

Conducting Upward Appraisals

As a best practice, RIT strongly encourages supervisors, department heads, directors, and vice presidents to use upward appraisals to facilitate two-way communication regarding performance with their staff.

Three templates are provided to obtain feedback; open-ended, structured response, and checklist, similar to the formats of the staff appraisal templates. However, the nature of the feedback solicited is related to an individual's performance in the areas of supervision, management, and leadership.

General guidelines and recommendations for conducting upward appraisals include:

- Conduct the upward appraisal process after you've completed and delivered staff appraisals.
- Select and edit one template for completion by a group of staff and/or by all staff in your department.
- Establish guiding principles, procedures, and a timeline for the upward appraisal process. Communicate these in writing prior to the distribution of the appraisal form.

Recommendations:

- Because the independent perspective of all members of the staff is important, ask each person to complete and submit his or her appraisal individually.
- To protect confidentiality, ask staff to complete their appraisals anonymously and send them to a third party for review and summary. If needed, provide pre-addressed envelopes. Options for a third party include the individual to whom you report, your HR Services Manager, or a trusted administrative colleague (your peer or above) willing to serve in the role.
- Ask the third party to provide you with a summary of common themes. The summary should not identify or attempt to identify individuals and no verbatim statements should be shared, with or without attributing them to an individual. Include these expectations in your communication to staff.
- At the end of the process, thank staff for their willingness to provide feedback and, as appropriate, acknowledge what you have learned and actions you plan to take as a result of the upward appraisal process.