



Performance Management Pilot Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is the pilot's purpose and timeframe?**
 - To determine a new approach to performance management at Harvard that furthers connections between organizational and individual success, for senior leaders, managers, and employees, through a culture that supports performance, development and meaningful connections.
 - The pilot will assess:
 - the impact of conversations between managers and staff on working relationships, engagement, and work outcomes
 - the effectiveness of new language (such as “priorities” instead of “goals”)
 - the usefulness of the tools and training provided in support of the piloted process
 - The timeframe is July 1, 2017 through May 31, 2018. Pilot groups are deciding when to kick off the pilot though no later than September 30; everyone will conclude on May 31, 2018.

- **What is in it for me as a manager? Staff member? What should I focus on?**
 - For both managers and staff members, the focus is on conversations and meaningful connections to help you maximize your contribution at work and help you feel fully satisfied by the work you do.
 - To have meaningful conversations, it's beneficial to focus on:
 - Having a positive mindset about our working relationships
 - Having a sense of shared responsibility for performance conversations
 - Using our listening skills
 - Asking open-ended questions to gain a clear understanding of priorities and challenges and to agree on the support needed for success
 - By participating in the pilot and providing feedback during FY18, you'll help Harvard craft its performance management approach for FY19.

- **How is the pilot different from my prior experience with performance management at Harvard?**

What's changing?

- Both managers and staff jointly own the process, frequency and quality of the performance conversations.
- There is new language such as “Priorities” instead of “Goals”, and “Direction, Connection, Reflection” instead of “Planning, Coaching, and Assessing.”
- There is a new form.
- Team priorities are expected to be identified and documented. With this level of priorities, it is expected that managers and staff will experience a closer connection to the bigger picture.
- There are no competencies.
- There are no formal mid-year reviews (this applies to schools/units and groups who have previously done this).
- There is no overall rating. Compensation will be determined by:
 - If you are represented by HUCTW or one of our service and trades unions, you'll receive your pay as agreed to in the contract with Harvard.
 - Exempt employees' pay will be determined based on a framework that will be provided no later than November 30, 2017.



- Year-end conversations will take place prior to any final written documentation.
- At year-end, the final written document will be uploaded to ePerformance.

What is staying the same?

- Feedback *may* be gathered on contributions and impact using either the process in PeopleSoft or via email. Pilot groups may choose to have feedback gathered using one of these approaches.

● **Will my feedback be sought about my pilot experience?**

- Yes. Surveys will be conducted during the pilot year with managers and staff. The information will be used to inform the FY19 process and experience University wide.

● **What are the pilot performance management process phases?**

- “Direction, Connection, Reflection” are the phases:
 - “Direction” includes identifying priorities and innovative ideas
 - “Connection” refers to ongoing conversations between managers and staff
 - “Reflection” is the year-end discussion and documentation, and looking forward to FY19

● **What are my next steps now that I’ve attended the kickoff session? Based on your group’s timeframe for the Direction phase:**

- Teams discuss their respective team priorities.
- Schedule the initial conversation between staff and managers to start talking about staff member’s priorities and define frequency of meetings (connections) that will work for both of you. Remember, it is about managers and staff making meaningful connections through performance conversations.
- Manager and staff hold individual meetings to confirm priorities, professional priorities and interests, and innovative ideas.
- Employee documents the information using the provided form and shares with manager via email so both have a copy.

● **What are “Priorities”? How are they different from “Goals”?**

- Priorities are what you expect to accomplish and contribute during the current performance period, as well as the expected impact. They are key areas or projects that you expect to devote your time to completing or doing.
- Examples of Priorities:
 - Provide customer service to faculty and students in the department
 - Manage XYZ project as outlined in the project plan
 - Participate on ABC project team
 - Build and maintain relationships with faculty and students
 - Manage ABC team to achieve its mission and goals
 - Support faculty member(s) Smith on ABC course(s)
 - Coordinate with colleagues to develop a strategic plan for our department
 - Manage research grants awarded to Principal Investigators in my portfolio
 - Manage the department/center budget
 - Engage with University wide colleagues to develop best practices for our function
- Priorities are not expected to include specific information, timeframes, or measurements. Goals are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Aligned, Realistic, and Time-bound).
- There is no goal setting.



- **What are “Professional Priorities and Interests”?**
 - This is about a staff member’s longer term career aspirations and professional development as it relates to the individual’s current role.
 - Examples of Professional Priorities and Interests:
 - Develop project management skills by participating/leading ABC project
 - Identify a mentor to develop finance knowledge and skills
 - Attend diversity conference and share information with colleagues
 - Attend communication course and apply on the job
 - Lead a group meeting discussion on building trust across the department
 - Job shadow Project Manager Jones for the purpose of learning about the role and work

- **What is the purpose of “Innovative Ideas”?**
 - Harvard is seeking ways to increase innovation across the University. One way is through this performance management process. Managers and employees are encouraged to explore new ways of getting work done such as forming a work group, forming an affinity group, determining how to improve a process or outcome, identifying new ways to solve problems. Additional ideas include taking on an interim role, job shadowing or job sharing, etc., if that is a new idea for you and/or your group to pilot.
 - During FY18, try out your idea(s) and discuss learnings with your manager (and others as appropriate).

- **My manager and I have completed the Directions phase, what is the Connections phase? What should happen?**
 - Meeting at the frequency that works for both of you to help you confidently manage and complete your priorities, and for your manager to provide information, support, and feedback as needed. There is no predetermined or required number of meetings.
 - As priorities change - and they often do during the course of a year - discuss this with your manager, update your document to include the new priorities, indicate if a priority has shifted or is no longer a priority for FY18. Be sure that you and your manager have the most recent updated document.
 - The document is meant to be a living document, one that managers and staff refer to and modify throughout the year.
 - Use the Connections section on the document that you maintain to capture notes as you choose. Or, you may choose to keep a separate file.

- **What happens during the Reflection phase?**
 - Employee and manager confirm a meeting time to discuss the year ending, and the year ahead.
 - If desired (Optional), feedback is gathered from others by the manager in advance of the conversation with the staff member.
 - Employee and manager discuss the successes, lessons learned, feedback, and areas for consideration for the next year.
 - The conversation is followed by:
 - **Employee** – The employee documents the insights into *what* they’ve been doing and *how* they have approached their priorities for FY18, shared during the performance conversation. Questions that may help you summarize the year end conversation



are: How have you been successful? What have you accomplished/achieved? What have you learned? What difficulties have you experienced or overcome?

Employee forwards their final document to their manager.

- **Manager** – The manager documents the insights, guidance and feedback s/he provided in the performance conversation, as well as any reflections s/he shared with the employee regarding what they should consider focusing on going forward.
- **Employee and Manager** – Confirm the final document including comments from both. And, each signs the document.
- **Manager** - Uploads the final document into ePerformance.

- **There are no ratings at the end of the year. How does this impact my pay?**
 - If you are represented by HUCTW or one of our service and trades unions, you'll receive your pay as agreed to in the contract with Harvard.
 - Exempt employees' pay will be determined based on a framework that will be provided no later than November 30, 2017.
- **Who is participating in the pilot?**
 - Over 4200 managers and staff across the University in school academic and administrative departments and central administration units.
- **What can I expect in terms of communications?**
 - Communications from your senior leader(s) and HR directors will be sent throughout FY18 to provide updates on the overall pilot, your school/unit or department/team's pilot experience, and provide support materials for manager and staff use.
 - Throughout the year, you will periodically be asked to complete a survey about your experience with the pilot.