

Evaluating Employee Performance

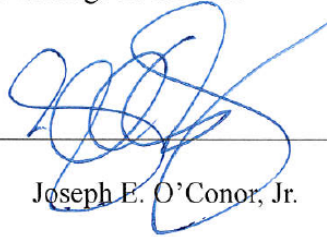
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Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that the appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Joseph E. O'Connor, Jr.', written over a horizontal line.

Joseph E. O'Connor, Jr.

Abstract

One problem the Peachtree City (Georgia) Fire Department (PCFD) faced was its performance appraisal system was perceived to have issues generating consistently accurate evaluations were completed in a timely manner for all personnel. The purpose of this applied research project was to develop standard operating guidelines to improve accuracy and consistency of performance appraisals for PCFD personnel. In order to search for the information necessary to address the underlying problem related to the evaluation system, four research questions were addressed during the course of this research: 1. To what degree has the current PCFD performance appraisal system lost accuracy and/or consistency? 2. What performance appraisal systems are in use by comparable sized fire agencies or local private businesses? 3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the performance appraisal systems in use? 4. In those cases, where performance appraisal systems are believed to be effective, what guidelines and training programs have contributed to that success? After a thorough review of the literature, two questionnaires gathered information from the subject agency's employees and other fire department, government and business employers to gather comparison data. Using action research methodology, the results were gathered into a comprehensive personnel development standard operating guideline, applicable forms as well as a related lesson plan to educate staff and supervisors on the lessons learned during the course of this project that show promise to improve how the department's greatest asset, the employees, are developed and encouraged.

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Evaluating Employee Performance

Few workplaces are more demanding of strong individual and team effort to meet their mission than the fire service. Attempting to maintain effective performance from each individual within fire service teams is an ongoing struggle faced by many fire agencies. One problem facing the Peachtree City (Georgia) Fire Department (PCFD) is the implementation of its performance appraisal system is perceived to have issues in generating consistently accurate evaluations are completed in a timely manner for all personnel. The purpose of this applied research project is to develop standard operating guidelines to improve accuracy and consistency of performance appraisals for PCFD personnel.

Four research questions will be addressed in the course of this study in an effort to develop the most effective resolution to this problem. To examine the scope of the problem, the first research question will seek to quantify the degree to which PCFD employees perceive the current performance appraisal system related to consistency and accuracy. To address the second research question, the author will seek to identify performance appraisal systems in use by regional fire service agencies as well as local private businesses. It is hoped that the third research question, specifically attempting to identify strengths and weaknesses of systems in use, will provide a framework for the development of an effective policy. Finally, the fourth research question will seek guidelines and training programs in use that are believed to contribute to the most successful programs. It is anticipated that such data could support the development of a comprehensive standard operating guideline to improve the subject agency's performance appraisal system.

Challenges experienced with the current process used to evaluate employee performance within the PCFD may be representative of a larger experience within the fire service or the

workplace at large. Careful attention to the construction and documentation of this applied research project could have a broader impact within the fire service to assist other agencies seeking to develop similar guidelines.

Background and Significance

As with many fire service agencies, the PCFD is a branch of local government and as such is expected to implement government-wide solutions in many areas including issues related to Human Resources. The performance appraisal system is one such element that is uniform throughout the City of Peachtree City government. The system in place for an extended period of time, utilizes an instrument evaluating 15 to 25 performance measures on a point scale of one to five. This numeric scale is further given labels with one being 'unsatisfactory', two 'marginally satisfactory', three 'fully satisfactory', four 'exceeds standards, and five 'outstanding'. In order to reach an overall score, the mean of the point values is calculated and compared to a chart distributed by the Director of Human Resources.

In spite of what appears to be a very structured process outlined in the Peachtree City Personnel Policy (City of Peachtree City, 2013), the standard against which performance is measured and the training to support the performance appraisal system are lacking. No terms on the instrument are defined, nor are any of the performance measures given objective criteria such as the element of attendance. In the absence of defined objective criteria; if an employee comes to work every day when scheduled, are they 'meeting expectations' or are they 'outstanding'? This very observation has been pointed out by staff members to highlight perceived inequities between former supervisors responsible for rating their performance. The perception that cases such as this occur routinely where similar behavior resulted in substantially different evaluation

scores is of great concern. The accuracy of appraisals has also been called into question when, in some cases, the document appears to evaluate the same behavior on two separate graded elements, such as ‘only needing to be asked once’ and ‘follows oral and written instructions’ often result in a different score assigned on the same evaluation form completed by a single supervisor.

The Peachtree City evaluation process places the task of scoring employee performance and writing a corresponding narrative on the direct supervisor. Once such a draft is prepared, it must be evaluated and approved throughout the chain-of-command to include a review by the Chief of the Department as well as the Human Resources Department before a meeting can be conducted with the subject employee to discuss and sign their performance appraisal. This complex review process often results in the draft document being returned to the author on more than one occasion for revision. Such a review can vary from spelling and grammatical errors, failure to sufficiently document disciplinary history or even redaction of inappropriate phrases that could be construed to be in violation of policy or law. Given the complexity of the review process, it has been observed that many front-line supervisors have resorted to utilizing cut and paste phrases from other evaluations or even submitting a verbatim narrative from earlier years in order to satisfy the review process and reduce or eliminate the number of times they will be expected to resubmit the document. It is hard to imagine such shortcuts would lead to an accurate and timely evaluation of current performance. At any given time, the department has a list of dozens of performance appraisals that are significantly overdue, leading the feedback intended and scheduled to be delivered annually to often be delayed by months.

The performance appraisal process in use is further challenged by several decades of tradition in which merit raises were tied to the overall rating of each year’s performance

appraisal. This pay for performance tradition further challenged this process because the overall evaluation rating was viewed as the only tool allowing the direct supervisor to impact the compensation of their staff. This led to many years of consistently high performance appraisal ratings. During the economic recession of the late 2000s, funding was not available for merit raises within the City of Peachtree City budget. For many employees and supervisors, this loss of funding removed all incentive for receiving or writing the evaluations

The goal of this research project is to improve the tools available to frontline supervisors in their effort to create highly effective teams, capable of operating well under extreme conditions. It is hoped an improved performance evaluation system will serve as an instrument to assist officers in providing timely and accurate information to those they supervise. It is further hoped that such effective feedback will encourage all team members to excel so they may carry their share of the team's workload. Information that is more than a year old or worse, a restatement of earlier observation, would seem to fail to encourage employees who seek to improve.

The Executive Development Course of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer program utilized a '360-degree Multi-Rater Assessment Instrument' because the course developers believed such timely feedback from subordinates, peers and supervisors would make participants in the course more aware of their strengths and weaknesses thereby allowing them to grow and mature as leaders. The concept of effective team member feedback was further reinforced during the Executive Development course when the elements needed for teams to be successful were explored, specifically a shared standard of excellence (United States Fire Administration, 2013). It is believed the main purpose of any performance appraisal system is to

ensure all members of workplace teams share an understanding of the expectations required to be a successful member of the team.

The core element of employee development is identified as a key to achieving one component of the third goal of the United States Fire Administration's Strategic Plan (2015) to "Enhance the Fire and Emergency Services' Capability for response to and Recovery from All Hazards". Specifically, the initiative seeks to "promote a culture of health, wellness and behavior that enhances emergency responder safety and survival". (United States Fire Administration, 2015) The development of safe and effective firefighter behavior is the primary reason for any fire service performance appraisal system and is the mission driving this applied research project.

Literature Review

In preparation for this applied research project, a comprehensive review of literature related to evaluating employee performance and performance appraisal systems, an internet search utilizing www.google.com was made for the terms 'evaluating employee performance' and 'performance appraisal systems' in order to understand the scope of research that had already taken place in this area of study. With more than three million applicable websites identified it was clear that this topic had been widely studied in both commerce and academia. Utilizing the extensive resources available at the National Emergency Training Center's Learning Resource Center, a broad collection of research material was reviewed. Improving employee performance is at the core of an extensive array of peer reviewed journal articles, textbooks and a large number of serious studies in the area of improving human performance, employee development, psychology, neurobiology as well as subject matter for an extensive collection of motivational

speakers, consultants and authors who have profited through the years attempting to improve such systems.

Of the many driving forces securing performance appraisals place in today's workplace, compliance with a large number of high profile federal legislation is certainly high on the list. Bogaert (2003) reviews a host of legislation including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (CRA as amended in 1991), the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991(ADA) as some of the many legislative actions that employers must comply with that impact the contents of performance appraisals. The concept of assessing an employee's job performance can have liability for the employer if care is not taken to avoid disparate treatment as defined in the legislation and through the large number of judicial decisions establishing case law in this field. Employment actions frequently center on the content of annual performance appraisals to both support and refute claims of disparate treatment. Requiring performance appraisals is not without challenges to employers, including the possibility of alleged employer negligence for the failure to regularly complete evaluations or the potential risk of a supervisor abusing their responsibility to be non-discriminatory, fair and unbiased. "The evaluation process, therefore, must guard against such abuse by maintaining consistency, objectivity and job relatedness particularly when an employee receives an adverse employment action." (Bogaert, 2003, p. 7)

Bogaert (2003) credits the United States Congress for first requiring mandatory annual evaluation for all federal workers in the mid-1800s. In their comprehensive summary of performance appraisal methods currently in use, Human Resources Management defines performance appraisal as "a systematic evaluation of an individual with respect to performance on the job and individual's potential for development." (Performance appraisal methods, 2010)

This source divides the methods in use based on whether each is past or future oriented. The past methods include rating scales, checklists, forced choice method, forced distribution method, critical incidents method, behaviorally anchored rating scales, field review method, performance tests & observations, confidential records, essay method, cost accounting method, comparative evaluation method (ranking & paired comparisons). Future oriented methods include management by objective, psychological appraisals, assessment centers and 360-degree feedback (Performance appraisal methods, 2010). With such a wide assortment of methodologies available, one would expect research in this field has been exhausted, but advances in psychology, sociology and neurobiology have caused an explosion of scientific research in this area.

Holpp points out that the performance appraisal is just one tool among many that can help a manager lead his or her employees to achieve results consistent with the goals of the organization. When done properly, performance appraisals can become a highly effective means to improve manager-employee communication, promote better performance, help employees fully develop, ensure that team members are all working together, and provide a system that ensures fair decisions and gives a supportable justification for all employment decisions from hiring to firing (Holpp, 2012, p. xiv). When properly performed “ongoing or timely feedback on performance helps people learn more about themselves and about their jobs. This information is used in career planning and in mastering new, complex skills. The desire to know more about oneself is referred to as ‘enlightened self-interest’” (Smith, 1995, p. 69). One interesting area of research has been the exploration of what motivates employees to be successful. Fowler (2014) explores individual’s motivation including what does and what does not motivate. Efforts attempting to motivate employees has been a commonly used strategy to attempt to increase

employee productivity and job engagement. External motivators have proven to be far less effective than those motivations that originate within the employee. These internal or intrinsic motivations have proven to be the most likely force driving high performance in the workplace (Fowler, 2014). Mager & Pipe (1997, p. 3) identified seven reasons employees fail to perform: they don't know what is expected, they don't have the tools, space or authority to succeed, they don't get feedback about performance quality, they're punished when they do get it right, they're rewarded when they do tasks wrong, they are ignored whether they do it wrong or right, and finally, they don't know how to do it. Unfortunately, not all employees are self-motivated or driven to succeed in the workplace. Employee performance fails to meet their employer's expectations for many reasons. Such a discrepancy is a gap between what is and what should be. "What people are actually doing (or not doing) and what they should be doing" (Cadwell, 1994, p. 9). The 'Dunning-Kruger Effect' as discussed by Marinucci (2015, p. 32) states that incompetent people don't have the self-awareness to know they are incompetent. It identifies a perception gap when an employee without adequate skills makes an error but fails to realize that a mistake was made. Essentially these employees believe they are consistently performing at a superior level and therefore are completely unable to comprehend or accept criticism from supervisors.

Written performance appraisals have taken many forms, with the most popular today being the graphic rating scale, behaviorally anchored rating scale (BARS), management by objectives and the 360-degree evaluation. The graphic rating scale is probably the simplest. A list of required workplace behaviors is rated on a scale with each behavior being graded by the supervisor. The BARS system as described by Holpp (2012), maintains the graphic rating scale, but specifically defines the behaviors associated with each possible grade for every graded

workplace characteristic. Management by Objective (MBO) was popularized when Peter Drucker coined the phrase in 1954. MBO evaluations require all managers to set specific measurable objectives to be achieved within specific time periods. (Drucker, 2008) The 360-degree evaluation relies on multiple perspectives to evaluate the performance of each employee. By incorporating reviews from subordinates, peers and supervisors many believe the most well developed assessment can be completed. (Performance appraisal methods, 2010)

Unfortunately, it appears no single system is without limitations, in fact some weaknesses are found across the entire spectrum of formats. In his article *The Dirty Dozen Performance Appraisal Errors*, author Jonathan Segal enumerates the major pitfalls. He lists: late evaluations, over evaluation, timing issues, inconsistencies, like-me bias, stereotyping, using labels rather than behaviors, using absolutes, impugning intent, referencing protected absences, one-sided dialogue and an absence of goals as his dirty dozen (Segal, 2011). One of the most substantial challenges is the concept of an annual evaluation spanning an entire year of performance. The tendency to focus on recent events to a greater extent than those 12 months earlier or shade a review of overall performance based on an employee's positive or negative attitude or demeanor would seem to be difficult to overcome regardless of the format used. One working definition of the perfect appraisal "is one that is tightly linked to the organization's strategy while using the employee's skills, experience, and goals in a way that provides a sense of satisfaction and achievement for both the employees and the manager" (Holpp, 2012, p. xvi). Holpp goes on to state that he believes that most employees, once they understand what's expected of them, will make every effort to meet those requirements. (Holpp, 2012, p. 7)

Allowing salary to become the focus of an appraisal meeting and not the employee's performance is another common pitfall; Caldwell (1994) believed most of the benefits of the any

performance appraisal would be lost. He recommends cutting any relationship between salary increases and performance appraisals and replacing a single conversation with “two separate discussions – one focused on pay and one focused on performance. This allows the manager and employee to openly discuss performance without the specter of salary looming overhead” (Cadwell, 1994, p. 20).

An argument could be made that every employee should strive to continually improve their performance by critically evaluating themselves. To counteract such theories as the Dunning Effect presented earlier, personnel and their supervisors must be able to concede the possibility that each has an opportunity to improve. Marinucci (2015) believed such a conversation could only take place when it is mutually understood that what each participant believes may not always be the same as what the other actually observed. Employees and managers who fail to understand this are often defensive or argumentative. When this occurs, the review quickly can become uncomfortable and counterproductive. Once this has been experienced, many supervisors choose to write a neutral or more positive evaluation to avoid such a conflict.

In a comprehensive review of the current state of performance appraisals, Williams in the article *Why Performance Appraisals Don't Improve Performance* (2014), offers little hope of changing these basic human characteristics. One of the simplest performance appraisal systems identified in use can be credited to Michigan State University (2007). A single, two sided, page document guides a structured employee/supervisor conversation culminating with a single check box asking whether or not the employee meets or exceeds the performance expectations for their job. Such a simple model is certainly not commonplace. Smith (1995) proposed that feedback would be more accurate and better received if it came from numerous sources and all possible

directions in order to counteract the information vacuum in which many people appear to operate. Believing that organizations should seek to provide immediate, timely feedback on performance from peers, supervisors, managers and leaders. Such 360-degree feedback evaluates elements of performance and compliance with guidelines or standards for achieving and maintaining quality and productivity. The negotiated performance appraisal model was by far the most complex system encountered in the literature review, involving multiple lists being prepared by both the supervisor and the subordinate. In Billikopf's (2010) negotiated performance appraisal model, a detailed methodology is presented for effective supervisor-subordinate communication and conflict resolution through a facilitated conversation. Point value scores are calculated by a facilitator who serves as a neutral third party in a structured facilitated conversation.

Regardless of the performance appraisal format Caldwell (1994, p. 4) believes it is the process that is most important. Many organizations frustrated with their performance appraisal system attempt to restructure forms and other processes. (Bacal, 2012) By simply changing the forms in use, it could be argued that a technical solution is attempting to resolve a complex and deeply rooted adaptive issue as described by Heifetz and Linsky (2002) in their book *Leadership on the line*. Review Snap's (2015) white paper recommended five effective measures to improve employee performance: hold reviews more frequently, involve employees to a greater degree, focus on employees' accomplishments, happiness and growth without evaluating and rating them, nurture universal accountability and incorporate technology to facilitate the process. These identified measures seemed to be worthy of incorporation into any potential policy revision.

Later discussing the future of performance appraisals, Review Snap (2015) offered a case study of Union Bank & Trusts' approach to performance management called their Four by Four

Performance Review Process. Numerical rating scores and mandatory annual performance reviews are replaced with quarterly conversations with each assigned employee to address four specific questions: What have you accomplished in the last six months? What will you accomplish in the next six months? What challenges are you facing? How can I help you be your best? This model is similar to the format proposed by Ferguson in the format described in Finally! Performance assessments that work (Ferguson, 2013) discusses monthly discussions based on employee submitted lists of their five accomplishments from the prior month and five goals for the future month.

If in fact, the purpose of performance management isn't to look at the past and assign blame but to solve performance problems as they occur and prevent them whenever possible; Holpp (2012, p. 28) believed when performance deficits occur, identifying the real cause of the deficit, whether a result of a broken system or attributed to an individual employee, should be the primary mission for both the supervisor and the employee. Believing that if the manager does their job in supporting employees, each employee can become the 'resident expert' about their job who would know best how to improve performance. Such a perspective represented a growing trend in the literature; to move away from mandatory annual process to a more frequent, less graded conversation with the goal of the manager eliminating red tape and obstacles from the employee's opportunity for success. Further pushing the argument, eliminating the annual performance appraisal was the subject of an entire book on the subject by Coens and Jenkins (2000) in which the belief that annual reviews would never be successful. The concept of eliminating annual evaluations has been accepted by Delloitt, an international auditing, tax and consulting firm that opted for four yes/no questions in lieu of their mandatory annual performance appraisal process (Buckingham & Goodall, 2015), Delloite's four questions were:

“1. Given what I know of this person’s performance, and if it were my money, I would award this person the highest possible compensation increase and bonus, 2. Given what I know of this person’s performance, I would always want him or her on my team, 3. This person is at risk for low performance, and finally, 4. This person is ready for promotion today” (Buckingham & Goodall, 2015). IBM recently moved their employee performance program to a ‘app’ called Check-Point to promote regular timely feedback in an age when social media has most in the workforce constantly connected in real time (Zillman, 2016).

In an era when the millennial generation exists in an environment with a constant stream of immediate feedback, recognition for just ‘showing up’ and where everyone deserves a trophy (Tulgan, 2009) it seems the long debated and extensively researched topic of performance appraisals will face a continuing up hill battle. The most promising trends seem to be a non-graded process where it is unnecessary to debate degrees of greatness with employees lacking any perspective of their own weaknesses, a focus on providing feedback in a timely and consistent manner and finally, a process where managers are encouraged to seek to remove performance obstacles rather than focus on past mistakes.

Procedures

Since the purpose of this research project was to develop standard operating guidelines to improve accuracy and consistency of performance appraisals for PCFD personnel and in order to permit replication of this study, a comprehensive review of the published literature was used to develop an approach to seek information about each of the four research questions. During the course of the research, no earlier work was identified that generated an ideal tool or instrument designed specifically to gather the information sought.

In order to address the first research question that asks, to what degree the current PCFD performance appraisal system lost accuracy and/or consistency, a brief questionnaire was developed to gather an accurate picture of employee satisfaction with the current performance appraisal system's accuracy and its consistency. The employee questionnaire was developed utilizing the on-line resource available at SurveyMonkey.com. The questionnaire sought to evaluate the perceived strengths and weaknesses based upon each employee's personal experience with Peachtree City evaluation process. The only information sought related to evaluations received or written using the Peachtree City process, attempting to remove any bias of appraisals based on their experience from other employers' programs. Once the questionnaire was drafted, it was circulated among members of the author's Executive Development class to evaluate the clarity and face validity of each question. Based upon the feedback received, adjustments were made to several questions to improve clarity and several additional questions added to ensure the specific information necessary to answer the research question was addressed. A final draft of the questionnaire was circulated to officers in and out of the subject agency who had either completed graduate level coursework or the Executive Fire Officer Program. A few final adjustments were needed and all sample results received during the testing of the questionnaire were discarded.

PCFD employs 66 full-time employees, in order to attain a 95 percent confidence in the results of the study, it was determined that excluding the author, 56 responses would be necessary as described in the Executive Development course materials. (United States Fire Administration, 2013) Achieving such a high confidence would require a non-response rate less than 20 percent. A brief cover memo was drafted to establish the confidential nature of the study and the importance of broad participation to ensure accurate conclusions could be drawn. Within

the memo, an internet link was included to the employee questionnaire as well as a deadline of seven days identified. This cover memo including the questionnaire link was sent to all 65 full-time PCFD employees by way of their Peachtree City official email address. Two reminder emails including the link to the questionnaire were scheduled to encourage participation on the third and sixth day after the original request was sent.

In search of answers to the remaining three research questions, a second questionnaire was developed using similar techniques to seek information from other fire service and local private business organizations. Specifically seeking to identify the systems in use, the strengths and weaknesses of each as well as forms and training tools in use that have proven successful. The format of this questionnaire sought information from organization leaders related to their current performance appraisal system. In addition to simply identifying systems in use, this questionnaire sought the perceived satisfaction with their system and identification of strengths and weaknesses experienced. Allowances were made for any agencies that did not perform mandatory annual evaluations as described in Coens and Jenkins (2000) in order to seek to understand their motivation to eliminate or never start such a system as well as perceived consequences of that transition. For the agencies continuing to require annual performance appraisals, gather strengths and weaknesses of those systems currently in use. Finally, opinions related to the perceived effectiveness of any training programs was also sought as well as identification of any organizations willing to share policies or training programs believed to be effective.

The agency questionnaire was tested in a similar manner to the employee questionnaire as outlined above. This questionnaire was also circulated to the Peachtree City Director of

Human Resources and the City Manager. Slight changes were made to clarify some of the questions and after feedback was complete all test data received was discarded.

A cover email establishing the purpose of the research and the confidential nature of responses was drafted prior to distributing the questionnaire link to members of the South Metro Human Resources Association, the Atlanta Metro Fire Chiefs, Georgia Mutual Aid Group (GMAG) and the Georgia Fire Chief's Association (GFCA). One follow-up email that included the questionnaire link for a second time was scheduled for the fourth day after distribution.

Results

This research ultimately sought through an action oriented research method to develop standard operating guidelines to improve accuracy and consistency of performance appraisals for PCFD personnel. This project will guide the PCFD in formulating a comprehensive guideline and training program to address this perceived problem. Following a comprehensive review of the literature, it became clear that broad frustration exists related to performance appraisal systems in a wide variety of organizations. No single methodology stood above the others; in fact, numerous examples of pitfalls related to each system available were identified.

Two targeted questionnaires sought detailed information necessary to address the four research questions. The first questionnaire specifically dealt with the first research question: **To what degree has the current Peachtree City Fire Department performance appraisal system lost accuracy and/or consistency?**

PCFD employee questionnaire received 53 responses from the 64 distributed; one full time employee was accidentally omitted from the distribution list. Fifty three responses represent a strong response rate exceeding 80% of those surveyed. Fifteen percent of the respondents

believed their most recent performance appraisal was inaccurate, however when asked whether they disagreed with the comments or ratings of their last evaluation, almost 23% of respondents reported such a disagreement with their last evaluation. When asked about the accuracy of their last five evaluations, more than 40% of respondents believed their appraisal was only somewhat accurate or not at all accurate. More than 18% of respondents believed their last five evaluations lacked consistency. The results of the employee questionnaire are listed in Attachment A.

The second questionnaire gathered data to answer the remaining three research questions. The second of which asked: **What performance appraisal systems are in use by comparable sized fire agencies or local private businesses?**

The organization questionnaire distributed to local government, business and fire service agencies had a low response level. In spite of the web link being emailed to more than 150 government and business members of Human Resource Associations and more than 100 fire service agencies, a total of only 56 responses were received. Of the responses received, only 32 were complete. Limited data was also collected from 24 additional respondents who opened the questionnaire, but failed to complete it in its entirety. In total, 28 fire service agencies and 28 other government and private sector organizations started the questionnaire, 16 fire service agencies, seven non-fire government agencies and five private manufacturing and distribution companies completed all questions. All data from the organization questionnaires received are listed in Attachment B.

Of those who provided information, a variety of performance appraisal systems are in use. All 56 responses included whether or not their organization had a mandatory annual performance appraisal system in use. All but six (89%) mandated annual reviews with the balance eliminating the process only in the last few years. Further analysis of the limited data for

those agencies that did not mandate annual reviews, indicate that a few organizations perceived some benefit, with generally no negative impact to their employees, managers or organization since eliminating the annual requirement. Of the majority continuing to mandate annual performance appraisals, most either utilized Management by Objectives (45%) methodology or a Graphic Rating Scale (34%). Only a few utilized either a 360-degree or Behavioral Anchored Rating Scale (BARS). No respondents reported using a system based solely on Critical Incidents.

When evaluating their satisfaction with their current appraisal system, most organizations reported general satisfaction with their system from the perspective of the employee, manager and organization, however many reported decreasing satisfaction from all perspectives for employees serving longer than a few years. This concept of diminishing value of annual performance appraisals with extended tenure on the job was not found in the literature review and would warrant additional study.

The third research question asked: **What are the strengths and weaknesses of the performance appraisal systems in use?** The strengths and weaknesses of systems in use were reported through open ended questions that are listed within Attachment B. In general, many credited their system with improved communication between the supervisor and the employee as well as a method to allow for tracking performance over time. Several cited a link between strong performance and pay incentives as a strength of their system. Most respondents believed job performance of most employees would improve with consistent feedback.

When asked to list the weaknesses of their systems, responses included the opposite opinion related to pay for performance with evaluation scores reported to become artificially inflated. Others believed their system was flawed and put too much emphasis on checking the boxes instead of really providing feedback. Some cite complaints from supervisors that the forms

are too complex and time consuming. Inter-rater consistency was a common theme for many, questioning the accuracy of many of the systems in use.

Finally, the fourth research question asked: **In those cases, where performance appraisal systems are believed to be effective, what guidelines and training programs have contributed to that success?** Training supervisors in how to properly complete performance appraisals were reported to be very inconsistent. Only two responding agencies reported great success in training supervisors in their evaluation process. Nine others reported some success in training, while most reported little success or the lack of an agency-wide training program. The few reporting successful training programs reported that such training was regularly provided and an essential part of all career development training for candidates who wish to rise further in their organization. 14 respondents expressed a willingness to share their program, forms and in a few cases effective training programs. Given the limited positive response in reporting the success of their program, no follow-up emails solicited copies of programs in use.

Discussion

The employee questionnaire seeking quantitative data from current PCFD staff members' perception of the accuracy and consistency of performance appraisals received during their tenure with the City. A goal was set of 56 responses to achieve a 95% confidence in the sample size, strong response was received, but with only 53 responses received, the sample failed to achieve a 95% confidence level in the data. Two scheduled reminder emails as well as other reminders through the management team were unable to generate the desired response. All 53 questionnaires received were thoroughly completed and it appears most spent a moderate amount of time considering their often detailed responses.

Most responding employees believed they were effectively performing their job, with many reporting they still had things to learn. When examining the employees' perspective of their direct supervisor, 64% of respondents rated the training received from their direct supervisors as only moderately effective or worse. More than 60% of respondents believed the career development and mentoring they received from their supervisor were only moderately effective to completely ineffective even though almost 90% believe their supervisor was qualified to evaluate their job performance. Nearly 32% believed their supervisor brought up new issues during their last evaluation conversation that had never been discussed on a prior occasion. Greater than 45% of respondents believed their last five evaluations were only somewhat accurate or not at all accurate. When considering the same time period, more than 72% believed their evaluations were either consistent or very consistent. Almost 70% reported they were very comfortable or extremely comfortable in raising work concerns with their supervisor, but 26% stated they did not believe their opinions were valued by their supervisor during their last performance review conversation.

The results of the employee questionnaire appear to support the author's premise that the City of Peachtree City performance appraisal system lacked accuracy and, to a lesser degree, consistency. The broader results support the development of a new standard operating guideline on Personnel Development in order to incorporate the most promising findings of the literature review to empower supervisors to better support and mentor their directly reporting employees.

The second questionnaire distributed to nearly 250 fire service, government and private businesses had a poor response rate. One respondent who chose not to complete the entire questionnaire wrote an email to express his great concern with requiring the agency name field be completed. This was intended to prevent multiple responses from the same agency, but as the

chief described in his email, many performance appraisal systems are administered by other agencies or departments. Based on the current or future political environment, candid answers concerning the effectiveness, or ineffectiveness of such systems could be misinterpreted (Wall, 2016). In hindsight the agency name could have been considered optional and would suggest anyone interested in repeating this study make such a change. Other feedback received regarding the format of the questionnaire was more positive. One human resources manager from a local municipality forwarded a compliment on a thought provoking series of questions comparing the importance and effectiveness of performance appraisal systems based on the tenure of the employee (Johnson, 2016).

In spite of the limited number of respondents to the agency questionnaire, those received were balanced between the fire service and other government and non-government organizations. The identification of five agencies that had abandoned the practice of mandatory annual performance appraisals, illustrated the rising trend identified in the review of the literature (Coens & Jenkins, 2000). The fact that the involved departments reported no negative consequences resulting from abandoning the annual evaluation process is also consistent with the literature. Agencies were found utilizing a wide assortment of processes as described widely throughout the literature. No single methodology stood out as either primarily in use or most effective. The general consensus of dissatisfaction with the instruments and processes in use was particularly unexpected given the large number of human resources professionals who responded.

One fact not identified in the literature was the concept of diminishing returns for continued annual performance appraisals for long tenured personnel. Generally, the benefits exceeded the management effort to prepare evaluations for those with less than two years in their

position, but as tenure increased, it was found that the effort required of management exceeded the perceived benefit of preparing these evaluations. Several other interesting facts were illustrated when the effort-benefit analysis was evaluated from the perspective of the employee, the manager and the organization as a whole. The best available documents should be incorporated into the PCFD Personnel Development Standard Operating Guidelines and a lesson plan for its related training.

Historically many organizations have made technical corrections such as changing evaluation instruments when resolution of the underlying organizational issue requiring a major shift of attitudes and effort within the organization. In Peachtree City, the employee questionnaire indicated widespread dissatisfaction with the training and mentoring presented by direct supervisors. This unexpected result may indicate a larger problem than just the performance appraisal system in use. For that reason, it is anticipated that instead of just recreating the performance appraisal system, the Department must put greater emphasis on how to best deliver effective and timely coaching as the foundation of changes to be implemented.

Recommendations

Several recommendations were driven by this research project. The original research problem sought to develop a revised standard operating guideline to address questions of accuracy and consistency in the current performance appraisal system. The degree to which the employees are able to receive effective feedback is heavily dependent on a well trained and properly supported group of front line supervisors. The items worthy of immediate action are:

1. The Department as a whole must expend significantly greater effort to ensure all supervisors embrace their responsibility to provide timely feedback and mentor the employees entrusted

to them. This was found to be broadly lacking based upon the employee questionnaire and therefore offers a great opportunity to improve the employee's working environment while motivating stronger employee's job performance.

2. Enhanced communication and encouraging regular mentoring conversations between supervisors and their subordinates would be best supported by providing a regular opportunity for supervisors to have one-on-one conversations with those they supervise. Specifically, by focusing less on ancient history, it is hoped the revised process will provide a focused agenda to be completed each time a supervisor 'checks-in' with a subordinate. The Standard Operating Guideline on Personnel Development can be found as Attachment C. By making the process easier and less about grading past performance, it is hoped the employees and supervisors will create a partnership resulting in generally improved individual performance as well as better communication within teams.
3. At the time of each supervisor/member performance check-in meeting, employees will be asked to come prepared by completing a brief 'self-assessment'. This additional element will become an integral component of the overall process. A Self-Assessment form based on a document produced by Virginia Beach, VA and available on the International City/County Managers Association's (ICMA) website (City of Virginia Beach, VA, 2012) as template. The PCFD form created from that template is included in Attachment C.
4. A lesson plan was developed to ensure all personnel are thoroughly trained on the revised Standard Operating Guidelines for Employee Development. Building additional officer training from this structured document will allow the best information identified during this research project to be put into action. This lesson plan is located as Attachment D. This program should be updated and the presentation repeated at least annually.

5. The employees' perspective gathered by the employee questionnaire (Attachment A) should become an annual mechanism to track whether or not the newly implemented program is successful.
6. Effort is necessary to separate discussions related to compensation from conversations about performance in the future. Merit pay that has been absent since the start of the great recession will eventually return and based upon this research; two distinct conversations, one on performance and one on compensation, would have benefits over the former system.

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Attachment A

Employee Survey
Performance Appraisals/Evaluations

1. How long have you worked for Peachtree City?

Less than 6 months	0
6 months - 1 year	1
1 - 2 years	2
More than 2 years	13
More than 5 years	13
More than 10 years	7
More than 15 years	12
More than 20 years	5

2. About how long have you been in your current position? Range 1 to 23 years (mean is 5.6 years).

3. Overall, how would you rate your performance in your current position?

Not very Effective	1
Effective, but still learning	24
Very Effective	28

4. How frequently do you get feedback from your current supervisor about your work?

Only during my annual performance review	20
Several times a year	7
Monthly	2
Several times each month	5
Weekly	7
Several times each week	5
Daily	7

5. How effective is the training you receive from your supervisor?

Extremely effective	4
Very effective	15
Moderately effective	20
Slightly effective	10
Not at all effective	4

6. How effective is professional or career development advice (mentoring) you receive from your supervisor?

Extremely effective	6
Very effective	15
Moderately effective	15
Slightly effective	8
Not at all effective	9

7. How qualified is your current supervisor to evaluate your job performance?

Not very qualified	5
Qualified	23
Very qualified	25

8. How long has it been since your last performance appraisal?

Less than 6 months	17
Less than 1 year	26
Less than 2 years	8
Greater than 2 years	1
Never received a performance appraisal	1

9. How accurately do you think your last performance appraisal summarized your work performance?

Not very accurate	8
Accurate	29
Very accurate	16

10. Did you learn about any new performance issues when presented with your last evaluation?

No	36
Yes	17

11. When considering your last five Peachtree City evaluations, how would you rate the overall accuracy of the performance appraisals?

Not Very Accurate	3
Somewhat Accurate	20
Very Accurate	28
Not Applicable	2

12. When considering your last five Peachtree City evaluations, how consistently do you believe your supervisors applied the rating system to describe your performance within each of the measured categories?

Not Very Consistent	10
Consistent	27
Very Consistent	14
Not Applicable	2

13. How comfortable would you feel voicing your work related concerns to your supervisor?

Extremely comfortable	15
Very comfortable	22
Moderately comfortable	4
Slightly comfortable	8
Not at all comfortable	4

14. Did you feel like your opinions were valued while reviewing your last performance evaluation with your supervisor?

No	14
Yes	39

15. Did you feel like you could discuss obstacles to your job performance while reviewing your last performance evaluation?

No	9
Yes	44

16. Did you disagree with any comments or ratings given on your last performance * appraisal?

No	41
Yes	12

17. How often would you like your supervisor to discuss your work performance with you?

Never	0
Once a year	14
Monthly	20
Weekly	7
Only when there is a problem	12

18. What do you like the most about receiving a Performance Appraisal?

- It informs me of my supervisor's interpretation of my performance.
- It helps keep me motivated to learn something new.
- Feedback on how I am doing.
- Keeps you informed and opens a line of communication.
- Finding new ways to improve
- Sure
- It gives me an idea of how my supervisor feels that I am doing.
- Positive feedback
- I like to hear that I am on the right track at work.
- Honesty, nothing since my last 3 supervisors have had me basically write my own review for them.
- That the hard work I put in every shift is recognized.
- Feedback
- Undoubtedly, I enjoy hearing about what I am and have done well. In the business of public safety however, there is always a need for improvement. I am of the opinion that areas of improvement; no matter how minute it may be, needs to be addressed. There is no such thing as a "perfect" employee; all of us make mistakes.
- Affirmation for the hard work I know I put into this department and this job.
- appraisals provide the basis for pay increases/ position reclassification or promotion
- I think it gives you a benchmark to were your level of professionalism stands.
- nothing, its usually what I expect.
- to know I'm doing a good job
- nothing
- It helps me to stay on track. If My review is not positive and only vague, then I know I have some improvements to make.
- Allows me to know if there are things that I could do better.
- Provides direction of goals and objectives for the next evaluation period.
- It helps affirm my performance - positive or negative. It gives my supervisor an official means of reviewing how I am doing in my position. It also allows me an opportunity to learn of subjects I need improvement in.
- Opportunity for Constructive Feedback
- I like feedback and mentoring. Help with goal setting and future development.
- It provides a basis for measuring improvement.
- Really nothing, they are so generic
- When we were getting raises. They hold the appraisals over our heads without merit hoping to get greater performance from fear of a bad appraisal. False promises to paperwork that cannot even be turned back into the employee in a appropriate time frame. Sometimes up to 6 months before we see it.
- Can't really say it's pretty generic
- Truthful info.
- It allows me to visualize a bigger picture aspect of my performance and effectiveness within or organization.

- I don't
- Feeling like I'm doing a good job.
- Let's you see how your supervisor views your performance.
- Helps you set goals for the next year.
- Nothing. It seems like a cookie cutter formality.
- Give you new goals to aim for
- It's a good bench mark for my performance.
- Appraisals provide the basis for pay increases/position reclassification or promotion
- Acknowledgement for my work Ways to improve my work and myself Being valued by the Department and City
- Nothing really
- Knowing that I am meeting my supervisors expectations.
- I would like to say "the raise that comes along with it", but that is not the case. I do like to see how my supervisor perceives my job performance.
- Nothing
- Identifies any areas that need attention.
- Knowing what I can do better and what I am doing well at.
- Let me know what I should work out based on opinion and my supervisor
- If the appraisal is accurate it allows you to gauge your performance against expectations.
- Nothing
- Keeps me motivated
- Let's you know your hard work and effort don't go unnoticed.
- The acknowledgement of a job well done
- If we got compensated for appraisals it would be that. At the moment it's just a piece of paper

19. What do you like the least about receiving a Performance Appraisal?

- Nothing
- Not knowing if I've done enough as compared to others.
- It does not seem to matter. Favoritism matters more than performance.
- Nothing
- Honest opinions from an outside source
- It means nothing. There is no rise with it.
- Our appraisal format is not accurate.
- Inconsistency
- Not getting raises in conjunction with them.
- See above answer
- I wonder if they are some time biased to make someone appear to be going their job when they really are not meeting their expectations.
- current system is bulky and cumbersome
- The performance appraisal system seems to be very monotonous. I believe it should

be streamlined and user friendly for both the evaluator(s) and the employee(s).

- N/A
- vague comments not relevant to job description/ performance
- Thers nothing to dislike about them.
- no money
- that I have disappointed my supervisor
- doesn't matter
- Having to talk about myself.
- N/A
- It often incorporates opinions instead of facts especially when related to poor performance.
 - It holds no tangible weight. The confirmation of a job well done from supervision is needed; but attaching a performance based incentive is missing.
 - Subjective in nature. Every Company Officer rates it differently so there is no overall concept of one's standing in the department.
 - The paperwork is not needed at my level in the organization. Paperwork doesn't cover my job very well.
 - It is difficult to receive a performance appraisal from a poor performing superior. "Do as I say, not as I do," should not be acceptable practice.
 - The comments are always the same, as is they could be written for almost anyone. Also, it seems that the evaluator "has" to rate some things lower than others
 - False promises, and ideas that never come to fruition. Just be honest to the employee... that seems to be hard for them to do.
- Same as 19
- Nothing
- Some aspects of our profession cannot be quantified on paper. This is no fault of the current system we have in place, it is simply a fact of life.
- I don't
- To get outstanding requires duties outside of my job description.
- Nothing.
- Can be opinionated
- That it really does not mean anything.
- There is no Neg with performance so use them as a positive
- Sometimes not meeting all of my goals.
- vague comments not relevant to job description/performance
- The tool used is very poor and therefore not consistent or accurate The possibility of hearing something negative I was not aware of They do not seem to mean anything since the pay raise was removed and we no longer get anything
 - That there is no way to get a exceeds standards.
 - having one bad thing negate good things.
 - The ambiguity in the rating system.
 - There are no raises so what is the point, there is no incentive to improve

- The fact that there is no merit increase tied to them.
- Possible negative comments but they are needed in order to become better at your job.
- it's too opinionated and not goal oriented
- It is meaningless. You should always know where you stand with your supervisor.
- Timeline
- Nothing
- Nothing
- The reminder once again that you excelled and you will not be compensated for you efforts through pay increases.
- How subjective the process is

20. Please describe what behavior is required to be rated as 'Outstanding' in the area of Attendance from your current Supervisor?

- Not sure
- Not sure?
- I don't know.
- Not using a lot of sick time
- No absences without being scheduled
- I'm not sure
- Arriving at least 30 minutes early and being willing to take a call for the off going crew
- No attendance related disciplinary actions
- Don't know.
- Not sure since they don't say
- On time, rarely call out last minute, look presentable to peers and the public, take pride in keeping our equipment clean, willing to take on extra projects
- above and beyond scope of others doing same job
- Arriving at least (20) minutes prior to 0800 hours in proper uniform and ready for duty. On the other hand; remaining in uniform, ready for duty until a "pass down" has been given to the oncoming officer or senior firefighter.
- Consistently on shift before shift change prepared and ready. Also consistently working my shifts with occasional vacation time and no sick time.
- timeliness / punctuality
- Always on time, take off when needed.
- missing no days
- Show up to work every shift
- competent
- Never be late.
- Going above and beyond normal job description expectations
- Consistently arriving to work at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the shift.
- Good question... Not sure - I've asked in the past and told that sick days negatively impact Attendance. I disagreed because some times it is inappropriate to report for duty when you are unfit.
- At work on time in uniform for each assigned shift. Proper use of leave.

- The work gets done on time and is complete with high level of accuracy.
- The supervisor should not conveniently schedule off days to coincide with his ambulance rotation.
- Positive attitude, excellent work ethic, doing not just what everyone else expects and does, but willing to do far more than just the standard
- Not abusing sick time.
- Not sure
- Schooling
- Exceed the expectations that have been set as the standard.
- I don't
- Doing additional projects.
- On time and never late
- Being present and ready for work at shift change.
- Not sure
- Positive and willing to work
- Not missing very many shifts.
- Timeliness/Punctuality
- I am not sure of his requirement (too subjective, refer back to the previous questions answer)
- Be at work in uniform or equivalent and ready to perform at 0800
- Outstanding should not be a rating for this category. Either you show up regularly or you don't. Everyone gets sick, everyone has family situations that arise. excessive absences should be handled outside this forum.
- I do not know.
- Absolutely, no sick time or never ever late
- I believe it is a discretionary question that leaves the interpretation up to the individual supervisor and should be removed from the document.
- Doing your job well and going beyond the minimum.
- could not really tell you my current supervisor has not completed my last year's evaluation to my knowledge
- Unknown. As long as you don't cause overtime you're ok.
- Don't kill anyone
- Prompt arrival before shift change prepared to begin shift.
- No frequent call in or being late.
- No call ins no abuse
- No clue no guidelines in place for how to place value in a performance area

21. In your current job are you responsible to write performance appraisals?

No	34
Yes	19

Employee Survey
Performance Appraisals/Evaluations

Section 2 Questions about your experience WRITING Performance Appraisals

22. How many Peachtree City performance appraisals are you responsible * to write each year?

None	0
One	3
Less than 5	6
Less than 10	8
10 or more	1

23. Have you received formal training in how to write a performance appraisal?

No	9
Yes	9

24. What positive benefits have you experienced when writing or presenting Performance Appraisals?

- Employees like knowing where they stand...good and bad
- Learning more about how much certain personnel mean to the department/crew
- IDK
- a review of subordinates current job description and the opportunity to initiate changes to said description
- People like being told good things
- The ability to learn exactly what the employee has accomplished throughout the year as some things are not relayed until evaluation time.
- It gives you time to talk to the employee and review goals.
- Trying to fairly evaluate the employee.
- It allows me to identify and discuss with the employee areas that may need improvement. Asa well as discussing their current goals
- Letting the employee know that their performance has not gone unnoticed.
- The only positive is that is a chance to review with the employee their performance.
- i have been able to boost an employee's morale and encourage them to progress with their career.
- It allows for a formal discussion of the job performance with those that I supervise.
- Praising people for a job well done.
- None
- None, with the exception that you get a chance to to really thank the employee for the job they do.
- None
- When used to correct problems I have seen improvement of employee

25. What negative obstacles have you experienced when writing or presenting Performance Appraisals?

- Not sure
- Sometimes it is very difficult to be honest with critiques of individuals but must be done
- remembering a years worth of performance
- none
- Employees opinion of what they think is outstanding.
- The poor attitudes that can result from a fair but critical evaluation.
- The employee is worried about the small stuff that does not matter.
- Not enough info.
- Most employees seem unconcerned with their appraisal because there's no monetary value attached to it.
- Not working with the employee and having to write it based on what others say.
- The expectation is more clear than in the past but it is still too subjective therefore leaning towards unfairness across the evaluates (supervisors). I think trying to fit everything on a single page is difficult.
- having to justify above average and outstanding marks in highly subjective categories without having a definition of what those marks should be.
- Writing evaluations for people that I do not get to work with very often. I feel that I am not qualified to rate them in many of the areas required.
- Opposite of 24
- None
- They are meaningless. Both the administration and human resources dictate what can and can't be said. If you state a negative then they want a specific example or your not allowed to say that a subordinate are qualified to do your job. So we just cut and past them to get them done.
- The meeting
- Very little

26. What, if any, change would you make to the Performance Appraisal format or process?

- Nothing yet
- More input from other officer's that may have had more time with said person during the evaluation period
- less cumbersome and less detailed. Evaluate weather they meet the objectives or not up to par.
- make appraisals more subjective/ less objective
- I would change it but would need to do research before making a suggestion.
- Eliminate the word count limit for narratives. There should be more negatives such as: Did the employee incur any disciplinary actions during this evaluation period? If so, explain. Has the employee met all deadlines for assignments for this evaluation period?

If not, explain. Has the employee fully supported all levels of management for this evaluation period? If not, explain.

- It should not take two hours to complete. Simple questions and time for goal setting.
- Actual job performance should carry more weight than extra duties.
- If we stay with a rating system, there should be standards identified that defines what each numerical value represents.
- A lot of the categories should be a yes or no.
- I would change the tool to include a portion of self-evaluation and maybe consider a peer evaluation tool as part of the process. The tool needs to be more objective and justification should not have to occur in writing unless it is sub-par or outstanding.
- Get rid of the numbering and scoring system. A performance Appraisal should be a gauge of employee development.
- I would like a more objective system that allows for some subjectivity when it comes to evaluating an employee's personality and attitude.
- Not sure
- I would make it goal base instead of opinions
- Since there is no longer a merit increase they should be eliminated, they don't mean anything. If there is a performance issue there are other procedures in place to deal with the issue.
- Eliminate them
- If no reward do away with them unless addressing to lens or probations

27. Please describe the performance you would require in order to give an employee an outstanding rating in Attendance?

- Not using a lot of sick time...(random).
- Good organization with scheduled leave, good communication with sick leave
- above and beyond others doing same job.
- consistent punctuality
- the same thing you get in school/ no days missed
- Repeat Question
- This person is your go to person because they get things done.
- Being on time and ready for work every day. Very minimal sick outs.
- No abuse of sick time
- I don't think outstanding should be an option. You either come to work ready for the day or you are not here.
- If you arrive to work every day without sticking out or being late more than once you deserve an Outstanding.
- None. This rating should not exist. You either show up to work regularly or you don't. This should be handled by the supervisor, not in this forum.
- This is the most ambiguous category and I have justified an outstanding rating in different ways. If a full-time employee arrives for work on time and uses the proper methods for utilizing sick time then I give a 'fully satisfactory', if they also arrive early enough to affect a proper shift change that respects the time of the off-going crew, and they rarely (if ever) call in sick, I will give an 'outstanding'. Very confusing!

- Above and beyond
- If they achieved list of goals in their previous evaluation completed classes suggested for the positive attitude
- The employee doesn't use sick leave once 24 hours of it is banked. The employee doesn't use sick leave to take a day off when the maximum number of people are already off.
- Show up in proper uniform ready to work with enough time for a complete turn over.
- Going above and beyond the minimum for the betterment of the department and city

Section 3 General Wrap-Up

28. Would you like to add any additional comments regarding Performance Appraisals?

- No
- No
- God help us!
- None
- Seems to be a good system with benefits for both parties. Allows persons to know what to work on for improvement/promotions
- No
- No
- No
- I have received and written appraisals in the past. When they were connected with an employees compensation, I felt they were important to the employee and the organization. Now, they seem like a waste of time for all involved.
- Supervisors even state that they are basically worthless since we see nothing out of them when they are positive.
- No
- no
- N/A
- Thank you for the opportunity to work at PCFD. I am proud of our department and enjoy coming to work.
- no
- Nope
- I have requested past evaluations from Lts for people that were assigned to me. there is no doubt they were very overrated. I think just to avoid drama.
- no
- no
- no
- No
- Performance appraisals often are affected by the opinions of others. This seems to be prevalent with subordinates. Their statements, comments, and accusations make their way into evaluations. Evaluators should not allow secondary information to affect their appraisals.
- These seem to be a stressful and time consuming part of the station officer's assigned

duties. Maybe create some incentive for timely completion or offer options for completing them off duty with compensation.

- 11/12 were answered not based on personal appraisals in last five years, but the PTC system of appraisal as a whole based on SUBJECTIVITY. Just ask two or three company officers to appraise the same individual and you will see the discrepancy in evaluations. The link from appraisal to HR to promotions to eligibility for special teams (swat team for example), etc. ought to be based on objective criteria. The appraisal process should also provide an opportunity for the company officer to provide subjective feedback as appropriate. If performance issues are in need of improvement there should be the support of the company officer and some accountability that corrections are made accordingly. I.e. if it's worth noting on an appraisal, it's worth following through to correct the issue. Company Officer's need training to ensure they are using the same criteria with which to rate their subordinates. Some provide high marks regardless of performance to stay in good graces with their crew while others are from the school of thought that everyone is average until proven otherwise. Others take their personal opinion of an individual and allow that to bias their evaluation. Personnel records should not be at the mercy of a company officer's personal philosophy in this respect. It would be helpful for the development of company officers if their subordinates were given the opportunity to provide feedback to the BC as part of their evaluations as well. Not taking that feedback into account denies the officer from opportunities to grow as subordinates would rarely provide that feedback directly to the officer due to rank and repercussions. I appreciate your investment of time and energy into revamping this system. Please excuse me for providing candid feedback if that is not what you were wanting to hear. I am available to discuss as requested. Bob
- The rating should not be a surprise to the employee. The appraisal should about progress and confirmation for the performance discussed during the year.
- Performance appraisals should be continuous so employees know where to improve through the year. Only learning of your deficits after a year could lead and employee believe they are performing well when they are not. It creates an issue where bad habits are allowed to be formed instead of stamped out quickly. Likewise, superiors need to praise their employees and encourage positive behavior to produce productive employees. Constant negativity from the supervisor creates a hostile work environment where employees are unable to perform their best. In addition to officer retreats, and job related tier training, there needs to be leadership training and a strict vetting process for leaders that actually want to be leaders instead of people just wanting a pay raise.
- Even though evaluations occur once a year, our performance should be articulated to us much more often, through coaching, or informal reviews, throughout the year. Also, perhaps a class for supervisors on how to write an effective review so that the review actually means something. Having said that, since the city does not seem to want to pay employees who go above and beyond, what does it really matter?
- Give back to the employees that step up and do more than what is asked. Pay them for what they do. If you are going to do an appraisal make it worth something to the employee for working hard. Even in hard times. And be on time, if the administration requires to have the appraisals in on a certain date get it back to the employee in a timely manner. Set the example. Hard for some to do. Mentoring is non existent due to the lack of integrity of certain leaders. Hopefully if you get the leaders to lead instead

of managing you will see a better outcome of employees. Think, and treat people right. Use your leadership position to benefit others instead of yourself. Again think...

- I feel a new rating system needs to be used
- No
- I understand the purpose behind Performance Appraisals and I understand their intended effectiveness in achieving the goal of monitoring and evaluating an employees performance within their given job, however, in this profession, there are many different aspects that cannot be quantified or measured by traditional methods, therefore a Performance Appraisal can only provide the employee and the supervisor with a portion of the overall makeup of the employee and his or her talents, gifts, abilities, and passions.
- No
- Projects for the Volunteer association should not have weight during the evaluation.
- No
- No
- I think we should be able to compensate those that go above. If you do not receive anything it does not mean anything. I think employees see it as a piece of paper. If you address the problems when they occur and give praise when deserved without a reward it does not serve a purpose.
- No
- No
- I thing the should be tied, in some manner, to a raise in pay.
- I do not feel that it is job specific for our profession
- Performance Appraisals should be used as a tool for developing an employee and helping them grow in their positions and within the organization. They should be as objective as possible. Having said, that making performance appraisals completely objective is a difficult task. Employees will grow and develop at different paces. Some will be ambitious and some will be content to be where they are. The employee who wants to stay where they are should not be punished for that through an appraisal as long as they are meeting the job requirements.
- While I do dread doing evaluations, the simplified paragraph template that you guys developed has helped me get them done more efficiently.
- It takes for ever for them to be done because there are so many steps and it should be electronic format. Why kill a tree if you don't have to.
- We need a new document.
- No
- No thank you
- A more effective method would be to perform quarterly reviews of set goals. These sessions would be informally documented and kept at the supervisor's level. The system in place now means nothing to either the employee or the City.
- No

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Attachment B

Organization Questions

Performance Appraisal System Questionnaire

1. What is the name of your organization? (Open Ended Responses)

2. What is your job role?

Human Resources Director	17
Executive (Chief of Department)	2
Senior Manager (Assistant or Deputy Chief)	12
Manager (Battalion Chief)	3
Crew or Team Leader (Fire Lieutenant)	6
Employee without Supervisory Responsibilities	5
Probationary Employee	0
Other	11

3. About how many employees work at your organization? (Ranged from 9 – 3,000)

4. What is the nature of your organization?

Fire / Rescue Service	28
K-12 Education	0
Other Government	22
Product Manufacturing	3
Product Distribution	2
Product Sales	0
Private - Service Industry	1

5. Does your organization conduct mandatory annual performance appraisals?

No	6
Yes	50

Performance Appraisal System Questionnaire

Section 2: For Organizations without Annual Performance Appraisals

6. When did your organization eliminate annual performance appraisals?

Never had them	0
More than 5 Years Ago	0
More than 2 Years Ago	1
Within the Last 2 Years	2

7. Why were they eliminated?

- Department Heads ignore them
- Not sure (that’s above my pay grade)
- Not eliminated but not mandatory – some department still complete them and others do not

8. Impact to Organization, Managers and Employees of NOT conducting Annual Evaluations

Impact on Organization	Significant Improvement	Some Improvement	Little/ No Improvement	Some Decrease	Significant Decrease
Morale	0	0	3	0	0
Job Performance	0	0	3	0	0
Job Satisfaction	0	0	3	0	0
Productivity	0	0	3	0	0

Impact on Managers	Significant Improvement	Some Improvement	Little/ No Improvement	Some Decrease	Significant Decrease
Morale	0	1	2	0	0
Job Performance	0	1	2	0	0
Job Satisfaction	0	0	3	0	0
Productivity	0	0	3	0	0

Impact on Employees	Significant Improvement	Some Improvement	Little/ No Improvement	Some Decrease	Significant Decrease
Morale	0	1	2	0	0
Job Performance	0	1	2	0	0
Job Satisfaction	0	0	3	0	0
Productivity	0	0	3	0	0

Performance Appraisal System Questionnaire

Section 3: For Organizations Conducting Annual Performance Appraisals

9. How would you Characterize Performance Appraisal System?

360-degree Evaluation	4
Management by Objective	13
Graphic Rating Scale	10
Critical Incidents	0
Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS)	2

10. Please evaluate the effectiveness of your current Evaluation System as it applies to employee length of service:

Value to Employees	Essential for Success	Valuable for Most	Rarely Helpful
Probationary Employees/ New Hires	13	10	6
Employees with 1 – 2 years	8	19	2
Employees with 2 – 5 years	6	16	7
Employees with 5 – 10 years	6	9	14
Employees with 10 or more years	5	8	16

Value to Management	Essential Tool for Managers	Valuable for Most Managers	Rarely Helpful to Managers
Probationary Employees/ New Hires	14	9	6
Employees with 1 – 2 years	10	15	4
Employees with 2 – 5 years	7	16	6
Employees with 5 – 10 years	6	10	13
Employees with 10 or more years	5	10	14

11. Please rate the effectiveness of your current Evaluation System as it applies to employee length of service:

Management Effort Required	More Value than Effort Expended (Positive)	Benefit Justifies Management Effort (Neutral)	More Effort than Value Gained (Negative)
Probationary Employees/New Hires	13	11	5
Employees with 1 – 2 years	11	16	2
Employees with 2 – 5 years	8	16	5
Employees with 5 – 10 years	5	15	9
Employees with 10 or more years	2	15	12

Improved Employee Job Performance	Improves Employee Motivation/ Success	Slight Positive Impact on Most Employees	No Impact on Most Employees	Slight Negative Impact on Most Employees	Decrease Employee Motivation/ Success
Probationary Employees/New Hires	14	8	5	2	0
Employees with 1 – 2 years	10	14	5	0	0
Employees with 2 – 5 years	6	13	9	1	0
Employees with 5 – 10 years	3	11	14	1	0
Employees with 10 or more years	2	9	15	1	2

12. What Impact Do Performance Appraisals have on Employees, Managers and Your Overall Organization Related to Each Area?

	Significant Improvement	Some Improvement	Little/No Change	Some Decrease	Significant Decrease
Impact on Employees					
Morale	1	11	16	0	1
Job Satisfaction	3	8	18	0	0
Productivity	3	11	15	0	0

 Impact on
Managers

Morale	1	13	14	1	0
Job Satisfaction	1	9	18	1	0
Productivity	1	11	14	1	2

 Entire
Organization

Morale	2	11	14	0	2
Job Satisfaction	3	9	15	2	0
Productivity	3	9	16	0	1

13. Please List Some POSITIVE Benefits of the current system? (Open Ended Question)

- Allows for managers to put down on paper the areas in which an employee excels and those that they struggle and if completed properly the manager includes specific detail that is helpful to the employee and upper management.
- Pay incentive linked to good evaluation. Identify trends and problems with employees of different experience levels and rank. Able to tie a good evaluation to career advancement/success. Employee retention and reward.
- Ability to provide a comprehensive and objective evaluation of the employee's performance throughout the year as long as the supervisor puts the effort in to making the evaluation tool what it is designed to be.
- It provides all the features which COULD be served by an appraisal system - pay raises determination, career development/training, basis for discipline, etc. (I wrote it)
- The system is designed to open up communication between the manager and the employee so that they discuss job performance.
- One on one time with each employee and their supervisor to discuss positive and negative job performance and set goals for improvement.
- if used properly the current system can accurately measure performance and identify areas to focus attention and training efforts on
- It is on an annual basis. And it addresses performance and attitude along with the Authority's core values.
- under review
- it is easy
- We simplified our form so it is quick and easy for managers to complete.

- Our system can trend how an employees effectiveness
- They can be used as a tool to inform the employee of what they are doing well and what they need to improve upon.
- It is well managed for the on line employees.
- When done right, can help employees improve.
- Merit increase dependent on performance so incentive to do better
- Open ended assessment objectives allow officers flexibility in apply to a variety of different employees and personality types.
- Performance appraisals offer the chance for supervisors to give feedback to their employees.
- Forces manager employee face time and a feedback
- We have on-line for management which is great and manual for hourly
- Difficult to relate, not sure what they are.
- Unfortunately, it only serves to "check the box" so that admin quits pushing for completion dates.
- It provides a sense of direction. Its people communicating

14. Please List Some NEGATIVE Consequences of the current system? (Open Ended Question)

- Most evaluations do not include specific examples and details of outstanding performance or unsatisfactory performance. Also, they are only conducted annually but probably should be quarterly to be current and helpful. New employees value this because their release from probationary status depends on a good evaluation on the flip side tenured employees know that it means very little and the score you receive depends on your particular manager.
- Only done annually and has little monetary effect on the employee. An excellent employee get the same pay increase as a meets standard employee
- In my opinion the system is flawed because many organizations tie raises to the overall percentage score. Many supervisors feel obligated to give their employees inflated scores so that they can receive a raise.
- You are relying on Managers to use the system properly. I see most Managers afraid of conflict so they give better reviews than are typically deserved. So the problems continue to fester because no one wants to deal with the conflict.

- Getting all supervisors looking weighting scores the same.
- Linked to pay. Time involved to complete a good, thorough evaluation. Employees don't care. Administration doesn't support bad evaluations on troublesome employees at times.
- Lots of variations across the board because of how many difference supervisors there are completing them. This can be a challenge as some personnel are rated poorly or highly depending on their supervisor alone.
- It is viewed as a joke as there is no standardization to the scoring. Scores vary greatly. No benefit is tied to it (monetarily or promotional opportunity).
- Once hit salary max, little impact except for those that are self motivated
- Supervisors complaint it is too long and too complex (I don't think it is, but then I wrote it and I know how to quickly fill one out)
- If you have an employee who performs well and has been with you for some time, the evaluation is viewed as a waste of time.
- under review
- Not all employees are rated other than on line personnel.
- Manual forms for hourly
- A great deal of effort is placed into the system by supervisors and managers yet there is no perceived gain.
- There are no measureable rewards attached to it in the eyes of the employees.
- The process is not taken serious enough Seen as just another thing the Chief is making us do
- Transfer evaluations can be cumbersome.
- Does not adequately address performance To many areas to cover Unrealistic categories
- No consistency between shifts, or even officers on shifts. No structured training for all to define the assessment criteria or grading levels.
- The forms are not fitting for our job functions. System is to cumbersome for completing.
- it is still possible to 'pencil whip' the current performance evaluations, which results in minimal impact and improvement

15. Do you train supervisors how to conduct annual Performance Appraisals?

No	4
Nothing Uniform throughout Agency	10
Yes, with LITTLE SUCCESS	4
Yes, with SOME SUCCESS	9
Yes, with GREAT SUCCESS	2
Total	29

16. What safeguards exist to ensure all supervisors are accurate and consistent in the evaluations they write?

- The Plant GM and HR Mgr review before the Managers sits with the employee.
- none.
- None, part of why the system is a failed opportunity.
- We encourage our supervisor be vey honest and to maintain a high level of professionalism.
- The employee includes a self-evaluation and both are reviewed by managers (Captain, Battalion Chief, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief then the Fire Chief)
- All evaluations are review by a chief officer for consistency
- Reviewed by Assistant Chief and Chief prior to presenting it to employee. Files are checked during writing process.
- The Batt. Chief reviews the forms to make sure they approve before meeting with employee
- Supervisor oversite by higher management
- In our organization there are none.
- review by HR and supervisors
- None
- They are all read by upper level administration and changes are made as they are found.
- under review
- Reviewed by all levels of supervision.

- none
- HR reviews all before they are issued
- I wrote a Raters Guide for the General Work Behaviors so raters all know what constitutes a 1 score, a 2 score, etc.
- Review by management and HR
- Each evaluation is reviewed by the HR Manager and General Manager
- Training and help from next level supervisor
- HR oversight of the evaluation process
- drop down boxes and HR review of each appraisals before issue to employee

17. Please describe training programs or guidelines that are being used:

- Training by the T&D Mgr and also local HR. Also corporate guidelines
- Most are self taught.
- HR policy without reinforcement or standardized training at all levels.
- The training is held through HR
- Fire Officer class / Human Resources has guidelines available
- We have a standard form and we are working on a training program through HR.
- Training program and handbook distributed by the county.
- Just basic guidance on what needs to be filled in not really how to perform an evaluation
- Per shift training of new Lieutenants by Captain and Batt Chiefs. Lacks consistency.
- Our personnel resources division handles the performance appraisal training and provides the guidelines.
- none, deadlines for completion
- None

- We have multiple levels of training for company officers and completing performance appraisals is one of the components in almost all levels of the career ladder classes.
- under review
- Fire Officer 1 and 2.
- 1-100 scoring system with what is good and what to improve upon
- Informal training in meetings & LGRMS training
- Raters Guide for Appraisers
- Performance Management Training for Supervisors
- Currently we train in house on how to perform the evaluation
- we train them on how to complete the form. we train them on how to craft positive and negative comments by showing them examples. We train them on why it is important to be honest and truthful.
- We are still using the 12 Danger Zones for Supervisors
- general review of performance management system and forms with employees filling out assessments
- Guidelines on how to complete and conduct performance reviews. definitely need to improve in this area

18. Do you anticipate changing your Performance Appraisal System?

No	15
Possibly in the Next Few Years	11
Currently Being Evaluated / Considered	3
Yes, Implementation Planned	0
Total	29

If a Change is Planned, (please Describe System Changes)

19. Please provide an email address if you would be willing to provide a copy of your Appraisal Forms and Training Materials:

(Open Ended Question)

Performance Appraisal System Questionnaire

Final Thoughts

20. Any other comments related to Performance Appraisals you would like to share?

- This requires constant training and making sure managers realize the importance of this and also the need for attention and execution of development plans.
- I will check and see if we can give out the appraisal.
- They seem to be a procedural thing here that is more for completion than for growth. They work well with recruits and the first few years. Other than that they don't seem to mean a lot.
- Good Luck!
- I've been in the Fire Service over 39 years (over 30 with East Point GA). Over my service time (including both cities) I've seen Performance Appraisals come and go. Through my experience the promises of pay incentives which were to be tied to appraisals never developed.
- It isn't easy for mgt or employees, but it is necessary
- I think they are very useful, but supervisors who have many to do, hate them, and the only purpose our City uses them for is pay raise determinations. I have threatened to just create a one line form "Raise- Yes or No"
- I feel they are very important for everyone.
- We converted our system over to our ADP - HRIS system this year. It is a much better, simpler approach for our managers....less time consuming. We also went back to a 3 choice rating system to simplify the process.
- I was not sure about the type of evaluation.
- our current performance evaluation systems are good, but more effort is needed in educating managers and other on how to bet utilize them
- Would definitely be interested in how other companies utilize performance reviews with their workforce.

Thank you for your input.

Attachment C

Standard Operating Guidelines	S.O.P. Number: C-208	Peachtree City Fire Department
Category: Personnel	Title Personnel Development	Effective Date: February 15, 2016

POLICY: All officers within Peachtree City Fire/Rescue are to mentor and guide all subordinates, be they full time, part time or volunteer, to achieve their maximum potential and retain qualified personnel. This can only be achieved by providing regular feedback and support to all personnel.

PROCEDURE:

1. Personnel Development and Job Performance Coaching shall be a priority for all members of the Department entrusted with supervisory responsibilities.
2. Each member of the Department will require individualized attention from their direct supervisor to reach their full potential.
3. It should be the goal of supervisors to remove or work to reduce obstacles to peak performance.
4. All newly hired career or volunteer firefighters shall be assigned a qualified Company Officer and Field Training Officer to guide the orientation process.
5. Only once cleared by either their Company Officer or Field Training Officer will members be permitted to operate at stations or shifts outside of the direct supervision of either their designated Lieutenant or Field Training Officer.
6. Personnel with performance Issues should be corrected as quickly as practical to avoid any mixed-signals between the supervisor and the member.
7. Whenever possible, post-Incident or post-training debriefings, either formal or informal, are encouraged to allow personnel to receive immediate performance feedback
8. Member/Supervisor 'Check-In' meetings will be scheduled whenever requested by either the subordinate or the supervisor. The agenda for all Check-In meetings will include these five core performance areas:
 - a. *Primary Job Performance*
 - b. *Teamwork and Teambuilding*

Standard Operating Guidelines	S.O.P. Number: C-208	Peachtree City Fire Department
Category: Personnel	Title Personnel Development	Effective Date: February 15, 2016

- c. Work Ethic and Leadership*
 - d. Professional Development*
 - e. Commitment to the Department's Core Values (Honor, Service, Integrity and Excellence)*
9. During any probationary period, check-in meetings between the probationary member and their direct supervisor are required at intervals not to exceed 90-days.
 10. The attached Personnel Development Check-In form is required to be properly completed to document all check-in meetings and should be forwarded up the Chain-of-Command once complete and signed.
 11. Officers may schedule check-in meetings as they see fit, but no less than twice annually with non-probationary personnel to provide regular performance feedback.
 12. All personnel are encouraged to request a Check-In meeting with their direct supervisor whenever they feel feedback is needed. Subordinates are strongly encouraged to come prepared with a completed Self-Assessment form.
 13. If any of the core performance areas to be discussed at a check-in meeting will result in any areas failing to meet standards, supporting documentation shall be forwarded up the Chain-of-Command to include the Chief of the Department and the Human Resources Director BEFORE the check-in meeting is conducted.
 14. If any of the five core performance areas fails to meet standards a Personnel Improvement Plan will be prepared to correct the underlying issue. Anyone with a Personnel Improvement Plan will have a check-in meeting with their direct supervisor every 30 days or sooner to monitor progress and ultimately documentation of conclusion of the Plan.
 15. All personnel should be encouraged to master skills related to their current assignment before seeking additional responsibilities. Once basic job skills are mastered, effort regarding future Professional Development of the member should take a more central role in their future supervisor/member check-in discussions.

Standard Operating Guidelines	S.O.P. Number: C-208	Peachtree City Fire Department
Category: Personnel	Title Personnel Development	Effective Date: February 15, 2016

Personnel Development Check-In Form

**Peachtree City Fire - Rescue Department
Personnel Development Check-In**

Employee: _____ Date: _____

Position: _____ Reason for Check-In: Choose One

Primary Job Performance
Comments if needed: _____ Meets or Exceeds Expectations Choose One

Teamwork & Teambuilding
Comments if needed: _____ Meets or Exceeds Expectations Choose One

Work Ethic & Leadership
Comments if needed: _____ Meets or Exceeds Expectations Choose One

Professional Development
Comments if needed: _____ Meets or Exceeds Expectations Choose One

Commitment to Department's Core Values
(Honor, Service, Integrity and Excellence)
Comments if needed: _____ Meets or Exceeds Expectations Choose One

Other Notes if Needed:

Reviewed on : _____ Employee Signature: _____

Supervisor Checking In: _____ Supervisor Signature: _____

Battalion Review: _____ A/C Review: _____ Chief's Review: _____

Standard Operating Guidelines	S.O.P. Number: C-208	Peachtree City Fire Department
Category: Personnel	Title Personnel Development	Effective Date: February 15, 2016

**Peachtree City Fire – Rescue Department
Member Self-Assessment Form**

This member Self-Assessment is designed to assist the member in providing input regarding their performance and to assist in obtaining a more comprehensive supervisor feedback. Responses to all questions are encouraged but are not required. These questions will serve as a guide for most member/supervisor check-in conversations.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. Over the past 12 months, what do you think your most outstanding accomplishment was, and why?

2. Which of your duties did you do best, or improve in the most? What contributed to this?

3. Were there any significant problems or obstacles that you overcame? Please explain.

4. Over the past 12 months, what duties could you performed better? What affected your performance?

5. What has been your biggest achievement relating to the goals set for this performance period? If you did not achieve your goals, what obstacles did you encounter that did not allow you to achieve those goals?

6. In what areas could you have used more experience or training?

7. What courses, training or experience most benefited you during the past 12 months?
Click here to enter response.

8. What further assistance could your supervisor have provided to help you be more effective?

Standard Operating Guidelines	S.O.P. Number: C-208	Peachtree City Fire Department
Category: Personnel	Title Personnel Development	Effective Date: February 15, 2016

**Peachtree City Fire – Rescue Department
Member Self-Assessment Form**

9. What suggestions, ideas, or concerns do you have for yourself or the department?

10. Do you have skills that you are not using, are being underutilized, or that you would like to use more?

11. Are there any skills that you do not have now that you would like to develop? How can your supervisor help you in developing those skills?

12. What would you like to do in the next 12 months, for your own development? How can your supervisor assist you in achieving this?

13. What are your long-range plans (next 3-5 years)? How can the City and your supervisor assist you in achieving your goals?

14. Comments:

Attachment D

**Peachtree City Fire – Rescue Department
Lesson Plan – Personnel Development Training****Overview:**

This program will provide participants with the opportunity to be exposed to the latest research related to optimizing employee performance and conducting performance appraisals utilizing the revised Personnel Development Standard Operating Guideline. All participants will be adequately prepared to receive effective feedback from their supervisor utilizing the revised processes and forms. Setting reasonable expectations and exploring the justification behind the forms and processes adopted should improve personnel's comfort with the revised process and the opportunity more timely feedback will give to improving the operation of our work groups.

Terminal Objective:

Given a group of Peachtree City Fire – Rescue Member, a qualified instructor, copies of policy and forms as well as related instructional material, participants in a classroom based training program will achieve a baseline understanding of the background and procedures necessary to allow them to complete a self-evaluation and conduct a simulated 'check-in' meeting' with a fellow participant utilizing the procedures contained within the related guideline, with 100% participation..

Enabling Objectives:

1. Provide the proper classroom environment and student motivation to engage students' interest in the subject matter designed to improve the quality of feedback provided within the Department.
2. Provide a comprehensive review of performance appraisals, specifically addressing their origin, history, formats, challenges and current trends.
3. Discuss personal experiences and the results of the recent employee questionnaire related to accuracy and consistency of former performance appraisal system.
4. Discuss the concept of pay for performance and the anticipated future of merit compensation.
5. Enlist the students to develop a comprehensive list of why effective and timely feedback is important to well functioning fire department teams.
6. Ensure 100% participation in role-playing exercises as both supervisor and member to engage the obstacles to success.
7. Provide effective handouts, policy and adopted forms for practical application.

Materials Needed:

1. A suitable classroom space, computer, projector, white boards with markers, and sufficient space to allow for group to break up for simulated 'check-in' meetings.
2. At least one, but preferably two qualified instructors to present the material and monitor the effectiveness of the role playing exercise..
3. Sufficient copies of hand out material, policy and forms.
4. PowerPoint presentation incorporating the terminal and enabling objectives.

Procedures:

1. Ensure the classroom, handouts and related materials are prepared.
2. Provide an effective introduction to the topic to establish a need to know and engage participants personal experience related to coaching and workplace feedback.
3. Discuss performance appraisals, including purpose, origin, history, various formats, common errors and current state of the topic in the workplace.
4. Establish the purpose for the revised guidelines as well as the intended benefits.
5. Review the elements of the guideline to ensure comprehension and eliminate concerns.
6. Have all participants complete a self-evaluation.
7. Review the participants experience completing the self-evaluation.
8. Demonstrate an effective 'check-in meeting' within the guidelines of the SOG.
9. Each participant will role-play as supervisor and member to discuss opportunities to improve performance, forge cooperative environment and look for opportunities to have personal growth.
10. Review the exercise as a group and facilitate gathering a comprehensive list of the pros and cons experienced.