



## Valley School District

### Guide for Classified Employee Professional Goals and Feedback

#### ESTABLISH EMPLOYEE GOALS FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The employee and the supervisor will meet at the beginning of the annual cycle to collaborate on establishing at least two goals. Goals will be set prior to October 15<sup>th</sup> each year.

The first goal is a *Performance* goal. The goal connects the specific work expectations of the employee with the Continuous Improvement goals of the school, program, or department. It does not attempt to encompass all the work expectations of the employee. Rather, it provides both the employee and the supervisor a specific, clear focus for their work together.

The second goal is a *Development* goal. This goal focuses on expanding or deepening the employee's skills and competencies. The Development goal is learning-oriented and motivated primarily by the employee's interest and desire for personal growth.

The SMART Goal criteria should be utilized to assure goals are:

**Specific:** Areas stated for improvement are precise and accurate without the use of generalities.

**Measurable:** There must be some way to determine progress towards the goal.

**Attainable:** Actions and strategies for progressing toward the goal are accessible and rational.

**Relevant:** The Performance goal is aligned with and supportive of the goals of the program, school or department. The Development goal aligns with the employee's interests and aspirations.

**Time Bound:** There is a time frame for attainment. A specific time frame encourages accountability and provides a structure for action planning.

The SMART concept is a tool for analyzing and discussing the viability and power of a goal. While it is often helpful to state the goal in the "SMART" format, it is not necessary to spend excessive energy wordsmithing.

#### PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Throughout the year, the supervisor should provide coaching and feedback on both goals. The goal areas, identified during goal setting process, can serve as the supervisor's coaching agenda during the year. At minimum, the employee and supervisor will have a Mid-Year Reflection prior to February 15<sup>th</sup>. Additional one-on-one meetings are encouraged.

Prior to August 1<sup>st</sup> each year, at the Year End Conference, the supervisor and employee will summarize progress toward achieving goals and identify development areas for the next annual cycle. This approach ensures focus on the continuous improvement. Effective supervisors understand the value and importance of giving continual performance feedback to their staff. Positive feedback will strengthen an employee's overall performance.



## Valley School District

### APPLYING COACHING CONCEPTS TO SUPERVISION

#### Employee coaching is:

- Focused on future behavior
- Inquiry oriented
- Used to help all staff perform even better by releasing potential in a way that works best for the individual AND the organization.

#### Coaching Steps:

- Open the conversation in terms of the employee's goals
- Invite the employee to express the immediate issue, opportunity or problem to address
- Acknowledge the employee's ability and willingness to address the issue, opportunity or problem
- Mutually refine the area of development or opportunity
- LISTEN
- Ask questions that will help open thinking towards potential solutions
- Paraphrase potential solutions
- Develop an action plan that clearly establishes who will do what and when
- Set a date for follow-up

### FEEDBACK

Feedback is often misunderstood as being a one-way communication between the supervisor and the employee, when in fact it is the overall interaction between them. Supervisors and employees should be both the givers and receivers of constructive feedback. Constructive feedback is essential for maximizing one's potential, raising awareness, improving one's strengths and building effective relationships.

In a practical situation, feedback is given to an employee so that he or she can work on the areas that need improving. Without feedback, the employee may assume that there is nothing to improve, and therefore no progress is being made. The lack of feedback usually leads to two main consequences:

1. The employee can make an inaccurate assessment of his/her performance and progress.
2. The employee can lose trust in the leader.

#### Effective feedback should be:

- **Timely.** It should occur as soon as practical after the interaction, completion of the deliverable, or observation is made.
- **Specific.** Statements like "You did a great job" or "You didn't take care of the clients' concerns very well" are too vague and don't give enough insight into the behavior you would like to see repeated or changed. Be explicit and clear.
- **Focused on the behavior and not the person.** Avoid making the feedback seem as if it is a judgment. Describe what you heard and saw, and how those behaviors impact the team, client, etc.
- **Continuous.** Feedback should become a regular part of supervisor-employee communication.



## Valley School District

### Guidelines for Giving Feedback

- **Speak directly to person:** Use their name, look them in the eye. This shows sincerity.
- **Be specific:** To be useful, the information has to be specific and to the point.
- **Be non-judgmental:** You are describing the behavior, not judging the person.
- **Focus on changeable behavior:** Use feedback as a method to gain awareness of changeable behavior.

### Guidelines for Receiving Feedback

- **Ask for it:** This gives the other person permission and lets them know they are free to provide you with information. Most importantly, it lets the other person know you are willing to listen.
- **Listen:** Give full attention.
- **Avoid justifying behavior or becoming defensive:** Remember, you asked for their opinion. You may not always agree, but you should always accept.
- **Confirm with others (when possible):** This helps add to the credibility of the feedback.
- **Respond:** The best response is thank you. You have just been given a gift. Let the other person know their gift was appreciated.