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### SB02-22/23 Resolution Encouraging Effective Employee Performance Review Practices

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## SB02-22/23: Resolution Encouraging Effective Employee Performance Review Practices

### 1 **Resolution Encouraging Effective Employee Performance Review Practices**

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3 *Whereas*, the University of Montana (UM) Staff Senate facilitates communication, cooperation,  
4 and engagement between the administration and staff of the University of Montana. Staff  
5 Senate promotes and works to improve the working conditions and professional welfare of  
6 UM's staff – “The Heart of the Grizzly;”<sup>1</sup>

7 *Whereas*, the University of Montana requires supervisors to complete Performance Reviews of  
8 eligible staff;<sup>2</sup>

9 *Whereas*, the UM Performance Review is conducted at the end of the Performance Review  
10 Cycle, which begins July 1 and ends June 30 the following year;<sup>3</sup>

11 *Whereas*, the process of the Performance Review is to reinforce open communication and to  
12 review employee performance objectively to assess Job Success Factors and overall job  
13 performance;<sup>4</sup>

14 *Whereas*, it is recommended that the supervisor meet privately with each employee for a  
15 formal performance discussion as a part of the annual performance review;<sup>5</sup>

16 *Whereas*, it is recommended that, during the annual performance review, the supervisor must  
17 elicit and listen to the employee’s perspective as well as be prepared to provide specific  
18 constructive feedback about the employee’s accomplishments and overall performance;<sup>6</sup>

19 *Whereas*, the annual performance review provides an opportunity for two-way dialogue to help  
20 ensure that an effective discussion is achieved;<sup>7</sup>

21 *Whereas*, the Performance Evaluation Process Guide encourages maintaining open  
22 communication throughout the cycle to avoid surprises<sup>8</sup> but does not supply any further  
23 guidance on how to achieve that;

24 *Whereas*, the Performance Review Instructions sheet as well as the Performance Evaluation  
25 Process Guide include directions to supervisors to fill out the performance review form using

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.umt.edu/staff-senate/bylaws/default.php>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.umt.edu/human-resources/employee-resources/performance-management/>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.umt.edu/human-resources/employee-resources/performance-management/overview-and-eligibility.php>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> The guide can be downloaded from this webpage: <https://www.umt.edu/human-resources/employee-resources/performance-management/>

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26 feedback from the employee's peers, direct reports, customers/clients, co-workers, and the  
27 individual being reviewed;<sup>9</sup>

28 *Whereas*, there is no instruction included in the Performance Review Instructions sheet nor in  
29 the Performance Evaluation Process Guide about comments being linked with reviewers'  
30 names,<sup>10</sup> so we can assume that supervisors and individuals being reviewed are receiving  
31 anonymous feedback;

32 *Whereas*, the practice of soliciting anonymous feedback from others to be incorporated into a  
33 performance review is generally considered a 360-degree or multi-rater performance feedback  
34 process, but this process has received criticism because it can be subjective and cause  
35 employee harm when not used effectively;<sup>11</sup>

36 *Whereas*, there is no mention of 360-degree performance feedback training – required or  
37 optional – anywhere on the Human Resource Services (HRS) Performance Management  
38 webpages, so we can assume that supervisors are not trained in how to use this tool effectively;

39 *Whereas*, there is no requirement for supervisors to receive supervisory or people management  
40 training upon becoming supervisors; and

41 *Whereas*, supervisors have control over parts of the wellbeing and livelihood of UM staff  
42 members;

43 *Therefore, let it be resolved*, that the UM Staff Senate urges Human Resource Services (HRS) to  
44 remove the instruction to supervisors to solicit feedback from others – unless the reviewer is  
45 named to the supervisor and the individual being reviewed – and to communicate this change  
46 as soon as possible before the performance cycle of 2022-23 concludes on June 30, 2023;

47 *Therefore, let it be further resolved*, that the UM Staff Senate urges HRS to remove any  
48 anonymous survey results that were previously used for Employee Performance Reviews from  
49 personnel folders;

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<sup>9</sup> The instruction sheet and guide can be downloaded from this webpage: <https://www.umt.edu/human-resources/employee-resources/performance-management/>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/jobs/360-reviews-often-lead-to-cruel-not-constructive-criticism.html>  
(There has been criticism of this NY Times article. Here's one example: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/hearsay-anecdotes-response-nyt-article-360-reviews-often-ron-warren/>, and yet, even that criticism points to the need to have trained and certified coaches debrief the feedback from 360-reviews.); <https://hbr.org/2011/10/the-fatal-flaw-with-360-survey>; <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/360-degree-reviews.aspx>; <https://www.business.com/articles/the-end-of-rank-and-yank-management-practices-revisited/>; <https://www.talentguard.com/blog/360-reviews-four-reasons-they-fail>; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/lizryan/2015/10/21/the-horrible-truth-about-360-degree-feedback/?sh=3223d55e69b9>; <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/pros-cons-360-degree-performance-feedback-ramesh-kajrolkar>; <https://www.thebalancemoney.com/what-is-a-360-review-1917541>

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50 *Therefore, let it be further resolved,* that the UM Staff Senate urges HRS to reexamine  
51 performance problems and disciplinary actions stemming from the utilization of anonymous  
52 survey results in previous Employee Performance Reviews. Based on the investigation report,  
53 HRS should take appropriate actions to rectify issues with individual employees;

54 *Therefore, let it be further resolved,* that the UM Staff Senate urges HRS to provide supervisory  
55 training as soon as an employee is put into a supervisory position, regardless of whether or not  
56 that person has been a supervisor at another workplace. The training should include, but not be  
57 limited to:

- 58 • understanding UM- and state-specific HR policies and procedures;
- 59 • supporting employees and their wellbeing;
- 60 • creating a culture of continuous feedback;
- 61 • recognizing bias in giving performance reviews and feedback;
- 62 • coaching as an integral role of supervisors;
- 63 • setting goals and expectations for supervisee and supervisor development;
- 64 • listening and communicating effectively;
- 65 • rewarding good work with compensation, professional development, and other options  
66 with the supervisor's toolkit;

67 *Therefore, let it be further resolved,* that the UM Staff Senate urges HRS to provide performance  
68 review training on an annual basis to remind supervisors of effective performance development  
69 strategies;

70 *Therefore, let it be further resolved,* that the UM Staff Senate urges HRS to develop a more  
71 robust and up-to-date performance development program with continuous feedback, goal  
72 setting, long-term employee development, and other effective, best-practice employee  
73 engagement elements;

74 *Therefore, let it be further resolved,* that the UM Staff Senate encourages responsible parties to  
75 consider this resolution in bargaining conversations; and

76 *Therefore, let it be further resolved,* that this resolution be distributed to Seth Bodnar, President  
77 of the University of Montana; Paul Lasiter, Vice President of Finance and Operations; Terri  
78 Phillips, Associate Vice President for HRS Operations & Finance; Libby Newman, Compensation  
79 Manager; Allen Szalda-Petree, University Faculty Association; and Brady Schwertfeger, FOCUS-  
80 MFPE Montana Federation of Public Employees.