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Academic Leadership on Faculty Performance

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Academic Leadership Journal

[Academic Leadership on Faculty Performance](#)

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Introduction:

One of the challenges academic leaders encounter is conducting on time a comprehensive faculty performance evaluation. There are two fundamental rudiments for addressing this challenge (1) having a PROMPT (precise relevant organized, measurable, pragmatic, within time lines) yearly faculty accountability planning and (2) preparing in advance for the impending deadline by having faculty submit end of year performance self evaluations .

Constraints on time, lack of proper prioritization, and leader's lack of comfort with confrontation or feedback can also contribute to the end of the year rush to complete the "paperwork" of an appraisal without the proper focus, effort and time needed to complete a true appraisal of a faculty member's performance.

The challenge might also exacerbated for academic leaders who are seeking solid and sound arguments to justify requests for budget increases, especially if the requested increase is for payments to support activities in the areas of personal and professional growth and development of the faculty. After all, educational leaders are expected to and should be judged on their ability to maximize organizational performance, mission effectiveness and most of all student performance, stratification, retention, and career opportunities.

In this article, we will provide a comprehensive approach for a yearly faculty performance evaluation report which includes the following components: (1) establishing a Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Plan (FPEP); (2) conducting a mid-year faculty self progress report; (3) creating a mid-year faculty progress evaluation report; (4) making a mid-year adjustment of the performance evaluation plan; (5) creating an end of the year faculty self-evaluation report; (6) conducting an end of the year faculty performance evaluation report.

In addition, we will share strategies that faculty could adopt in helping them to focus on accomplishing their goals and to prepare an effective performance evaluation report. Furthermore, we will share strategies that department chairs could adopt to guide faculty to more successfully accomplish their goals and in preparing their performance evaluation report. In adopting such approaches, the department chair will benefit by better understanding the strength and limitations of the department resources. Furthermore, he or she will be able to understand faculty needs and strengths and thus better involve faculty in accomplishment of the mission and the goals of the department.

Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Report

The yearly faculty performance evaluation report is not an activity report. An activity report is task driven and summarizes work completed. A yearly faculty performance evaluation report focuses upon results, achievements and the impact of the faculty member's work upon their colleagues, and the institution, as well as on the profession and or the academic discipline of a given faculty. It is this type of report that will provide the opportunities for faculty, the academic leader, and the institution to develop a shared vision and mission. It will also better support excellence in student performance, satisfaction, retention, as well as to maximize the institutional performance and effectiveness.

Conceptual Framework for Yearly Faculty

Performance Evaluation:

A comprehensive approach for a yearly faculty performance evaluation includes the following components:

1. A Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Agreement (FPEA):
2. Mid year faculty self progress report.
3. Mid year faculty progress evaluation report:
4. Mid year adjustment of the performance evaluation agreement.
5. Mid-year departmental faculty progress report.
6. End of the year faculty self-evaluation report.
7. End of the year faculty performance evaluation report.
8. End of year departmental faculty performance evaluation report.

In order for academic leaders to effectively implement these proposed conceptual frameworks and strategies, they must exhibit faculty leadership. We define faculty leadership defined as "the continuous act of leading faculty in accomplishing the mission of the institution, and in achieving their own professional growth and development" (Gialamas 2001). Fundamental elements required to successfully adopt and implement faculty leadership include having the department chair:

- A. Believe in and practice the principle of leadership as partnership.
- B. Have a strong desire to serve and provide faculty with high quality opportunities for professional growth and development and in having their own very thought out personal dreams (Moore, 1996, Blanchard 1999).
- C. Believe in and practice that real communication is a product of trust; thus, he/she works hard to make faculty feel safe in the work environment by adopting performance review and evaluation systems that bring the best performances out of the faculty (Blanchard 1999) and result in high quality of faculty satisfaction.

D. A person who is able and willing to create a climate of trust in the workplace, a structure in which everyone is important and all ideas count, and an atmosphere in which kindness, generosity, hard work, honesty and integrity are the norm in dealing with people. (Casey 1997).

E. Convey to the faculty that he/she sees them as “either winners (meaning you already know are good performers) or potential winners (meaning you strongly think can become good performers), and you mean them no harm.” (Blanchard 1999, p. 69)

I – Establishing a Yearly Faculty Performance

Evaluation Agreement (FPEA)

The goal of the yearly faculty performance evaluation Agreement (FPEA) is for the faculty and the academic leader to jointly: (a) Identify all faculty performance accountabilities and targeted goals for a given academic year and (b) Design an action plan for accomplishing the yearly faculty performance goals. The conceptual framework for the yearly faculty performance Evaluation Agreement (FPEA) consists of;

1. Accountabilities and Tasks, which include in most institutions, teaching, professional development, and services to the institution and the community.
2. Time for completing the accountabilities and tasks.
3. Weight of each component of the accountabilities and tasks, which depends on the mission and the goals of the institution.
4. Measurement, which includes the tools needed to measure the performance

In order to develop this plan, the institution must first have instituted a yearly faculty accountability and performance evaluation, including the criteria for measuring success in the areas of teaching, services, professional activities, and personal and professional growth.. With this in mind, we propose that prior to the beginning of the academic year, and based on the instituted accountabilities and criteria, the academic leader and each individual faculty must meet and jointly set clear goals based upon the needs of the institution and the role of the faculty within the institution. Next, with the faculty member’s agreement and collaboration, and within the scope of the institution instituted accountabilities and criteria, the academic leader and the faculty member decide on the specific accountabilities and plan for personal and professional growth and development for the following academic year. These accountabilities not only should be clearly stated but also should have identified tools through which they can be measured. The academic leader, however, must make sure that:

- The goals are achievable with respect to the available resources provided to the faculty as well as faculty’s academic specialties and abilities.
- The necessary support to accomplish the faculty performance goals can be provided.
- Sufficient and consistent constructive feedback to each faculty member regarding progress in the accomplishment of the stated goals will be provided.

· The identified performance goals are flexible for adjustment based on the progress in the accomplishment of the goals.

In summary, establishing “A Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Agreement (FPEA)” is one of the cornerstones for a successful outcome of faculty performance evaluation and in turn of achieving a high quality faculty performance, personal satisfaction, and career retention.

II – Mid Year Faculty Self Progress Report

Rather than to wait for the end of the academic year, academic leaders should ask every faculty member in his or her area to prepare and submit a mid-year self-progress report. This report should reflect the progress of accomplishing the goals stated in the “Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Agreement” (FPEA). The purpose of Mid-year Faculty Progress Report is:

1. To identify the progress in accomplishing the goals in timely fashion.
2. Realistic adjustment of the goals, tasks and or time needed to accomplish them.
3. Identifying whether or not additional resources and or skills are needed to accomplish the established goals and tasks.
4. Opportunities to see whether or not additional tasks should be added to a given faculty member.

Strategies For Preparing an Effective Mid-year Faculty Progress Report.

1. Report the progress on the accountabilities and tasks stated in the Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Agreement (FPEA), including the impact of those accountabilities and tasks on the faculty, and the institution as well as the profession and the areas of academic discipline.
2. Report on any new accountabilities and or tasks that the faculty is assigned to do or not to do after the FPEA has already been established and agreed upon by both the faculty and the academic leader.
3. Reflect on the accountabilities and the tasks that were not accomplished at the mid-point of the year.
4. Propose a justifiable modification, elimination, and or addition to the existing accountabilities and or tasks.

Each faculty member should prepare his or her mid-year self-progress report, using the stated criteria and should include all the activities he or she did throughout the academic session. Additional categories can be added to report on activities that might not fit nicely under the stated criteria. When the mid-year self progress report is ready, the faculty submits to the academic leader for evaluation.

III – Mid-year Faculty Progress Evaluation Report:

Upon receiving the mid-year faculty self progress report, the academic leader reads, analyzes and internalizes the report. If he/she has questions or concerns, these are addressed with the faculty member before the leader writes his/her reflective report. The academic leader writes his /her report and sends it to the faculty member. If the faculty member has no concern, he/she signs and returns the report. If a given faculty member has a concern, then he/she requests a meeting with the academic

leader to discuss the matter. The academic leader and the faculty member meet and discuss the concerns in a climate of trust and good intention from both parties of the meeting. The outcomes of the meeting must be agreed upon by both parties...

IV – Mid Yearly Adjustment of Yearly

Faculty Performance Evaluation Agreement (FPEA):

Based on the academic leader's reflection on the mid-year faculty self-progress report, the leader and the faculty member consider whether or not an adjustment should be made in the yearly faculty performance Agreement.

V – Mid-year Faculty Progress Evaluation Report:

The academic leader also needs to prepare a mid-year faculty progress report. However, with the proposed strategy, the leader's job has been made easier because most of the materials and information that is needed for a report such as this are provided by the faculty members in their mid-year faculty self progress report.

In preparing the mid-year faculty progress report, the academic leader collects all the faculty mid-year self progress reports, reads, internalizes and organizes them in one written draft report that could follow the same criteria as the faculty did. At the same time, he/she needs to provide each faculty with written comments and suggestions on his or her mid-year self-progress report. With faculty comments and suggestions in mind, the leader should revisit his or her mid-year faculty progress report, make the necessary changes and modifications, and then prepare a summary progress report

The academic leader's report must be:

1. Written in a polite, concise and clear format so it is easy to read and to understand.
2. At the end of each section of the report, the leader must give credit to those who helped, collaborated with, and or made a given accomplishment or impact possible within and outside of the institution.

VI – End of Academic Year Faculty Self Evaluation Report:

In almost all institutions, faculty members are required to write and submit an end of academic year faculty self-evaluation performance report. The goal of this report is to help the academic leader make decisions regarding faculty accountability and to justify faculty performance and promotions. Therefore, faculty are expected to report on what they accomplished, and contributed in the areas specified in the Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Agreement, as well as in the faculty policy handbook of their institutions. They are also expected to report on other activities and experiences that were outside the stated categories, but were important in their performance evaluation and promotion. They should also include in their reports any newly acquired skills and experiences that might be valuable to the institution.

Each faculty member needs to prepare and submit an end of the academic year faculty self evaluation performance report using the same procedures and strategies applied in the mid-year self-progress

report. This simple strategy, which helps to save time and energy, is an effective way to organize information, and is also an efficient “memory saving device”; something that many faculty members are in need of toward the end of each academic school year. This strategy also provides the opportunity for each faculty to compare his/her performance and activities on academic semester and/or quarter bases. This kind of comparative analysis allows the faculty to make a conscious decision whether or not to change how he/she has been doing professionally and to re-establish priorities.

Part of the mid-year faculty self-progress report can also be used as an;

1. Inventory of activities that faculty performed during the academic session.
2. Avenue for sharing information with department chair and upper administration, as well as colleagues.
3. Method of record keeping for future use.

VII – The End of Academic Year Performance Evaluation Report

There are certain obstacles and pitfalls to be avoided in performance evaluations.

1. One is to avoid and/or minimize the “central clumping” error that often occurs. Central clumping occurs when managers group their employees into a middle clump of performance, usually because of a lack of confidence in outlying results.
2. A second issue to avoid is the “recency effect”. This is when the evaluator focuses too heavily on recent performance instead of providing a balanced review of the entire performance period.

To address the above concerns is to provide mechanisms for appraisal of the faculty member on a continual basis throughout the year.

If the academic leader uses the tools and strategies set forth above, when he/she prepares the end of the year performance report, the leader will have the following useful reports available for him or her to rely on:

1. Mid-year faculty progress evaluation reports.
2. Mid-year summary of faculty progress report.
3. End of year faculty performance evaluation reports.
4. End of academic year summary of faculty performance report.

The academic leader needs to combine the reports together to prepare the end of the academic year performance report. This way the leader doesn't find himself under pressure to prepare the report, chasing the faculty to submit their self evaluation reports, and/ or finding what to include and what not to include in this report. In addition, because of this strategy, time and energy are saved and the chair has enough time to distribute his or her report to the faculty and ask for input and reflection. This process helps produce high quality end of academic year faculty performance reports.

IV – Benefits of Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Report:

A.

Faculty Benefits:

This process will provide the opportunity for faculty to:

1. Be evaluated based on specific and pre-determine plan which can be modified according to the pre set priorities, resources, and faculty progress.
2. Be able to determine halfway whether or not she/he is accomplishing the stated goals.
3. Provide time to reflect and readjust priorities.
4. Minimize surprises on the final performance evaluation report.
5. Minimize conflicts with the academic leader.
6. Keep the faculty focus on the goals and objectives.
7. Eliminate the problem of the chair assigning more tasks beyond the pre-planned accountabilities.
8. Additional tasks could be assigned more effectively when leaders are aware of the faculty progress, and the impact of this progress on other faculty, and the institution.
9. Help build confidence and self-esteem within the faculty, characteristics that are needed when faculty members voluntaries and or asked to work on all college-wide committees.
10. In order for faculty to demonstrate the impact of their accountabilities and task performance upon colleagues, institution, profession, and or the areas of academic disciplines, they need to become better communicators, critical thinkers, become creative and seeking collaboration with others, etc. This strategy provides the opportunities to experience and exercise these characteristics and attributes.
11. Provide the opportunity for the faculty to focus and distinguish in their yearly faculty performance report between content (facts), feelings (emotions), and meaning (significances).
12. Provide opportunity to learn and apply management and leadership principles in the accomplishment of their accountabilities and tasks.
13. Help faculty to and chair to form and have shared vision, mission, and excellence in the workplace.

B – Academic leaders Benefits:

This process will provide the opportunity for academic leaders to:

1. Identify the strengths and the limitations of their faculty,
2. Identify disproportional distribution of resources, professional, and personal projects. Thus distribute the resources within the time frame of the year and for appropriate projects.
3. Provide time to react on negative attitudes, unexpected events, and unfinished duties.
4. Adapt a better plan for budget next year.

5. Effectively use human resources.
6. Be able to adjust the instructors' priorities based on the progress report.
7. Identify which faculty can be relied upon to carry administrative duties when needed.
8. Provide opportunities to reflect on new priorities and initiatives.
9. Prepare more effective departmental one year, five years and ten years goals and action plans.

C – Institutional Benefits:

The Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Report as described in this article has the potential not only to help faculty's abilities to maximize students performance and satisfaction, but also to maximize organizational performance and mission effectiveness.

Striving to achieve quality and excellence education is a characteristic of a successful educational institution. Institutions that fail to demonstrate both high performance and superior achievement in organizational performance and mission will never be able to provide excellence in education. They can never achieve high levels of quality student performance, stratification, retention, and career opportunities. Educational research has shown over and over again that above average performance and effectiveness are usually easier to achieve during periods of sustained growth. The real test of leaders and organization typically comes when growth begins to give way to stability or decline. At this point, institutional success will correlate more closely to institutional ability than any other factors.

Praxis Matrix for the Yearly Faculty Performance Evaluation Report

The following specific action steps are strongly recommended in yearly faculty performance evaluation report:

1. Individual faculty writes his/her self-progress report and submits to the corresponding academic leader.
2. The academic leader reads, analyzes and internalizes the report. If he/she has questions or concerns, sets with the faculty before writing his/her reflective report.
3. The leader writes his /her report and send to the perspective faculty.
4. If the faculty has no concern, he/she signs and returns the report. If he/she has concern, then the faculty requites a meeting with the leader.
5. The leader and the perspective faculty meet and discuss the concerns in a climate of trust and good intention from both parties of the meeting.

Conclusion:

One of the most frequent sources of conflict between the department chair and a faculty member is the

lack of clear communication to the faculty regarding faculty accountability and the criteria for performance evaluation (Gialamas, Cherif, and Hilentzaris 2003). Transparency, honesty and openness are essential elements in a faculty performance evaluation. Faculty self evaluation and leader's reports as described in this article provide a way to show consistency in faculty reporting and self-evaluation and help eliminating ambiguity in performance evaluations.

This type of strategy will help academic leaders to see the strengths, the potential of their faculty and form a better picture of the future of the academic area they lead. In doing so, it helps them to carefully engineer the future by planning the experiences that will serve as a stepping stone for desirable goals and outcomes. And most importantly, the strategies will enable them to see which rules, policies and procedures are necessary and which are not.

These strategies will enable leaders to provide ongoing feedback, something that is essential for motivating people and for effective performance in the workplace. Indeed, as Blanchard (1999) has strongly argued, "providing feedback is the most cost effective strategy for improving performance and instilling satisfaction." (p. 11)

These strategies will enable leaders to see who from the faculty is focused and aligned with the mission of the institution and who needs to take time out to reflect, think, strategize and prioritize his or her academic performances and activities.

These strategies will better enable leaders to discover what motivation works with each faculty and in turn how to help him or her to achieve high quality performance and satisfaction.

These strategies will help the leaders to discover who of the faculty are really interested and committed versus those who talk about trying to do something rather than actually doing it. (Blanchard, 1999, p. 51).

These strategies can also be used as a tool in stimulating curiosity, experimentation, analysis, discussion, critical debate, and communication skills – key principles in professional development and collegiality.

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