Performance Evaluations:

The 2012 University Online Performance Evaluation (UOPE) is now open for supervisor access and completion. An email went to all supervisors on December 13, 2012 informing them of new tool enhancements.

The following are additional enhancements that are available in the UOPE tool:

- Expanded character limit to 300 for the Overall Assessment Rating field
- Pop-up reminder to save work every 15 minutes (Banner Self-Service will time out after 180 minutes)
- A “Preview” button is available for supervisors to review and print all typed comments in the evaluation prior to submitting the evaluation to Supervisor + 1
- Names of Supervisor, Supervisor + 1, Department Reviewer and Employee will display on all dashboard views to better identify who is responsible for taking action
- Human Resources has the ability to return an evaluation at any time to the Supervisor

Supervisors should be scheduling performance evaluation meetings with employees. Please contact your HR Consultant if you have any questions.

Employees should complete the Employee Self-Assessment and share the document with their supervisors prior to the evaluation meeting.

BEST PRACTICES

Avoid Rating Errors in Performance Evaluations:

A rating error is any attitude, tendency to respond in a certain way or inconsistency on the part of the supervisor which impedes objectivity and accuracy in the evaluation process. Psychological research indicates that the following types of rating errors are the most common:

**Halo/Horns Effect**

The Halo effect is the tendency to generalize from one specific positive employee trait to other aspects of the individual’s performance. For instance, a person who is always willing to help other workers may receive inappropriately high ratings on other related job factors. The Halo effect tends to blind the supervisor to shortcomings in the person being evaluated.

The Horns effect, on the other hand, occurs when a particular negative trait or behavior blinds the supervisor to strengths of the individual being evaluated. An example might be a case where a person who consistently argues with the supervisor over job assignments is rated down on all job factors because of his/her argumentative nature.

The following suggestions can increase objectivity and help prevent this kind of error:

- Consider whether the person being evaluated has done anything unusually good or bad in the last few months - either situation can color your thinking.
- Ask yourself whether you feel the person has a particularly pleasant or unpleasant personality and whether this might be influencing your opinions regarding their job performance.
- Make certain that you are familiar with the job factors being rated – how they differ from one another and why they are important.
- Maintain a performance log.
Central Tendency Bias and Leniency Errors

Central Tendency Bias errors occur when the supervisor does not use either the high or low end of the performance evaluation scale. This means that most, if not all, the ratings end up falling in the middle of the scale. If over 90 percent of the ratings are in the middle category, it is likely that this type of error has occurred.

Positive and Negative Leniency refers to the frame of reference used when rating. Positive Leniency is the tendency to be an “easy grader” and is demonstrated by giving too many high ratings. If more than 20 percent of your ratings are in the top two rating categories (“exceeds expectations“ and “outstanding”), you may be rating too easily. Negative Leniency is the opposite and results in a disproportionate number of low ratings.

Some ways to reduce Central Tendency Bias and Leniency Errors include:
- Remember that most employees “meet expectations” in most job factors and in the overall rating. Keep in mind that few employees are “outstanding” or “exceeds expectations” at everything.
- Compare your distribution of ratings with that of other supervisors in your unit. If your ratings are consistently higher or lower than theirs, you may be rating inaccurately.

Similar to Me and Contrast Errors

The Similar to Me and Contrast Errors refer to the tendency to give slightly higher ratings to people who are similar to yourself and slightly lower ratings to people who are very unlike you. Similar to Me errors are most likely to occur in a situation where obvious similarities exist between supervisor and the employee. If you find your rating in terms of any kind of stereotype such as “college educated people are brighter than those without degrees...” or “people who enjoy the outdoors are better adjusted...” then you are probably making this kind of error.

To reduce Similar to Me Contrast errors:
- Study the ratings you have given to determine whether you have given higher ratings to individuals more similar to yourself. Be particularly alert for this problem when rating an employee who is a good friend or with whom you socialize.
- Also, study your ratings to see if you are giving lower ratings to employees who are very dissimilar to you or whom you dislike.

Additional Resources for Performance Evaluations:

Giving a High Performer Productive Feedback provides guidance for evaluating star performers.

Tough Love: The Good Manager’s Guide to Delivering Bad News in a Performance Review provides insight on how to approach a performance evaluation for an individual who may not meet expectations and/or may need a performance improvement plan.

HR EVENT

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Tribute

The Human Resources MOVE Committee will host the second annual memorial tribute in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Friday, January 11, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., in the Wool Ballroom, located in the Busch Student Center. This luncheon program will feature D.C. Cooper's interpretation of “I Have A Dream” and civil rights leader and broadcasting executive, Xernona Clayton. Please indicate on the form your attendance by January 7, 2013.

BENEFITS

2013 Retirement Plan Limits

The Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 created an opportunity for a 403(b) catch-up contribution for anyone age 50 or older (which includes anyone turning 50 in calendar year 2013). The catch-up for 2013 is $5,500. This $5,500 catch-up can be contributed in addition to the general 403(b) limit of $17,500. This means that in 2013, anyone age 50 or older can contribute up to $23,000 to the 403(b) plan. If you want to take advantage of this catch-up, you must complete a 2013 Earnings Reduction Agreement/Allocation Form making this election. This form can be found here, and when complete, it can be faxed to 314-977-1785.

Retirement Orientation

The Benefits Office will host a retirement orientation from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Monday, January 7th, 2013 in room 128 (Human Resources Training Room) in the Marvin and Harlene Wool Center. The purpose of the orientation is to inform employees of their rights under the plan, investment alternatives, sheltering current income from taxation, and establishing a retirement plan account. This seminar is beneficial for all employees, including those currently participating and those not participating who may want to consider enrollment. Employees already participating in the 403(b) plan are strongly encouraged to attend retirement orientation. You can RSVP by contacting the Benefits Office at 314-977-2360 or benefits@slu.edu. Those unable to attend may enroll for the TIAA-CREF 403(b) and Retirement Plan online at www.tiaa-cref.org/slu.
**LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT**

**Personal Development**

**Live Well: The Developmental Lines of Bullying**

Unfortunately bullying is a reality in our world. The news often reports tragedies that stem from bullying, and our children may have to deal with it on a daily basis. Join us on **January 16 at 11:00am – 12:00pm in BSC room 251** for a personal development session to learn about bullying and methods to prevent it. Steve Zwolak, the executive director of the University City Children Center, will be prepared to talk about bullying, how to recognize it and how to deal with it. Click [here](#) to register and view other upcoming personal development sessions.

**Professional Development**

Register [here](#) to attend January instructor led sessions:

- **Conducting Effective Meetings** – Tuesday, January 8, 9:00am - 10:00am, HR Training Room
- **Diversity and Affirmative Action** – Wednesday, January 9, 10:00am - 11:00am, HR Training Room
- **Time Management** – Thursday, January 10, 1:00pm - 2:00pm, HR Training Room
- **Team Building** – Thursday, January 10, 2:30pm - 4:00pm, HR Training Room
- **Project Management 201** – Tuesday, January 15, 10:00am - 11:00am, HR Training Room

**Mission**

The mission of the Human Resources division is to administer practices and programs that will attract, develop and retain high performing faculty and staff to advance Saint Louis University’s mission of higher education, patient care, research and service.

**MISSION - ATTITUDE - GUIDANCE - INGENUITY - SERVICE**