

## Employee self-evaluation and how to do them well

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It is a common practice for organizations to conduct employee self-evaluations. Self-evaluations assess individual performance, identify the cause of productivity issues and encourage employee self-awareness. Periodic evaluation is an opportunity for managers and their subordinates to review performance discuss expectations moving forward. An evaluation also serves as an opportunity to set goals, both as individuals and teams. This article will give insight into what self-evaluations are, and how to do them.

### Employee self-evaluation

Sedikides (1993) defines self-evaluation as the process of looking within oneself to evaluate aspects that are important to one's identity. Self-evaluation drives self-introspection and knowledge of one as an individual. This brings about ways in which one can develop themselves. According to David Hassel, CEO of 15five, "Modern employees are intrinsically motivated to work autonomously and by opportunities to learn and grow. So, from a management perspective, self-assessments – which contribute to autonomy and development – are incredibly valuable," (Uzialko, 2019).

A self-evaluation is an opportunity for an employee to reflect on their performance in their workplace. Employees have a way to assess themselves and describe their successes, shortcomings and their professional progress over the previous year, through their perspective.

Self-evaluations often motivate employees to improve their work performance. Through a self-assessment, the employee acknowledges their shortcomings and offers suggestions on some possible solutions that they intend to work on. According to Trope (1986), self-evaluation is a way to enhance an individual's self-esteem. In the short-term, self-evaluation may have the effect of making a person feel as though they have not achieved as much as they would have liked. However, with time, this may motivate one to work even harder to achieve the goals they would have missed and result in an enhancement of their self-belief (Trope, 1986). After reading the self-evaluation, the manager then reaches out to the employee and discusses how they can work together to improve the employee's performance.

In an experiment by Constantine Sedikides in 1993 (Sedikides, 1993), he investigated the roles of self-evaluation motives, in particular, whether they were more for self-assessment or self-verification. The results from the experiment showed that, when choosing what questions they wanted to be asked, participants were more likely to request those that would verify their self-concept rather than assess it (Sedikides, 1993).

This finding shows that individuals are more likely to look for self-affirmation, rather than a critic to their performance. Meyer (1980) adds that "...while people may be motivated to respond with varying degrees of accuracy, in general, people seem to possess a fairly accurate, but a slightly inflated, view of capabilities and characteristics." This points to some particular weaknesses of self-evaluations, as individuals are more likely to present themselves favourably, thereby making it difficult to find areas of weakness within an individual.

### **What do you write in an employee self-evaluation?**

Self-evaluation is not only a way to report on your performance as an individual, but to highlight your selling points as an employee. It is therefore important for you to write your evaluation in a way that not only captures your shortcomings but shows your strengths. Here are some of the few things you could include in your self-evaluation:

#### **Promote your successes**

This part of your evaluation is where you highlight your strengths as an individual and how these have helped you succeed in your job. You can also indicate some of the goals you would have surpassed since your last evaluation.

#### **Address areas that need improvement**

The main purpose of self-evaluation is performance management. In this regard, you need to introspect as an individual and identify areas that may need improvement. Not only will this help your employer in identifying areas for training and development, but it will also help you as an individual in your career growth.

#### **Record your accomplishments**

As you do your self-assessment, you should also take time to recognise yourself and your accomplishments. During the year as you take on projects, take time to record every win you get. This will also come in handy in identifying any possible areas you may need to focus a lot more on in your course for improvement.

#### **Set goals**

At the end of it all, it is imperative to set performance goals. These will guide you in the path you will take for your year, and steps you may need to take in attaining your goals. These goals should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. Setting unrealistic goals will only fail to achieve them and in you thinking you are not doing much when you are working hard.

### **How do you write an employee evaluation?**

An employee evaluation helps your employees identify growth opportunities and potential areas of

improvement. As a manager, here are some of the ways you can write an employee evaluation:

### **Balance the evaluation**

An employee evaluation should not only focus on the negative aspects or purely on the positive, it should have a balanced approach. It has been noted that people prefer to receive self-verifying information (Swann, 1983) and react negatively when they receive feedback that is inconsistent with their self-appraisals (Swann, 1990). While this needs to be considered when coming up with an evaluation, too much of a positive review may result in an employee feeling as though they do not need to improve on anything, or that they are better than their colleagues. Again a purely negative review may be demoralising for an employee and make them feel unappreciated. Hence it is important to note an employee's key strength areas while making recommendations for improvements.

### **Remain Objective**

During the review process, personal feelings should not dictate how a review should go, rather it should be based purely on performance. Some people may interpret procedures differently from you and execute duties in a way other than you would personally do. This does not mean that they are not good at their job, and should therefore not influence your review of them. Brett & Atwater (2001) note that negative performance outcomes arise when feedback is lower than expected. When one knows their capabilities, and excels in their job, receiving feedback that is more negative than positive is likely to affect their future performance as they become demotivated.

### **How do you write a self-evaluation summary?**

Self-evaluations have an impact on how you're perceived within your organization. Not only are they an important platform for taking a look back over your accomplishments and demonstrating clear communication skills, they determine how your career within the organization will go. Here is how you can write your self-evaluation summary:

- Reflect on Your Accomplishments
- Reflect on Your Mistakes
- Set Goals for the Future

### **Conclusion**

A self-evaluation is a platform for you to sell yourself as the ideal employee. It is important to do justice to it by highlighting relevant information. This does not however mean only focussing on the positive, you have to show yourself as a person who is willing to grow and learn. By following the steps outlined above, you can be assured of doing the best self-evaluation.

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