

Evaluating the Library Director

- Presented by Susan Briant on October 2, 2004 for The Trustee Institute

Learning Objective

- You will learn how to conduct a performance evaluation for your library director

The Board's role

- Develop the process
- Explore different models & instruments
- Establish criteria to use
- Work with director to set goals, objectives and performance plans
- Tie evaluation to planning process
- Conduct an effective appraisal

Board's role (Continued)

- Communicate the results
- Monitor the evaluation
- Foster growth / improvement
- Establish personnel policies
- Terminate if necessary

Defining Performance Appraisal

- Performance Appraisal is a way of measuring what has happened, and a way to plan for what will happen.
- Its purpose is to review past performance, determine present objectives and plan employee development for the future.

Why don't we conduct evaluations?

- Don't know how or whom to ask
- Uncomfortable with criticism
- Don't feel qualified
- Don't have the time
- Problems may generate controversy
- Other ways to get results

Why is it important to conduct evaluations?

- To measure the library director's accomplishments
- To provide director with a clear understanding of the board's expectations and how well they are being met
- To show where the library has been, where it is, and where it is going

Why evaluate (continued)

- Director's evaluation is the keystone in evaluation process for the entire library
- Evaluations show elected officials that the library is expertly managed, that it is successful in meeting program objectives
- Sums up past activity and sets the basis for the next year of progress and evaluation

Why evaluate (Continued)

- Identifies concerns so that appropriate actions can be taken
- Supplements and wraps up continuous reports on progress and accomplishments of the library (celebrate!)
- Serves as a primary vehicle for communication between the board and the director

Developing the Evaluation Process

- Discuss the philosophy of the board
- Determine parameters. Who will evaluate?
What is the cycle of review?
- Choose an evaluation instrument
- Set goals, objectives & performance plans
- Make timetable
- Communicate results to the director

Advantages to Personnel Committee handling evaluation

- Smaller group, easier to meet and do work
- Less than a quorum so committee meetings are not in open session (usually 3)
- Allows for entire board input
- Allows for representative members with experience and qualifications
- Permits smoother consolidation and coordination

If entire board is involved...

- Harder to schedule bigger groups of people
- Extra meetings will be necessary if you want a timely process
- Monthly meetings could be very long
- Open Public Meetings law observation

Include the director for greater success

- Get director's input for greater success
- Make sure Board and director feel comfortable
- Director should understand and agree with the process / timetable
- No surprises

The evaluation instrument ...

- Based on job analysis to identify characteristics needed for successful job performance
- Chosen in consensus and to meet library needs
- Shows a clear understanding of purpose

The evaluation instrument (continued)

- Raters should understand rating standards (measurable outcomes)
- Allow flexibility
- Look at other evaluation instruments
- See packet & bibliography for samples
- Evaluate instrument periodically

Evaluation Models/ instruments (continued)

- No one right model / many to choose from
- Based on job descriptions
- Based on goals and objectives / activity plans
- Based on characteristics
- Narrative only / some use numerical ratings
- Self evaluations / Peer evaluations
- Combinations of above

Sample Performance Evaluation instrument

- Contains different sections
- Sections on characteristics or traits, such as judgment, adaptability, cooperation, initiative, etc.
- Focus on skills : interpersonal, communication, problem solving, supervisory, etc.

Sample performance evaluation instrument (continued)

- Develops work plan with objectives and action plans with timeframes for completion
- Comments by board and director
- Allows for disagreement / rebuttal
- Form / Agreement is signed by both director and board

Criteria for evaluation

- Portfolio or personnel folder
- Observation from year's work
- Measurement of goals, objectives & plans
- Letters or comments of commendation
- Suggestions for improvement
- Input from administration / staff

Criteria for evaluation (continued)

- Self evaluation by director
- Accuracy of record keeping
- Input from Board committees
- Performance Standards

Performance Standards

- Are statements that specify or describe desirable work-related behaviors or job outcomes, and that can be evaluated in some objective manner
- Can be compared against mission statement to be sure that you are really doing what you set out to do
- Allow accountability in neglected areas

Performance Standards (continued)

- Guide you in resetting organizational priorities
- Help to equalize workload distribution
- Allow you to compare job performance more equitably
- Give director feedback on areas for improvement

Performance Standards (continued)

- Collaborate with director when writing standards
- Usually assign a percent of employee's time to duties or area

Samples of Performance Standards in Budget (Planning)

- Budget includes new and present staff, materials, maintenance, equipment, and all supplies necessary for operation of library
- Budget follows prescribed format
- Budget is thorough: allows for ongoing functions and implementation of plans for the coming year, and addresses correction of problems.

Sample Performance Standards: Budget (Planning)-Continued

- Budget is tied to annual plan or strategic plan
- All deadlines are met
- Flexibility of budget to meet changes

Job Descriptions

- a written description which includes the purpose, description of tasks and content of the job as well as qualifications for a job.
- Write, review and update annually with director
- May be used in developing performance standards
- Samples- www.njla.org / other libraries

Setting Goals and Objectives

- Director's goals are key to library goals
- Tie goals to planning process
- Make them measurable
- Get Input of Director, Board & stakeholders

Definition of Goals and Objectives

- Goal is from where you are to where you want to be- the outcome for the community
- Objectives are measures of progress or steps towards reaching goals. Desired result of an activity
- Activities are the work required to complete the objectives with timelines

Objectives are SMART

- S Specific
- M Measurable
- A Achievable
- R Relevant
- T Time Sensitive

Sample Goal & Objectives

- Goal: Improved Public Awareness and Use of the Library and its Services
- Objectives: A. By June 2005, produce and distribute quarterly library newsletters to all 2500 local residents.
- B. By December 2004, develop program to showcase library services on bi-monthly local Cable Television Station.
- C. By Sept. 2004, execute library card campaign to sign up 700 new borrowers by year's end.

Goal: Improved Public Awareness and Use of the Library and its Services.

- Objective D:
- Objective E:

The Performance Agreement

- Designated board members complete the evaluation form on time
- Director should complete self evaluation
- Draft Goals and Objectives and Activity Plan

Performance Agreement (Continued)

- Meet to iron out goals, objectives and activity plan
- Make a final copy of goals, objectives and activity plan
- Consolidate responses into a composite rating
- Consolidate written comments in respective sections

Performance Agreement (Continued)

- Have process for full Board review of the evaluation before it is finalized
- Keep entire board apprized through Personnel Committee
- Chair of the Personnel Committee is official Board contact

Communicating the Results

- Allow director to review the evaluation before meeting with the Personnel Committee
- Review the evaluation with the Director at a meeting with comfortable, private setting
- Allow director the opportunity to respond with written and verbal comments/ questions

Better Performance discussions

- Start with overall observations, move to specifics
- Identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement
- Use commendations and recommendations
- Allow period for discussion/ questions

Better Performance Discussions (Continued)

- Be honest and specific / build trust
- Focus on job performance, not personality
- Listen
- Ask for feedback, probe if necessary
- Be calm and patient
- Choose your words carefully

Timeframe

- Decide when to conduct the evaluation
- Allow sufficient time
- Agree to timeframe / stick to it

Probationary employment

- Standard time is 90 days
- Give evaluations on a monthly basis
- Let director know strong areas and those needing improvement
- Monitor probationary period closely...
- Termination is easier with evaluations to support the case

Standard causes for discipline / possible termination:

- Incompetence, inefficiency or failure to perform duties;
- Insubordination;
- Inability to perform duties;
- Chronic or excessive absenteeism or lateness;
- Conviction of a crime;

Standard causes for discipline/ possible termination (continued)

- Dishonesty or misappropriation of funds
- A willful breach of director's fiduciary duty to the library
- Conduct unbecoming a public employee;
- Unlawful use or abuse of substances;
- Neglect of duty;
- Misuse of public property, including motor vehicles;

Causes for discipline/possible termination (Continued)

- Discrimination that affects equal employment opportunity, including sexual harassment;
- Other sufficient cause;
(NJAC 4A:2-2.3)

When termination is required

- Make the problem known, give the remedy, and monitor progress for improvement
- Stick to job related issues
- Build a case for termination if progress is not made
- Document the problems with clear, concise written examples
- Documentation must be job specific

The importance of documentation

- Keep a file of positive and negative examples of performance
- Be specific.. On this date, director did not turn in _____ report. Bd. president addressed the issue by calling director on date and asking about the missing report. Director stated it wasn't done because ... On that date, the report was

Counseling

- Make director aware of the problem or concern
- Offer solutions to fix the problem
- Give written directives with specific instructions to eliminate confusion
- Offer counseling as necessary
- Give appropriate chances within reason.

Counseling (Continued)

- Monitor progress or lack of it
- Keep a written record of all counseling sessions, directives, conversations, etc.
- Counseling should be through official channels
- Keep it legal
- Consult with your attorney

Improvement Plan

- Outline a written improvement plan
- Set clear timeframes
- Make expectations clear
- Plan should be monitored
- If improvement isn't enough, plan the termination date

The Rice Letter

- The Rice Letter is used to inform employees when their employment is being discussed. This might include demotion or termination. After the employee receives the Rice Letter, s/he may opt to request that the discussion be held in open session. (See packet)
- Consult with legal counsel

Summary for termination

- Know your policies on progressive discipline and termination
- Keep it legal / consult with your attorney
- Follow Dept. of Personnel regulations
- Take action to terminate
- Be prepared in case of difficulties
- Have contingency plan for new leadership

Available resources

- Your board attorney
- NJ State Library – www.njstatelib.org
(sbriant@njstatelib.org)
- N. J. Library Association (www.njla.org)
- Your policies / other libraries' policies
- DOP regulations (www.state.nj.us/personnel)
- Related books & websites -see bibliography in packet