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“The Do’s and Don’ts of City Management Evaluation”

Ron Cox

Ron Cox Consulting, Friendswood

James Thurmond

Director MPA Program University of Houston



What is performance evaluation?

- It is not complicated but rather straightforward:

Here’s how you are doing and here’s how you ought to be doing.



Evaluation = Feedback

- Feedback directs and motivates (Landy et al. 1982)
 - Directs manager to continue or change behavior
 - Motivates manager to improve performance
- Research shows that feedback is a positive influence on performance
 - Performance improvement of 8% to 30%
 - Positive correlations of +.3 to +.5



Why evaluate the city manager?

- It's your job
- Councils have oversight and supervisory responsibilities over the city manager
- This includes evaluating the city manager's performance



Purpose of Evaluation

1. Communicate city council's goals to the city manager
2. Counsel the city manager on issues/problems
3. Motivate the city manager to improve performance
4. Determine more fairly the city manager's organizational rewards (if any)



Evaluation Payoffs

Quality evaluations can lead to improved performance by

1. Identifying strengths and weakness in the city manager;
2. Providing feedback on performance
3. Providing for two-way dialogue



Quality of the Evaluation

- The question is not whether or not to evaluate, because you should evaluate
- Rather the question should be “how to conduct a **quality** evaluation?”



Evaluations ain't easy



for both the evaluator and the evaluatee



Evaluations ain't easy

- Evaluations can be painful for both parties
- Even the most experienced of supervisors don't relish giving evaluations
- So, our comments are applicable to all evaluators, and not just mayors and city councils



The Evaluation Process

- Should be an ongoing process
 - Informal as appropriate throughout the year
 - Formal as least annually
- Should be both informal and formal



Formal and Informal

- Formal –
 - Scheduled
 - Structured and planned
 - Definite performance criteria
- Informal
 - Ad hoc and less regimented
 - On-going conversation throughout the year



Problem #1 with evaluations

1. Ambiguous city council goals
 - Unclear: “we want a well-run city”
 - Clear: “we want the fund balance to be 20% of fund revenues”
 - Unclear: “you don’t communicate well with us”
 - Clear: “provide us monthly status reports on major projects”

Criteria for Evaluating City Mgrs

Good	Poor
1. Project is ahead of schedule	1. He didn't work on my preferred project
2. PD has too many brutality complaints	2. She doesn't give the PD everything it asks for
3. Employee turnover is down	3. My son's Little League had to pay park fee
4. Goals have been accomplished	4. His spouse is unfriendly

Problem #2 with evaluations

- 2. Ambiguous performance standards
 - Objective – standard based on hard data
 - Subjective – standard based on perceptions or assessments toward performance
 - Both standards are used
 - Mgr. should know which standard or combination is being used

Criteria for Evaluating (Halter 1982)

- Accomplishments
- Public image
- Teamwork
- Relations with the council/staff
- Information flow
- Community involvement/awareness
- Effectiveness with advisory committees



Problem #3 with evaluations

- 3. Improper evaluation process
 - This may be related to council's evaluation experience
 - Lack of counseling or coaching
 - Are there hidden agendas?
 - Is "I got you" the mode of evaluation?
 - Are you "emptying your bucket"?



Problem #4 with evaluations

- 4. Lack of two-way dialogue between the city council and the city manager
 - Mgr. is sent out of the room and no two way communication occurs
 - Evaluation process is a good time for coaching
 - Dialogue allows perspectives to be presented



Good Evaluation Process

- Be committed to it
- Take the time to do it
- Do both formal and informal
- Learn how to give good evaluations
 - TML sessions
 - Reading
 - Google
 - City Council workshop



Evaluation Form

Do – use something that is meaningful to both the Council and the city Manager

Don't- use an off-the-shelf one page sheet that rates whether the manager comes to work on time, dresses nicely, etc.



Evaluation Form(s) – number?

- One completed evaluation form merging or summarizing the mayor's and the individual councilmember's evaluations
- Multiple completed evaluation forms representing comments from the mayor and each individual councilmember



Evaluation Format: Simple

GUIDING PRINCIPLES For Evaluation from Council:

- We Believe That Visionary Planning is Essential.
- We Believe That Proactive, Responsive, Effective Leadership is Essential.
- We Believe That Ongoing Interactive Communication is Essential.



Evaluation Format: Simple

- Council Expectations
 - Execute the decisions of the majority
 - Be a facilitator
 - Present pros and cons and bring recommendations to facilitate decision making
 - Identify what was heard to facilitate good decision making
 - Provide information openly to all members
 - Provide regular reports for projects including meeting timelines



Evaluation Format: Simple

- Evaluation Survey for Council and Manager
 - How has City Manager met goals of City Council?
 - How has City Manager set a positive tone of leadership for the staff?
 - How has City Manager set a positive tone of leadership in the community?
 - How has City Manager met the expectations of Council?



Evaluation Format: Detailed

- Establish rating values:
 - 1 = unsatisfactory – below minimum requirements
 - 2 = marginal – meets some requirements
 - 3 = fully satisfactory – performs expected duties
 - 4 = exceeds requirements -- consistently
 - 5 = Outstanding



Evaluation Format: Detailed

Performance Factors	Council Comments	Rating
Goal accomplishment	<i>Water and park projects - good</i>	4
Keeping Council informed	<i>We are in the dark.</i>	2
Involvement in community activities	<i>Keep it up.</i>	5
Revenue generation	<i>Increased by 6%. Looking good.</i>	4



The Informal Evaluation

- Provide during mgr.'s status reports
- Don't delay your feedback
- Don't collect feedback thoughts for the annual evaluation
- Ask for the manager's perspective



City Manager's Obligation

- Learn how to pick up subtle feedback from the mayor and city council
 - "You should look at north side alleys"
 - "Gosh, that budget review was lengthy"
- Listen
- Don't be defensive
- Remember the boss is the mayor and city council



Everyone's Obligation



Listen and be Open Minded



Summary

- **Quality** evaluations improve job performance
- Evaluations are part of your job
- Evaluations ain't easy
- Learn how to give quality evaluations
- Managers must be receptive to evaluations
- Improved performance is the public interest
