



CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Ministries Council

STAFF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND DEVELOPMENT

Appraiser Guidance Notes – For Completion of Pre-Appraisal and Review Forms

1. What is an Appraisal?

- A confidential discussion between the appraisee and appraiser.
- Two way process based on self-assessment.
- An opportunity to give and receive feedback.
- An opportunity for you to focus on the tasks the appraisee is good at and not so good at.
- A chance for you to agree realistic operational and personal targets and objectives.
- An opportunity for you to link their development to your Council/department's aims and objectives.

2. Appraisal Meeting

- Agree a date and venue with your appraisee.
- Remember it is both the appraisers and the appraisees responsibility to plan and prepare
- Review the previous Review form (this will not apply on the first staff appraisal).
- Complete a Pre-Appraisal form in advance of the appraisal meeting to ensure you are prepared. In particular spend some time reviewing the job description and thinking about the appraisee's role. Think ahead about what development you think they may need and prepare some SMART objectives.
- The appraisal discussion will be based on the headings on the Pre-Appraisal form.
- You should complete a Review form outlining the agreed discussion and action points and you should forward to the appraisee to sign and date. Both parties retain a copy and a copy is sent to the Ministries Council/HR Department.

3. Pre-Appraisal Form

The Pre-Appraisal form has been split into nine areas. Use the pre-appraisal form as an agenda and work through the sections. Throughout the interview encourage the appraisee to undertake most of the talking. Ask the appraisee to expand on their comments under each section of the form as you deal with them. Following the appraisees comments, add your own comments and discuss the issues generally.

Section 1 – Main Responsibilities

Briefly list the main responsibilities of the appraisee's job and the approximate percentage of time spent on each over the year as a whole. List no more than four to six aspects. It is always worth starting an appraisal discussion by checking that you and the appraisee have the same understanding of what the job entails; it is very easy for it to have changed without one or both parties fully appreciating the fact.

Section 2 – Assessment of Objectives

You need to look back at the last year's Review form and confirm the objectives agreed. For each agreed objective identify which, *from your point of view*, have been (a) exceeded, (b) met as required, and (c) not achieved. Explain why you have assessed them in any particular category.

Section 3 – Achievements

Be sure to give full recognition to the appraisee's achievements and strengths; note specific examples of good work. It is particularly helpful to express appreciation of tasks that have not come easily and which have called for real effort or persistence from the appraisee.

Outline what you feel the appraisee has done particularly well over the last year and why you feel that way? This may not be a major area of work; simply something you feel has been done well.

Do the achievements and the areas identified by the appraisee coincide with your own perceptions of their performance? If there are any significant discrepancies, they will have to be discussed. *Make sure that you are considering the whole period under review – and not just what has happened recently.*

Section 4 – Potential Improvement Areas

Outline what you feel the appraisee has done least well over the last year and why you feel that way. Remember this is designed to help, develop and move forward, not to criticise!

When managing performance weaknesses, commend appraisees for their frankness where they have identified real shortcomings. Discuss them firmly but constructively trying to get the appraisee to produce their own ideas and plans for overcoming these shortcomings. There may be cases where the weaknesses mentioned by the appraisee on their Pre-Appraisal form do not reflect the deficiencies in performance which you have identified. In such circumstances, you will need to address the difference in views in the appraisal discussion. Where the appraisee has identified an aspect of performance that has fallen short of their own standards but which you perceive as being perfectly satisfactory, little more than reassurance may be needed. Potentially the most difficult disagreement is where you perceive weakness and the appraisee does not. In dealing with a situation of this kind:

- Be specific; make sure you have evidence to back your comments – do not make vague and unsupported assertions
- Try to be firm but positive; keeping the emphasis on what constructive action can be taken; the aim is to improve performance, not to demotivate the individual.
- Do not tackle more than two areas of weakness in any depth; this is as much as most people can take without becoming defensive – confine your comments to remedial weaknesses; there is little point in commenting on aspects of the individual that are not amenable to change. The emphasis is on appraising job performance, not the appraisee's personality.

Section 5 – Additional Steps

In identifying what action could be taken to improve performance, has the individual made suggestions that are realistic and practical? To what extent has the appraisee taken responsibility for their own actions?

To help improve the effectiveness in the job still further, what additional steps do you feel could be taken by: -

- (a) The appraisee;
- (b) You as the appraiser;
- (c) Your Kirk Session or Presbytery; or
- (d) The Ministries Council?

Section 6 – Principal Objectives

What do you consider to be the *main objectives* for the next 12 months? List four or five. When listing the main objectives for the period ahead consider how you would like to measure success in achieving them; they will be reviewed again at the next appraisal. The objectives should reflect performance development rather than simply routine work. In framing them, consider the wider perspective of the needs of your particular situation.

Setting objectives:

The appraisee should complete this section with the appraiser. Prior to the meeting both appraisee and appraiser should have considered personal and job objectives.

As the appraiser you should consider the following:

- The objectives should relate to the Kirk Session or Presbytery's objectives
- The objectives used are SMART:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Timely

An example of a SMART objective is:

- *To undertake a review and make recommendations for improvement to the pastoral visiting rota by July 2010.*

The appraiser and appraisee must agree a timescale for all objectives set.

Section 7 – Changes in Responsibilities

What changes, if any, in the duties and responsibilities would you like to see to make the role more effective? Again it is important to be realistic in this section. If you have no changes, please leave this section blank. The appraisee may, of course, have some suggestions to make. You may also wish to discuss any changes, which you feel are relevant to the current job description. Please remember that any significant changes to the job description must be made in consultation with the Kirk Session/Presbytery and Ministries Council.

Section 8 – Learning and Development

This section deals with learning and development. In thinking about the appraisee's needs, look back at the strengths identified in section 3 – how can these be capitalised on? How can the less successful aspects of the appraisee's performance mentioned be managed through changes in job content, through training, or by other means? Will any changes in the demands made on you in the near future require that some steps be taken now to equip you to deal with them?

There are a number of ways in which employee learning and development should be undertaken and can include any of the following:

Attending meetings, guided reading, delegation, working on a particular project, work shadowing, open learning, computer based training, attending seminars and conferences, working groups, coaching, training sessions and further education.

Section 9 – Additional Discussion Areas

Is there anything else you would like to discuss during this process?

4. Review Form

After completion of the appraisal meeting, the appraiser will complete a Review form which will provide a summary of the agreed areas of discussion following the appraisal meeting. This form must be sent by the appraiser to the appraisee to sign and date.

5. Mid Year Review

The appraiser will meet with the appraisee approximately six months after the initial meeting. This meeting is to review the objectives, discuss progress, identify any new objectives and agree timescales. This will also give the appraiser and appraisee an opportunity to discuss any objectives that may have become obsolete.

6. Basic Guidelines for the Appraisal – Appraiser:

- Listen properly & actively
- Be prepared
- Positive body language
- Look interested – if you are not why should the appraisee be!
- Stay focussed
- Test your understanding – ask questions and repeat.

7. Summary

The agenda for the appraisal interview will be based on the headings of the Pre-Appraisal forms, so the starting point for the whole discussion will be the appraisee's ideas and perceptions (though the appraiser will obviously contribute his or her views too). This means that the major responsibility for making the appraisal a successful and effective vehicle for constructive action will be the appraisee's. The more thought and preparation completed beforehand, the more the appraiser, appraisee and the Church as a whole will get out of it.