

Mar. 27 | 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. | In Person

Explore how you and others deal with conflict by learning about personal Conflict Management Styles and a framework to leverage when working through conflict.

[Seizing Your Career](#)

Mar. 28 | 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | In Person

Master the four core attributes of professional success to seize control of your career.

[DISC: Flexing Your Style to Achieve Results](#)

May 21 | 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. | In Person

Explore your personality style and the styles of others so you avoid common interpersonal issues and benefit from enriched relationships in every facet of your life.

** If any of the above sessions are full, please join the waiting list or find another session date that works for your schedule by logging into the [Learning Management System](#) and searching in the course catalog by the session name.

Performance Improvement Follow Up

What to do if the employee receives a Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory rating?

What performance ratings prompt HR engagement and PIP discussions?

- The Unit leader should work with the HR Partner for appropriate actions
- Managers are required to provide comments with examples for overall ratings of Unsatisfactory and Needs Improvement in the performance evaluation
- It's important to consult your HR Partner or Employee Relations Consultant for guidance.

What to do if the employee receives a Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory rating?

- Depending on the level of corrective action that may have already taken place, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) may be necessary.
- PIP should outline:
 - Emphasize opportunities for improvement
 - Provide feedback that guides expectations for improvement
 - The consequences for not **significantly** improving and **sustaining** satisfactory performance

Examples of Balanced Feedback

Balanced Feedback Example: Exceptional

Performance Goals and/or Job Responsibilities	Actual Results and Comments	Ratings
Oversee and administer carpentry projects on to assigned personnel a weekly basis. Monitor, inspect and evaluate all completed projects (i.e. building, installation, repair and maintenance) within 48 hours and submit system reports within 5 business days of completion.	George successfully accomplished the goal by exceeding all proposed deadlines for each project. George also displayed advanced ability in forecasting supply and equipment needs prior to project start dates which ensured employees had the necessary tools and resources available to complete projects and avoid delays. It should also be noted that George ensured the quality of work exceeded regulatory compliance guidelines which helped our organizations reputation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory

Balanced Feedback Example: Strong

Performance Goals and/or Job Responsibilities	Actual Results and Comments	Ratings
<p>Conduct four research projects in 2021, one per quarter, due by the last business day of each quarter (i.e. Q1 project due 3/31/21, Q2 project due 6/30/21, Q3 project due 9/30/21, Q4 project due 12/29/21). A preliminary project summary should be submitted to me by the 15th day of the first month in each quarter (i.e. 1/15/21, 4/15/21, 7/15/21, and 10/15/21).</p> <p>Each research project should be completed with the intent of publication and is expected to outline the following subject matter; project charter with timelines submitted by, preliminary assessment, equipment and/or chemicals utilized, unforeseen variables, and a thorough summary of actual findings/results in standard APA style.</p>	<p>George was able to complete this goal and completed all projects by the assigned deadlines. Each research project was thoroughly researched and documented.</p> <p>George displayed a significant amount of dedication to achieving overall results however, there were a couple of areas of opportunity identified including; missing a few milestones in each project by his projected timelines and not identifying potential variables for chemical and/or equipment usage. These are two areas that George is expected to work towards enhancing to further stretch his project capability.</p> <p>Despite the identified opportunities, George demonstrated strong abilities in this area and continued focus will assist him with further enhancing his research abilities and performance trajectory.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory</p>

Balanced Feedback Example: Satisfactory

Performance Goals and/or Job Responsibilities	Actual Results and Comments	Ratings
Develop, implement, and execute an 18-month department strategy that focuses on improving productivity, employee engagement, professional development, and retention. This assignment should be submitted to me for review and approval by March 4, 2021.	George demonstrated competence in completing this task. The assignment was submitted by the scheduled deadline and George provided a solid strategy to improve productivity, employee engagement, professional development, and retention, as requested.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets Expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory

Balanced Feedback Example: Needs Improvement

Performance Goals and/or Job Responsibilities	Actual Results and Comments	Ratings
<p>Process and submit p-card statements and travel/expense reports by the 15th business day of the month. These assignments will be measured by the scheduled deadlines, the level of accuracy, and the number of errors. Performance will be measured by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Submit monthly before the 15th = Exceptional-Submit bimonthly before the 15th = Strong-Submit monthly by the 15th = Satisfactory-Submit monthly after the 15th = Needs Improvement-Failure to submit = Unsatisfactory	<p>George repeatedly struggled with meeting this objective. George submitted the first monthly p-card statement and travel and expense report before the deadline however, the remaining reports were submitted late, after the 15th. George also failed to check his BoA statements timely resulting in three separate purchases going into default and three p-card violations in March, April, and May. George was counseled about this issue and made some improvements with meeting deadlines however, he continued to struggle with accuracy and errors in the third and fourth quarter of the year. George has been provided additional training on p-card processing and has committed to improving in this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional<input type="checkbox"/> Strong<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory

Balanced Feedback Example: Unsatisfactory

Performance Goals and/or Job Responsibilities	Actual Results and Comments	Ratings
<p>Administer all OneUSG Connect transactions within 48 hours of receipt for the department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Review all transactions•Ensure transactions adhere to policy guidelines.•Approve transactions timely•Submit all requested transactions timely.•Provide weekly status updates to respective leaders.	<p>George and I met in February 2021 to discuss this goal and the operational need for this task to be completely accurately and timely.</p> <p>Several department leaders reported that their transactions were not reviewed or processed timely, nor did they receive weekly updates. Further, these delays caused issues with pay and reporting change delays in May 2021.</p> <p>I met with George to discuss these concerns and George apologized for the error and agreed to make this task a priority moving forward. I scheduled monthly 1:1's with George to review the status of all assigned tasks.</p> <p>Unfortunately, George continued to struggle with meeting this tasks for the remainder of 2021. George was subsequently issued the following progressive disciplinary actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Verbal warning in June 2021.•Written warning in July 2021.•Performance Improvement Plan from August- October 2021; some progress was made during this time and George was released from the PIP.•Unfortunately, after being released from the PIP, the pattern of not meeting this goal started again.•Final warning was issued in December 2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional<input type="checkbox"/> Strong<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory<input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory

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