Guide to a Successful Performance Dialogue Process (PDP)

Queen’s Managerial and Professional Group (QMPG)
and Administrative Executives

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Organizational Development and Learning
Human Resources

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I. Performance Dialogue Process Overview

At Queen’s University, the Performance Dialogue Process (PDP) for the Queen’s Managerial and Professional Group (QMPG) and the Administrative Designated Executives is designed to align individual priorities and objectives with the university’s mission, as well as support the goals of individual departments and their units. This process improves job understanding, promotes the highest level of job performance and provides an opportunity to discuss future goals for career and personal growth.

The PDP cycle facilitates ongoing discussions about performance between the manager and employee to:

- set expectations for performance during the coming year
- encourage just-in-time coaching throughout the year
- provide real-time feedback on performance and development opportunities
- establish objectives for coming year

For QMPG members and Administrative Executives, the PDP is a way to formally acknowledge and document the results, successes, and challenges of a given cycle, and to determine individual development opportunities for employees.

Who should use this guide?
This guide is intended for QMPG employees, Administrative Executives, and their managers.

The PDP Cycle
II. How to Use the PDP Form: Steps in the Process

Performance Planning

1. Manager schedules the first planning meeting with the employee.

2. Employee downloads and saves the PDP form.

3. Both the manager and the employee independently prepare for the Planning Meeting by identifying core responsibilities, objectives, and behavioural competencies applicable to their role, as well as the question posed in the Dialogue for Planning Meeting section. The employee sends their completed form to their manager.

4. Together, discuss and identify the core responsibilities, objectives, and behavioural competencies that are most critical to success in the role and department. Apply a qualitative or quantitative measure to each that will allow assessment of required performance.

5. Finalized expectations required. Both employee and manager save a copy of the form.

Communicate Regularly

6. Stay in touch on a regular basis over the course of the year as part of the coaching process, to ensure the employee is aligned with departmental strategic priorities and is progressing towards successful achievement of expectations.

Evaluation

7. Manager schedules a Year End Review Meeting with the employee.

8. Both the manager and the employee independently prepare for the Year End Review Meeting by identifying the achieved results in each section, as well as reviewing the questions posed in the Closing Dialogue section. The employee sends their completed form to their manager. Begin the Review Meeting by discussing responses together.

9. Manager assesses the results for core responsibilities, objectives, and behavioural competencies as evaluated against the measurement criteria set in the first planning meeting. Comments in each section can be used to add context to the assessment and note areas of future development. Record the appropriate evaluation assessment for each of these sections.

10. Overall Assessment: Manager provides an overall assessment, adds comments that identify possible new approaches, future challenges, and successes from the past year.
11. Ensure the document is signed and that both manager and employee have a saved copy.

12. Send a copy of the form via email to Human Resources as per the submission method identified on the PDP Form.

III. Performance Planning

Core Responsibilities
Core responsibilities are those activities/outcomes that are expected to be completed by an employee as a function of their role on a continuing basis. Core responsibilities are specific activities or obligations for which an employee is held accountable when assuming a role. The manager and the employee discuss and identify the core responsibilities for the role and how performance will be measured.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Responsibilities</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

Use this space to enter examples of Core Responsibilities that will measure performance over the course of the PDP cycle.

Some examples may include:
Managing performance of employees or managing the department’s operation budget.

Use this space to enter quantitative measurements of each Core Responsibility. This will serve as the benchmark to determine the success of the employee.

Some examples may include:
Conducting PDPs with employees or submitting monthly budget reports on schedule.
Objectives
An objective is a specific action that supports the attainment of a goal that an employee is expected to achieve within a certain time-frame (mid to short term) with available resources that is both measurable and tangible. In partnership with your manager, discuss and identify the objectives you expect to accomplish.

Objectives can be linked to:
- New or improved systems and processes
- Activities that align with organizational or departmental strategies
- Major projects and initiatives
- Personal or professional development

A well-written objective should have a qualitative or quantitative measure, so that an objective assessment can be made regarding the accomplishment of the goal (see Appendix A: SMART Objectives).

Objectives differ from core responsibilities in that they represent projects and activities beyond the scope of an employee’s core responsibilities. These objectives may become a part of an individual’s Core Responsibilities in the next PDP cycle. So for instance, a core responsibility may be to manage the departmental budget as per the example below. An objective might be to find ways to reduce expenditures in one area and dedicate monies toward an area of higher priority for next year’s fiscal cycle.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
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Use this space to enter examples of Objectives that will measure performance over the course of the PDP cycle.

Some examples may include:
Reduce expenditures within overall department budget or complete professional development training

Use this space to enter quantitative measurements of each Objective. This will serve as the benchmark to determine the success of the employee.

Some examples may include:
Identifying areas to reduce budget by a certain timeframe or identifying and vetting possible training opportunities.
**Behavioural Competencies**

Behavioural competencies are observable and measurable behaviors, knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics that contribute to individual success in the role. Behavioural competencies are “how” you accomplish your core responsibilities as well as your objectives.

During the initial meeting, the manager reviews the Competency Dictionary with their employee and discusses where they see their strengths and development opportunities. Together discuss where perceptions differ and agree on the expected results.

During the Review Meeting, the manager will indicate the demonstrated competency level exhibited during the course of the year. This is an excellent opportunity for an open dialogue between the manager and employee. Use this meeting to discuss successes, challenges, and areas for development around each identified competency.

**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Required Competency Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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Use this dropdown menu to select the Competency that will measure performance over the course of the PDP cycle.

All competencies can be found in the Competency Dictionary, which can be downloaded from the Human Resources website.

Use this dropdown menu to select the appropriate Level for each Competency.

Each competency has a range of Levels, from 1 to 5. Information on each Level and examples of behaviours can be found in the Competency Dictionary.
The responsibilities of the manager are to:

- Support your direct reports in their development planning
- Provide coaching moments and mentoring opportunities
- Look for on-the-job activities where employees can practice and hone the competencies identified for development
- Gather behavioural evidence to raise awareness to behavioural levels employees are demonstrating
- Provide feedback on a regular just-in-time basis

Appendix A: The SMART Method

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<th>M</th>
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<th>R</th>
<th>T</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Achievable</td>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>Time Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describes an observable behaviour and clearly explains what the employee is to achieve</td>
<td>Can be assessed by a qualitative or quantitative measure</td>
<td>The employee has the skills and authority to complete the objective. Resources for the project are adequate to allow for success.</td>
<td>Supports the mission of the University and/or the University’s department(s) and/or unit(s)</td>
<td>Has clear, agreed upon milestones or completion dates (where applicable)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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