

Agent Performance Review Module

PowerPoint Presenter's Notes

These notes are intended to be used as a general discussion outline and not as a script to be read.

Note of explanation: In local units with five or more agents, the local unit director is responsible for personnel, including agent performance reviews. Please adapt the script below to fit the situation in your local unit.

Slide #1

The local board is responsible for encouraging and recognizing extension agents' professional growth, development and progress toward the goals of the local educational program. Performance reviews are useful in this process. This presentation gives an overview of performance reviews and an introduction to the roles of partners in the process.

Slide #2

The goals of the performance review process are:

- To provide agents an opportunity for self-assessment.
- To increase job satisfaction and understanding.
- To recognize performance that meets or exceeds expected levels.
- To identify areas where development is needed.
- To establish agreement on professional development plans.

Slide #3

Effective performance review systems take two forms – informal, ongoing feedback that occurs regularly at board meetings, and the formal review that is generally conducted annually.

During the formal review, a specific time is set aside to meet with the agent and discuss

the performance review document. Ongoing performance feedback, on the other hand, occurs at the regular meetings of the local board, as the agent and board members discuss progress toward programming goals that have been established in the Action Plan.

Slide #4

The partners in the process are the agent, the local board, and the area extension director. In local units with five or more agents, the local unit director has personnel responsibilities, so is also a partner.

Slide #5

Each of the partners has a unique role. The agent's role is to provide information, in written and oral format, regarding programming outcomes. Outcomes might include what the audience learned, what they experienced, and ultimately what changes they made in behavior or practices as a result of participation.

The agent will also seek feedback from board members regarding the progress being made toward program goals.

An important part of the agent's job description is to increase his or her capacity as an educator by taking part in professional development opportunities. Board meetings are a time for the agent to update the board on professional development needs and how those needs have been addressed during the previous month.

Slides #6 and 7

Some examples of educational programming outcomes that an agent might share are illustrated in the slide.

(With the board, identify some examples from the current board reports of results of participation or progress toward audience impact or outcome.)

Slide #8

The role of the board in the performance review process is to:

- Understand the scope of the local program. Board members are responsible for understanding the entire program, not just the priorities of the program development committee to which they were elected (in counties) or appointed (in districts).
- Understand the role of each agent in implementing comprehensive educational programming.
- Provide feedback on program outcomes during board meetings.
- Participate, when possible, in educational programming and activities.

Slide #9

The local unit director provides leadership to the process at the local level.

Slide #10

The area director brings a unique perspective to the performance review process by having the opportunity to observe program outcomes and agent performance in a number of local units.

Slide #11

The groundwork for an effective performance review is laid early in the year when the agents and board review the following:

- Agent Performance Review process and forms.
- Action Plans.
- Professional development plan.

(These documents can be presented to board members in a notebook format so they have easy reference to them throughout the year.)

Slide #12

As discussed earlier, agents will periodically provide board members with brief reports reflecting outcomes of their educational programming. Board meetings provide an opportunity for the board to give feedback on strengths and limitations of the educational programming.

Slide #13

In September or October, board members will receive an email with a link to the agent's

- Performance Review with examples of performance indicators.
- Professional Development Plan.
- Action Plans.

Slide #14

Board members will individually review the documents provided by the agents and add their comments. They will then electronically forward the form.

The Agent Performance Review is a confidential document to be viewed and discussed only by the partners involved in the process.

Slide #15

If desired, the agent can send copies of the External Feedback Form to a group of individuals who work with that agent – 4-H leaders, Master Gardeners, PDC members, etc. These forms are to be forwarded electronically.

Slide #16

The local unit director or area director will summarize the board members' form and add comments. The face-to-face performance review will be attended by the agent and one or more of the following: board chair, area director, local unit director. Any specific performance concerns will be outlined.

Slide #17

Areas of emphasis in the performance review include:

- Program Planning, Implementation, Reporting and Evaluation
- Professionalism and Self-Management
- Volunteer and Staff Development
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- Administrative and Management Skills

(Note to presenters: Spend some time looking at the indicators under each area.)

Slide #18

Performance reviews are an important step in the growth and development of extension professionals and ultimately the success of the local educational program. Thank you for partnering in this process of strengthening extension programming for local residents.