

TWO-WAY PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

AN ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TRAINING RESOURCE

WHY USE TWO-WAY EVALUATIONS?

A two-way performance evaluation involves both the employee and supervisor evaluating the employee's performance. What is the benefit of this approach?

Empowering employees to take ownership of performance and growth is key to engagement. Two-way performance evaluations are an excellent tool to encourage that ownership ([O'Donnell, 2023](#)).

Furthermore, two-way evaluations can help you retain an employee who is considering moving on, or develop talent for the next challenge within your organization ([O'Donnell, 2023](#)).

Below is a template questionnaire, to be completed by the employee, which the supervisor and employee can use to assess the employee's performance in their role. For suggestions on how to structure a "reverse mentoring" program, where employees and supervisors learn from one another, please consult [this article](#) by Judy Ellis.

- > The information next to the arrows describes the value and uses of each section of the performance evaluation.

ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR: Outline what you thought were the highlights of this past year in terms of your performance and satisfaction in this job. Please discuss the strengths you have brought to this position and what satisfies you most about your job.

- > Their answer will give the supervisor insights about which types of achievements (big or small) the employee is most proud of, and what motivates them in their work. The supervisor can also use this knowledge to further grow and develop an employee's skill sets. As O'Donnell ([2023](#)) states, "If you can, capitalize on an area (or several) where the employee already feels confident and competent. This can make it easier to suggest additional responsibilities as well as training to grow their skill set even further."

GOALS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD: Describe what you hope to achieve in the coming year. In particular, what knowledge and skills would you like to enhance? What challenges do you want to take on? What milestones do you hope to reach?

- > This information can tell you the specific training they may want or need to thrive in their position. If the employee wants to grow and advance within the organization, the supervisor can suggest a mentoring program that can provide the employee with a more detailed view of the position(s) they aspire to.



CAREER PLAN: Where do you see yourself within this organization over the next year and beyond?

- > “When you work with a staffer to plan their growth within your company, you boost retention. Planning for their future inside your organization means they feel no need to look elsewhere to meet their career goals. Opening up this dialogue could result in a long-term, highly engaged staff member” ([O’Donnell, 2023](#)).
- > “Even if a step up the ladder isn’t immediately apparent, working with an employee to be assured they’re ready for a move when it becomes available is key. You may offer a lateral move within the company that gives them a chance to restart their career. Opportunities to develop new skills and learn new things could be just what’s needed to retain the staff member” ([O’Donnell, 2023](#)).

SUPPORT NEEDED TO SUCCEED: What are some ways that I, as your supervisor, can best support you so that you can achieve your goals?

- > Showing a willingness and desire to support an employee in achieving their goals, rather than a supervisor’s goals for them, reinforces an employee’s ownership over their performance and growth within your organization. This keeps them engaged and helps meet their needs for self-actualization and growing to their full potential as a human being.¹
- > This question demonstrates that you are open to feedback and interested in critical reflection, making you an ally and partner in their success, and not a hindrance to it.
- > From an equity and inclusivity perspective, acknowledging that employees are the experts on what they need to succeed and that you (as their supervisor) want to provide that support, helps to balance some of the power dynamics that can keep employees from voicing their needs (i.e. if they fear they may lose their job or experience retribution for speaking up).

1. Refer to [this article](#) by Karen Lincoln Michel for more information on the concept of “self-actualization,” and its importance for humans, from both a Native and western perspective.



THE ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION AND FAIR FORESTS CONSULTING

At the Arbor Day Foundation, we believe everyone should have access to the powerful benefits of trees. To help strengthen our focus on communities that need trees most, we partner with experts like Dr. Christine Carmichael from Fair Forests Consulting. This resource, crafted by Dr. Carmichael, is part of our ongoing commitment to empowering our partners to grow their environmental justice work in urban forestry.

Alliance for Community Tree members have access to our full environmental justice training series in the ACT Member Resource Center. Learn about this network and how to join at arborday.org/ACT.