Developing Employee Performance Appraisals

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Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicated, and the appropriate credit is given where I used the language, ideas, expressions or writings of another.

Signed_____

Abstract

This Applied Research Project (ARP) examined whether or not it was possible and practical to consider instituting an employee performance appraisal system for the Fond du Lac Fire Department (FdLFD). The problem was that the fire department does not have a formal personnel evaluation instrument, which has resulted in no documented performance history.

The purpose of this ARP was to create an acceptable performance evaluation appraisal method to be utilized by the FdLFD.

Descriptive research methods were used for this ARP in order to identify what it would take to develop an effective performance appraisal method. A 10-question questionnaire was developed, distributed and analyzed.

Interviews were conducted with various city department directors to get a better understanding of how other city departments evaluate personnel. Research also showed that employee performance reviews can be beneficial for both employee and employer if done properly.

Recommendations based upon the research conducted concluded that the FdLFD management team needs to work

collaboratively with the rank and file membership to develop an employee evaluation program which improves employee outputs and helps develop future leaders within the organization.

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Introduction

The City of Fond du Lac Fire Department (FdLFD) is compromised of 67 career members who are divided among fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency medical services and administration. The problem is the FdLFD does not have a formal personnel evaluation instrument, which has resulted in no documented employee performance history.

Employee performance evaluations are meant to improve overall outputs by employees and to give employers an opportunity to determine training needs, identify employees who are best suite for promotion and award merit pay increases for top performers. Feedback from supervisor to employee can also improve motivation and productivity. Unfortunately, despite all the potential benefits, employees widely doubt the overall successes of performance evaluations (Tompkins, 1995 p. 243-245).

The purpose of this research will be to create an acceptable performance evaluation method to be utilized by the FdLFD. The research method that will be utilized for this Applied Research Project (ARP) will be descriptive. This paper will utilize literary reviews, questionnaires and interviews to identify the best course of action in

selecting an acceptable method of evaluating personnel performance.

The following research questions will be addressed through the presentation of the materials:

1. What are the necessary components of an effective employee evaluation process?

2. What evaluation instruments do other City of Fond du Lac departments utilize to evaluate personnel and what is their level of satisfaction with them?

3. What are the labor considerations and concerns in regards to implementing a new personnel evaluation instrument and policy in the FdLFD?

4. What performance evaluation instrument should be adopted by the FdLFD?

Background and Significance

The City of Fond du Lac is located in the southeast part of the state of Wisconsin, approximately 60 miles south of Green Bay and 70 miles north of Milwaukee at the base of Lake Winnebago, the largest inland lake in the state. The FdLFD protects an area of 18.2 square miles and an estimated population of 42,305 residents (2000 Census).

Fond du Lac (FdL) is also home to many manufacturing plants, a four-year university, a satellite campus for the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh, and a technical college. The City of Fond du Lac serves as the county seat of Fond du Lac County and includes a county courthouse, jail and government center. Fond du Lac is also home to the largest correctional institution for women in the state.

The FdLFD is a full-service, all-hazards emergency response agency that provides a wide range of services including fire suppression, emergency medical care, hazardous materials mitigation, and public education training and fire prevention. In 2008, the department responded to 6,899 requests for service (D. Pinnow, 2009), which includes providing hazardous materials responses for the entire county. The fire department hierarchy has one fire chief, two civilian administrative staff members, three battalion chiefs, three captains, one fire prevention officer, 12 lieutenants assigned to suppression, three paramedic lieutenants and 42 firefighters. Suppression personnel work on a three-platoon system; each 24-hour shift has an optimum staff level of 18 and maximum of 21. Firefighters work out of three fire stations strategically placed throughout the city. One battalion chief and one

captain oversee the headquarters station and a lieutenant supervises four members at each satellite station.

The FdLFD only provides written employee appraisals for probationary members, which include new firefighters and those members who are recently promoted. The administrative assistant is the only member other than the fire chief who receives an annual performance evaluation. According to FdLFD Administrative Assistant Luanne Bradenbaugh, a 30-year employee of the city, formal evaluations for unionized personnel ended more than five years ago because the former fire chief didn’t believe they were valuable (personal communication, September 18, 2009).

The purpose of this research will be to create an acceptable performance evaluation instrument to be utilized by the FdLFD. The research method that will be utilized for this Applied Research Project (ARP) will be descriptive. This paper will utilize literary reviews, questionnaires and interviews to identify the best course of action in selecting an acceptable method of evaluating personnel performance.

This research is related to the National Fire Academy Executive Development course offered at the National Fire Academy and corresponds to Unit 7: “Succession planning is

an organized and systematic way to ensure that employees in a particular organization are capable, competent, and willing to replace and/or succeed to strategic roles within the organization” (National Fire Academy, 2005, SM 7-3).

Additionally, the topic of this ARP directly correlates to the firth organizational objective of the United State Fire Administration’s (USFA) Applied Research operational objective, “To respond appropriately in a timely manner to emerging issues” (National Fire Academy, 2997, p. II-2).

The FdLFD is the only city department that does not use a formal evaluation process for its employees with the exception of unionized workers in the Department of Public Works who are covered under AFSCME. Without a formal evaluation process in the fire department employees are not given feedback on their performance and no game plan for their future is developed, which may inhibit their ability to move up the ranks in the department.

Literature Review

Performance appraisal is a process where written communication is given to an employee to evaluate performance and encourage future improvement. If done

correctly it can provide both the employer and the employee with a wide range of organizational benefits. The results can be utilized to help determine future training needs, identify candidates for promotion and determine rewards through a merit pay system. Motivation and productivity are also areas that can benefit from a performance appraisal program. However, appraisal systems are widely looked at as a negative part of the work place and many employees and employers have doubts about their accuracy and many supervisors view them as unpleasant. Performance appraisals rarely give the benefit that they promise in theory (Tompkins, 1995 p. 243).

According to Tompkins (1995) there are four uses for the performance appraisal: directing and controlling behavior, validating administrative decisions, improving work performance and developing employee capabilities. Unfortunately many performance appraisals fail to achieve what they set out to accomplish and leave all parties unhappy. Some of the obstacles that effect performance appraisals are the rating instrument, judgment by the person rating the employee and the appraisal process itself.

Performance appraisals are inherently subjective. Personal bias and prejudices of raters may positively or negatively skew a person’s appraisal. According to Tompkins (1995) some of the most common rating errors include continuing to judge someone on a first impression, and the tendency to rate an individual based on one part of the employee’s work performance and not the total work product. Another pitfall is when the rater judges an employee more favorably because that person is perceived to be more similar to him or herself. Lastly, raters tend to rate all individuals close to the middle of the scale, because they are unable or unwilling to put forth the effort needed to distinguish between employee performances (p. 246).

Evaluations that mostly rely on supervisor feedback, even with the best intentions, are often unreliable and inaccurate. Supervisors will unknowingly attach their own personal biases to the evaluation that can cause a prejudice. It is important to provide accurate performance feedback to keep from compounding performance problems. Feedback that is scheduled and not given as it is needed or earned can discourage timely feedback. Giving employees feedback as often as needed and not waiting for quarterly

or monthly sessions can help improve productivity (Coens and Jenkins, 2000 p. 115-126).

Performance evaluations in a union environment are often times more complicated due to collective bargaining agreements and because unions traditionally challenge efforts by management to identify poor performance and suggest future performance improvements. Unions have a primary function in securing the work place which protects members' rights and benefits. Managers of unionized employees with seniority may be well advised to forget the possibility of formal performance evaluations. Union contracts often may ban evaluations because they do not provide the employee with due process (Patten, 1982 p. 41-43).

Performance evaluations for firefighters should be more inclusive than just the administrator or supervisor's opinion about how well he or she does on the job. In order to establish accurate evaluation fire administrators should receive input from a group of people who have an overall picture of the firefighter's performance. One idea would be to let firefighters evaluate each other and themselves as well as the evaluation given by their immediate supervisor. Firefighters should be given an evaluation which is

performance based. Giving firefighters a performance guide to check to see if he or she is meeting or exceeding written standards would be a good way to measure a firefighter’s on the job attitude and behavior (Clark, 1999 p. 12).

Why do we owe it to our personnel to evaluate their performance? Some firefighters may think that their performance is being evaluated to lay the groundwork so they can be terminated. Others may view the process as an opportunity for management to institute a merit pay system where step increases are abolished and raises are given to parallel scores on evaluations. Lastly, some may think that they are done just to create busy work and it often seems as though nothing is ever done with the evaluations to make them serve any real legitimate purpose. Firefighters should be evaluated so they know how they are doing, to shore up areas of weakness to increase employer and employee satisfaction and to help prepare employees for promotion. And lastly, evaluations should work to enhance or create dialogue (Neely, 2002).

Finding the right focus for performance evaluations can be the most difficult and least popular part of the supervisor’s job. Yet, the evaluation process is one of the

most critical responsibilities of being a supervisor. Exchanging information between the employee and his or her supervisor is the most critical element of the evaluation, not the rating form. The goal is to better the employee's work performance. Employees most often want to improve and to be seen in a positive light by their supervisor. The evaluation should be positive, even when discussing areas needed for improvement (Bogard, 2000 p. 38).

Capturing the good, Bogard (2000) says, is done through proper documentation and communication. It may be helpful to establish an employee log to record exceptional performance as it is observed. Bogard further suggests that the focus needs to be on the behavior, not the employee. When the emphasis is placed on the problem as opposed to the person the employee can detach sufficiently enough to take remedial action. Lastly, Bogard suggests that supervisors should focus on the firefighter's deficiencies and not the cause of them.

A common misconception is that performance appraisals are meant to solely inform an employee of how his or her performance has been rated. Unfortunately, this is the only thing that is done. Producing an effective performance appraisal can accomplish much more. Providing an employee a

review of their work serves as an opportunity for the supervisor and the employee to take time and effort to set future goals and objectives for the upcoming year. Productive performance appraisals recognize the value of employees and why they are the most valuable resource of the organization (Sachs, 1992 p. 38).

There are many strengths and weaknesses inherent to most every performance appraisal system. Errors associated with implementation of even the best programs can be made no matter what techniques are used. Training given to managers using the system probably has more to do with the overall success of the appraisal than any other factor. Some of the most common appraisal errors are evaluations that do not define standards of performance, overemphasis on past performance, reliance on gut feelings, unclear performance documentation, inadequate time allotment for the evaluation, too much talking by the supervisor, and the lack of a follow-up plan (Swan 1991 p. 31-33).

Performance evaluations should be specific and measurable to the maximum degree possible on every element contained in a performance appraisal form. The more specific and measurable each objective is, the clearer it will be to the employee. There will be fewer disputes over

whether the objectives were met. However, there will be factors that seem difficult to measure. If they are important job requirements they should be included in the appraisal (Swan 1991 p. 95-99).

Putting responsibility on the subordinate to establish short-term performance goals for themselves is gaining popularity in the workforce. During this process the supervisor enters the process only after the subordinate has provided a thoughtful reflection about his or her job, made careful assessments on strengths and weaknesses, and formulated a plan to accomplish goals. The supervisor focuses on how to help the employee relate the self appraisal to the overall organizational objectives. The first step in this process is to specify the major components of the job rather than a formal job description. This document is developed by the employee and defines the broad areas of responsibility they perform on a regular basis. The employee will then establish personal goals or targets for a short period of time. This plan is discussed with the supervisor and is modified until both are satisfied. At the conclusion of a six-month period subordinates develop their own appraisal which will assess what they accomplished relative to the established targets.

The interview the employee has with the supervisor will culminate in a resetting of targets for the upcoming months (McGregor, 1990 p. 155-165).

Literature Review Summary

The literature review outlined several resources, which provided the foundation used to answer the research questions. The literary resources opened this author's eyes to several new ideas, which he had not previously considered, related to this ARP. The sources identified several elements of consideration, which could be used in evaluating whether or not it would be feasible to have a written performance appraisal instrument at the FdLFD and if so, what would best serve the department's needs. Literature review also provided valuable background information relating to what makes up a successful evaluation process and equally important, what makes them fail. Finally, the literature review provided some outstanding reviews of organizations that have had success utilizing alternate forms of performance appraisals that counter the status quo.

Procedures

The procedures employed to prepare this ARP consist of research questions, a literature review, interviews, and creation and implementation of a questionnaire instrument. After identifying a need for research within the Fond du Lac Fire Department and submitting the research topic for approval, the following procedures were developed for this ARP.

Research related to the selected topic was conducted initially through the Learning Resource Center (LRC) at the National Fire Academy where several journals were reviewed utilizing the LRC electronic card catalog and later through the Fond du Lac Public Library located in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. In addition, extensive research was conducted online through various Internet search mediums such as Google to further identify published documents related to this ARP.

After completing the Literature Review, a questionnaire instrument was developed based on the need to collect research information pertinent to other fire departments utilize performance appraisal systems, as related to questions that were raised as a result of the Literature Review. It was important for this author to have

a more detailed perspective of how other fire departments evaluate personnel. The survey requested objective information and quantitative data from fire departments throughout the United States pertaining to employee performance appraisal. The fire departments, which were solicited to participate in the questionnaire, represented a cross-section of career, paid-on-call and volunteer departments. Included in the cover e-mail was a brief description of the questionnaire's purpose and a web-based link to the instrument. All data collected was done through surveymonkey.com, which provided accurate data collection methods and improved overall data collection accuracy.

A 10-question questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed to assess policies of fire departments relating to evaluation methods. The questionnaire was distributed throughout the month of October 2009. Individuals were asked to return the questionnaire in a timely manner. After collecting the data it was analyzed and summarized. The summary of the questionnaire is included with this ARP as Appendix B. Eighty-nine responses were received. The questionnaire instrument is listed below along with the intended audience, its purpose and distribution method:

Appendix A: Employee Performance Evaluations (Audience: Fire departments in the United States). The purpose of this questionnaire was to obtain feedback and examine possible trends in evaluation methods, frequency of evaluations and what possible roles evaluations play in career development. The questionnaire was electronically distributed via several mediums which included: social and professional networking sites, Executive Fire Officer e-mail distribution lists and a mass e-mail from the Wisconsin Fire Chiefs' Association.

Appendix B: Employee Performance Evaluations Questionnaire statistical results.

Interviews were conducted with several City of Fond du Lac department directors who have both historical and current knowledge of the city's performance evaluation system. Interview questions were developed and used for each interview (See Appendix C). It was important to this author to get a sense from leaders within the city to know what evaluation practices are in place and what may have been part of past practices.

A rough draft outline for the project was developed according to the established guidelines of the Executive Fire Officer ARP Guidelines.

The draft ARP received peer review and comments relating to its content, structure and grammar were provided. The final ARP product was finalized and submitted for grading and review.

Limitations

It is important to identify certain limitations related to this ARP. The primary limitation is related to the “Employee Performance Evaluations” in that the questionnaire was e-mailed to several individuals within several fire service professional arenas and there was no definitive way to know that the respondent was qualified to answer the questionnaire in order to provide honest and accurate feedback.

Results

The results of this ARP were derived from information collected and reviewed from the questionnaire, literature reviews, interviews and consultation with the current human resource director for the City of Fond du Lac.

Research Questions:

The first research question asks, “What are the necessary components of an effective employee evaluation process? The components must include a system that is

tailored to the special requirements of the organization, and include proper evaluator training for managers who must do the evaluating (Patten, 1982).

Another component to successful evaluations is to have three evaluations conducted for each firefighter. The first would be a self-evaluation, then an evaluation by those members who work with the firefighter on a daily basis and lastly, an evaluation done by the supervisor (Clark, 1999).

Finding the right focus of performance evaluations is a critical component of the overall process. Although evaluations are thought to be the most difficult and unpleasant part of the supervisor’s job, every employee has a right to an honest assessment of his/her job performance. Evaluators need to focus on the behavior, not the employee, and actions, not intentions. Supervisors should also focus on the employee’s deficiencies not the causes of them and finally, assist the employee in goal-setting strategies for future success (Bogard, 2000).

The results of the interviews conducted with several City of Fond du Lac leaders determined that the FdLFD was the only city department that did not use a formal annual employee rating form. City of FdL Human Resource Director

Rodney Pasch suggests evaluations should determine the future professional goals of the employee. Pasch also believes supervisors should look for ways to provide feedback that leads to continuous improvement. Organizational planning that helps employees better understand their net worth will help employers identify the job skills employees need to succeed (R. Pasch, personal communication September 22, 2009).

The second question asks, "What evaluation instruments do other City of Fond du Lac departments utilize to evaluate personnel and what is their level of satisfaction with them?" The research determined that the City of FdL utilizes several evaluation forms. The city's Police Department has the most comprehensive evaluation forms and process. Each police officer receives a written evaluation (See Appendix F). This evaluation is initially done "car to car" and contains a majority of check boxes which indicate Exceeds Standards, Acceptable Standards and Needs Improvement. In this rating instrument there is little room for comments, but the employee can write his/her comments on the back of the form. According to Administrative Captain Steven Thiry, the monthly evaluations provide a chance for ongoing dialogue between

supervisors and their subordinates while providing direct feedback on a monthly basis (S. Thiry, personal communication September 18, 2009). Police officers are annually evaluated utilizing an “Employee Values Inventory” (See Appendix E), a two-page instrument which rates attendance, personal qualifications, capacity, attitude towards job and overall job performance. The initial interview is given to the employee a week before the second part of the evaluation is completed. In the second part the employee development survey is completed which gives the supervisor opportunities to further write about the strengths and weaknesses of the employee.

The Department of Public Works utilizes the evaluation form that has been provided by the city. According to Department of Public Works Director Mark Lentz, the form is not too helpful because it only allows supervisors to indicate satisfactory or unsatisfactory which causes him and his staff to add additional rating factors to make the instrument more useful. Additionally, only non-represented employees are evaluated; none of the unionized employees at public works receive a written evaluation (M. Lentz, personal communication September 18, 2009).

The city's library director, Ken Hall, utilizes an evaluation instrument that was developed between him and his board of directors. Hall says evaluations should be performed well or else they can be worse than not doing one at all. He says evaluations should be done with a great deal of thought, preparation and skill. Hall says the city's evaluation form does not give enough room for supervisor comments and says evaluations should justify everything you think about the employee's performance. Hall believes that 90% of the evaluation should come from the employee's self-assessment (K. Hall, personal communication September 22, 2009).

The third research question asks "What are the labor considerations in regards to implementing a new personnel evaluation instrument into the City of Fond du Lac Fire Department?" The FdLFD has employees represented by three labor unions: American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) and the Fond du Lac Fire Supervisors' Group. Currently, none of the employees in these three unions receive an evaluation. This author could not find any contract language in any of the three labor agreements that would prohibit the use of written performance

appraisals for unionized workers within the fire department, but realizes through research conducted for this ARP the need to engage labor organizations in the development of the evaluation process.

Of the fire departments that were surveyed for this ARP, 27.9% said they have collective bargaining language that relates to performance evaluations. There were 24.7% of those surveyed that indicated evaluations are tied to performance and lead to merit pay. Each labor union in the city would have a right to bargain the impact of performance based merit increases.

The final research question asks, “What performance evaluation instrument should be adopted by the FdLFD?” The FdL Police Department’s monthly evaluation (See Appendix F) instrument provides a method for supervisors to track daily observations and a forum to discuss the good and bad with employees on a monthly basis (S. Thiry, personal communication, September 18, 2009). The FdL Police Department utilizes several performance criteria, which evaluate appearance, attitude, attendance, written communications, knowledge and adherence to policy and procedures, interpersonal relationships and productivity. Thiry further suggests that a 180-degree or self-evaluation

on an annual basis is where most employees will identify their own strengths and are harder on themselves as far as weaknesses are concerned than any supervisor would be.

The questionnaire used for this research asked several questions which help to answer this final research question. In 72.3% of the departments, annual evaluations are used to identify future training needs which suggests any future instrument used by the FdLFD should have measurable criteria to evaluate future training needs (See Appendix B question 8). In contrast, only 24.7% of the departments surveyed have employee pay tied to performance reviews and as stated earlier, the impact of the pay for performance evaluation's impact would have to be negotiated (See Appendix B question 6). Lastly, 54.8% of the departments surveyed do not utilize performance reviews in promotional ratings (See Appendix B question 7). Again, if this were to be considered for the FdLFD, the impact of such would have to be bargained. FdL Human Resources Director Rodney Pasch suggests a merit system is not good for public sector employees in part because the systems lack funding for rewarding everyone who may be doing exceptional work (R. Pasch, personal communication, and September 22, 2009).

Discussion

Research into the merits and pitfalls of employee performance reviews from both human resources and fire service perspectives show that many variables exist when considering the best way to approach evaluating employee performance. Interviews with several key department directors in the City of FdL shows that all city departments evaluate employees except the fire department, but the way in which they carry out the evaluations varies from department to department. The police department developed and utilizes its own evaluation instrument. Most all agree the current instrument utilized elsewhere in the city is inadequate.

Survey results collected during the research found that a majority of fire departments utilize some formal employee evaluation method on an annual basis. However, the departments surveyed vary in what performance criteria are measured and whether or not evaluations are linked to merit pay and future promotional potential.

As a result of this research an extensive amount of information was identified relating to how departments within the City of FdL and fire departments throughout the country handle annual employee performance appraisals. The

research clearly identified the need for performance evaluations and the role they play in fire departments. It is clearly evident through literature review conducted for this ARP that employee performance evaluations play an important role in the overall effectiveness of an organization as pointed out by Tomkins (1995) and if done correctly, can benefit the employee and the employer, but most employees widely doubt their successes. Several literary resources identified some common uses of performance appraisals that include directing and controlling behavior, validating administrative decisions, and improving work performance. Performance evaluations in a union environment often can be more complicated due to unions' challenge of them in an effort to protect workers' rights.

Employee evaluations should have discussion that focuses on employee professional goals, skill building to achieve those goals and organizational planning to make sure future needs of the employee are met (R. Pasch, personal communication, September 22, 2009).

Providing an employee a review of their work serves as a work session where the supervisor and the employee take time and effort to set future goals and objectives for the

upcoming year. Productive performance appraisals recognize the value of employees and why they are the most valuable resource of the organization (Sachs, 1992 p. 38).

Clark (1999) brings a fresh approach to the traditional firefighter evaluation process. Clark suggests that performance evaluations for firefighters should be more inclusive than just the administrator or supervisor’s opinion about how well he or she does on the job. In order to establish accurate evaluation fire administrators should receive input from a group of people who have an overall picture of the firefighter’s performance. One idea would be to let firefighters evaluate each other and themselves as well as the evaluation given by their immediate supervisor. Firefighters should be given an evaluation which is performance based. Giving firefighters a performance guide to check to see if he or she is meeting or exceeding written standards would be a good way to measure a firefighter’s on-the-job attitude and behavior.

Another important finding pointed out by Neely (2002) is that firefighters should be evaluated so they know how they are doing, to shore up areas of weakness to increase employer and employee satisfaction and to help prepare

employees for promotion. And lastly, evaluations should work to enhance or create dialogue.

Recommendations

Based upon this study, this author is recommending that the FdLFD begin to develop a performance appraisal instrument to measure performance and provide feedback to fire department members in an effort to improve overall employee outputs and build a stronger workforce. The following recommendations are being proposed as potential steps that can be implemented in order to gain the identified benefit:

1. Develop a list of department members who represent the firefighters' union, the supervisory labor group and those who are non-represented (See Appendix H).

2. Call an initial meeting and set an agenda to be used as the framework to begin the evaluation. These stakeholders would be brought together to discuss the findings of this research and begin the process of developing an evaluation method and instrument (See Appendix G).

3. Review the FdL Police Department evaluation model to see if a similar evaluation plan could be utilized in the FdLFD.

4. Set a deadline for the implementation of the new employee performance evaluation method and schedule follow up meetings to evaluate its effectiveness.

It is through these recommendations that the FdLFD can develop an employee performance appraisal system that benefits both the firefighters and the FdLFD leadership team by providing a process which will serve to develop future leaders. Designing an evaluation system that promotes participation will help build a stronger work environment.

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APPENDIX A

My name is Peter O'Leary; I am conducting research for a class I am enrolled in at the National Fire Academy. Part of my research consists of collecting data from members of fire departments to find out what type of performance appraisal is used at your department. Thank you for agreeing to complete this short questionnaire regarding Employee Performance Appraisals. Please read each question and mark the response which best answers the question. Thank you for your time.

1. Which of the following best describes your department?

☐ A. Fully paid

☐ B. Volunteer

☐ C. Combination

2. What is the population of the community you serve?

☐ A. 0-10,000

☐ B. 10,001-25,000

☐ C. 25,001-75,000

☐ D. 75,001-100,000

☐ E. 100,001 and above

3. Does your department work under a collective bargaining agreement which has language relating to performance evaluations?

☐ A. Yes

☐ B. No

4. Does your department conduct performance reviews on its members?

☐ A. Yes

☐ B. No

5. If performance reviews are done, at what frequency are they conducted?

☐ A. Monthly

☐ B. Quarterly

☐ C. Semi-annual

☐ D. Annually

6. Is employee pay tied to performance reviews?

☐ A. Yes

☐ B. No

7. Are performance reviews used in promotional ratings in your department?

☐ A. Yes

☐ B. No

8. Are performance evaluations used as a tool to help identify future training needs for the employee?

- ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ B. No

9. Do performance evaluations become part of the employee's permanent record?

- ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ B. No

10. Which of the following best describes your current evaluation system?

- ☐ A. Rate (numeric score for each subject area)
- ☐ B. Ranking: Employee vs. other employees
- ☐ C. Management by objectives
- ☐ D. 360 Degree rating assessment
- ☐ E. Self-assessment with peer review
- ☐ F. None of the above
- ☐ G. We do not rate our employees
- ☐ H. Other

APPENDIX B

1. Which of the following best describes your department?		
	answered question	**89**
	skipped question	**0**
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
A. Fully paid	**49.4%**	**44**
B. Volunteer	2.2%	2
C. Combination	48.3%	43

2. What is the population of the community you serve?		
	answered question	**89**
	skipped question	**0**
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
A. 0-10,000	9.0%	8
B. 10,001-25,000	23.6%	21

2. What is the population of the community you serve?			
C. 25,001-75,000		**42.7%**	**38**
D. 75,001-100,000		2.2%	2
E. 100,001 and above		22.5%	20

3. Does your department work under a collective bargaining agreement which has language relating to performance evaluations?			
	answered question		**88**
	skipped question		**1**
		Response Percent	**Response Count**
A. Yes		28.4%	25
B. No		**71.6%**	**63**

4. Does your department conduct performance reviews on its members?		
	answered question	**89**
	skipped question	**0**
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
A. Yes	**85.4%**	**76**
B. No	14.6%	13

5. If performance reviews are done, at what frequency are they conducted?		
	answered question	**77**
	skipped question	**12**
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
A. Monthly	0.0%	0
B. Quarterly	1.3%	1
C. Semi-annual	7.8%	6
D. Annually	**90.9%**	**70**

6. Is employee pay tied to performance reviews?		
	answered question	**87**
	skipped question	**2**
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
A. Yes	25.3%	22
B. No	**74.7%**	**65**

7. Are performance reviews used in promotional ratings in your department?		
	answered question	**86**
	skipped question	**3**
	Response Percent	**Response Count**
A. Yes	44.2%	38
B. No	**55.8%**	**48**

8. Are performance evaluations used as a tool to help identify future training needs for the employee?		
	answered question	**85**

8. Are performance evaluations used as a tool to help identify future training needs for the employee?

	skipped question	**4**

	Response Percent	Response Count
A. Yes	**72.9%**	**62**
B. No	27.1%	23

9. Do performance evaluations become part of the employee's permanent record?

	answered question	**86**
	skipped question	**3**

	Response Percent	Response Count
A. Yes	**84.9%**	**73**
B. No	15.1%	13

10. Which of the following best describes your current evaluation system?

	answered question	**88**
	skipped question	**1**

Appendix C

Interview Questions for City of Fond du Lac Department Directors:

Name of Interviewee: _____

Date:_____

Location of Interview:_____

1. Does your department utilize a written evaluation instrument?

2. If so, did you develop it or was it provided by the City?

3.If not, how to your formally evaluate your personnel?

4. Do you use evaluations to help rate employees up for promotion?

5. Do you feel written evaluations should be tied to merit increases?

6. Do you feel the city should have a standard evaluation method for all city employees?

7. How would you rate the effectiveness of the evaluation you receive from the city manager?

8. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with your current evaluation instrument?

Any further comments?

Appendix D

CITY OF FOND DU LAC

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM

NAME _____ **JOB TITLE** _____

DEPT/DIV _____ **SUPERVISOR** _____

REVIEW DATE ___/___/___

This review is an assessment of your performance for the period of _____ to _____. You are being evaluated in four major categories: Projects and Continuing Job Responsibilities, Self-Management, Working Relationships and Communication Skills. Within each category you will be rated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

S - SATISFACTORY: Met the standard of acceptable performance

US – UNSATISFACTORY: Did not meet the standard of acceptable performance

PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES

PROJECTS AND CONTINUING JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

QUALITY OF WORK

Are you meeting the qualitative performance standards of your position? How accurate, thorough, and useful is your work? Are your projects completed with no "loose ends"?

_____

_____

QUANTITY OF WORK

☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

How productive are you? Are you meeting the quantitative standards of your position? Do you consistently meet or beat your deadlines?

_____

_____

_____

CRITICAL THINKING/DECISION MAKING

☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

Do you use a common sense approach to handling situations? Do you make objective decisions based on facts? Are your decisions timely?

_____

_____

_____

INNOVATION/CREATIVITY

☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

Do you identify opportunities to improve operational systems and procedures? Were any accepted and implemented?

_____
_____
_____

SELF-MANAGEMENT

PLANNING/ORGANIZATION ☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

Do you prioritize and plan your work effectively? Are you surprised by problems, or do you anticipate and solve them in advance? How good is your attention to detail?

_____
_____
_____

RESPONSIVENESS/TIMELINESS ☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

How quickly do you turn around documents which require a response?

_____
_____
_

INITIATIVE ☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

Do you take action without having to be asked? Do you offer solutions/options when you present problems?

_____
_____
_____

EMOTIONAL CONTROL/ENERGY LEVEL ☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

How well do you handle crises and emotional situations? Do you sustain a high energy level as required by your job?

_____
_____
_____

TRAINING/CONTINUOUS LEARNING ☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

Do you strive to learn more? Are you open to accepting additional responsibilities?

_____
_____

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS ☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

RELATIONSHIP WITH SUPERVISOR AND COWORKERS

How well do you inform me of your progress and possible problems? Do you get along with your fellow employees? How well do you work as a team member?

_____
_____

COMMUNICATION SKILLS ☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

How well do you come across one-on-one or in a meeting? Do you get to the point without rambling or over explaining? Do you make sure your listeners understand you?

_____
_____

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Is your writing clear, concise and well organized? Do you communicate accurately on paper?

_____
_____
_____
_____

LISTENING

Are you sincerely interested in what other people have to say? Do you show it?

_____
_____
_____

OVERALL RATING REVIEW SUMMARY

☐ **Satisfactory**

☐ **Unsatisfactory**

SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS:

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE**:_____

SUBORDINATE'S COMMENTS:

SUBORDINATE'S SIGNATURE:* _____**DATE**: _____

*NOTE: Your signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with the appraisal, only that it has been discussed with you. You are obligated to acknowledge the appraisal if your supervisor

has discussed it with you.

Appendix E

EMPLOYEE VALUES INVENTORY

Date:

Employee:

Job Classification:

Type of evaluation: Annual

This rating sheet provides a practical method through which the individual can be judged with a reasonable degree of accuracy and uniformity. Indicate your opinion of this employee by placing an "X" in the block by the phrase which seems to fit the person best. Please follow these instructions carefully:

1. Use your own independent judgment.
2. Disregard your general impression of the person and concentrate on one factor at a time.
3. When rating an employee, call to mind instances that are typical of his/her work and way of acting. Do not be influenced by situations that are not typical.
4. Make you rating with the utmost care and thought. Be sure that it represents a fair and impartial opinion. Don't allow your personal feelings to govern your rating.

ATTENDANCE:

Punctuality	**Dependability**	**Notification**
☐ a. Always on time	☐ a. Perfect rating since last evaluation	☐ a. Always notifies on time
☐ b. Occasionally late	☐ b. Rarely absent	☐ b. Notifies but usually too late
☐ c. Requires occasional reminding	☐ c. Frequently absent - but for cause	☐ c. Occasionally late or absent W/O notification

☐ d. Often late
inquiry as to why late or absent

☐ e. Always late
notify

☐ d. Poor record – requires counseling

☐ e. Unsatisfactory – work suffers

☐ d. Requires

☐ e. Often fails to

PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS:

Appearance
Courtesy

☐ a. Neat/meticulous about appearance
exceptional tact and courtesy

☐ b. Generally neat, looks good
considerate of others

☐ c. Sometimes careless about appearance
untactful and inconsiderate

☐ d. Untidy
but arouses antagonism

☐ e. Unsuitable for job
trouble

Personality

☐ a. Exceptionally pleasing

☐ b. Makes good impression – wears well

☐ c. Makes good first impression only

☐ d. Makes fair impression only

☐ e. Creates unfavorable impression

Tact and

☐ a. Shows

☐ b. Tactful and

☐ c. Occasionally

☐ d. Attains goal

☐ e. Often breeds

CAPACITY:

Ability to learn

☐ a. Learns with exceptional rapidity
ability to reach sound/logical
conclusions

☐ b. Grasps instruction readily
generally based on good reasoning

☐ c. Average ability to learn new things
judgment

☐ d. Somewhat slow in learning
makes decisions w/o considering
alternatives

☐ e. Limited in learning new duties
often faulty

Initiative

☐ a. Always finds work to do

☐ b. Pushes work through on own initiative

☐ c. Normal supervision required

☐ d. Needs considerable supervision

☐ e. Must always be told what to do

Judgment

☐ a. Outstanding

☐ b. Action

☐ c. Average

☐ d. Usually

☐ e. Conclusions

ATTITUDE TOWARD JOB:

Interest	Cooperation	Responsibility
☐ a. Shows interest and enthusiasm in all work	☐ a. Goes all out to cooperate with associates and management	☐ a. Seeks additional responsibility
☐ b. Shows interest enthusiasm	☐ b. Promotes cooperation and good will	☐ b. Willingly accepts additional responsibility
☐ c. Passive acceptance, rarely shows interest	☐ c. Moderately successful in cooperating with others	☐ c. Reluctant to accept additional responsibility
☐ d. Shows little to no interest	☐ d. Cooperates reluctantly and sometimes	☐ d. Avoids responsibility
☐ e. Dislikes work	☐ e. Uncooperative. Often breeds trouble	☐ e. Cannot be depended on

JOB PERFORMANCE:

Accuracy	Neatness	Quantity
☐ a. Rarely or never makes mistakes	☐ a. Takes pride in appearance of work;	☐ a. Unusually
high output; meets emergency	has a sense of neatness	demands
well		
☐ b. Occasionally makes mistakes	☐ b. Usually turns out neat work	☐ b. Consistently
turns out more than average		
☐ c. Average	☐ c. Apparently lacks a sense of neatness	☐ c. Finishes in
allotted time		
☐ d. Below average	☐ d. Too often sacrifices neatness for quantity	☐ d. Does just
enough to get by		
☐ e. Highly inaccurate	☐ e. Majority of the work is sloppy	☐ e. Amount of
work done is inadequate		

PRE-EVALUATION INTERVIEW:

☐ **Pre-evaluation interview has been completed.**

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT SURVEY:

1. How long has this employee been under your supervision?

2. What do you consider his/her *STRONGEST POINTS*?

3. What do you consider his/her *area(s) MOST IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT*?

4. What steps are being taken (or could be taken) to correct these weaknesses?

5. Give a brief appraisal of this employee's potentialities:

6. Give a brief description of this employee's professional interests and where he/she sees himself/herself in the

future:

7. What does the employee need for the above interests to be met and how can the department help to meet

those needs?

8. Additional comments:

OVERALL RATING: **Outstanding**

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE: _____
DATE: _____

SHIFT SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURES: _____
DATE: _____

_____
DATE: _____

_____
DATE: _____

DIVISION COMMANDER SIGNATURE: _____
DATE: _____

CHIEF'S SIGNATURE: _____
DATE: _____

COMMENTS:

Appendix F

FOND DU LAC POLICE DEPARTMENT – *Monthly Evaluation*			
Date:	**Officer:**	**Shift:** 2230-0730	**Evaluation Period:**

Personnel Issues: **N.I. ACC. E.S.** Appearance (uniform/grooming) ☐ ☐ ☐ Sick time usage & notification ☐ ☐ ☐ Promptness/readiness for duty ☐ ☐ ☐ Attitude toward the job ☐ ☐ ☐ *Comments:*	**Local, State, & Federal Law:** **N.I. ACC. E.S.** General knowledge & understanding ☐ ☐ ☐ Charges appropriate for violation ☐ ☐ ☐ Knowledge of Miranda issues ☐ ☐ ☐ Knowledge of search & seizure ☐ ☐ ☐ *Comments*:
Written Communications: **N.I. ACC. E.S.** Complete/accurate forms ☐ ☐ ☐ Complete/accurate narratives ☐ ☐ ☐ Grammar, spelling, punctuation ☐ ☐ ☐ Neat/legible handwriting ☐ ☐ ☐ *Comments:*	**Productivity:** **N.I. ACC. E.S.** Meets standards for citizen contacts: ( ) ☐ ☐ ☐ Balance in activity ☐ ☐ ☐ *Comments:*
Radio Communications: **N.I. ACC. E.S.** Brief/concise transmissions ☐ ☐ ☐ Professional (not surly) transmissions ☐ ☐ ☐ Knowledge/use of 10 codes ☐ ☐ ☐ Monitoring radio traffic (repeat/miss)	**Interpersonal Relationships:** **N.I. ACC. E.S.** Ability to get along with co-workers ☐ ☐ ☐ Interaction with outside agencies/departments ☐ ☐ ☐ Maintains positive image with the public ☐ ☐ ☐ *Comments:*

Tactics – Generally: **N.I. ACC. E.S.** Tactical scene approach (foot/vehicle) Officer positioning (bracketing/team tactics) Control of scene and subjects Perimeter setup when necessary *Comments:*	**Unified Tactics – *Firearms*:** **N.I. ACC. E.S.** Firearm retention in all situations Firearm deployment when appropriate Firearm safety Use of trained firearms tactics *Comments:*
Unified Tactics – Vehicle Contacts: **N.I. ACC. E.S.** Announcement of location/registration Vehicle distance & positioning Location for stops (tactical & safe) Tactical approaches & retreats Use of emergency & other lighting *Comments:*	**Unified Tactics – Emergency Vehicle Oper: N.I. ACC. E.S.** Adherence to motor vehicle laws Vehicle speed (routine & emergency) Use of emergency lights & siren Operation with due regard for safety Accident rate (at-fault accidents) *Comments:*
Unified Tactics – DAAT: **N.I. ACC. E.S.** Tactical distance and body positioning Subject control Tactical subject searches Handcuffing (speed/efficiency/appropriateness) Use of Force (amount & duration) *Comments:*	**Unified Tactics – Profess. Communications: N.I. ACC. E.S.** Use of clear & concise language Continuity in tone/inflection/body language Professional speech w/o profanity or insult Verbally non-antagonistic toward citizens *Comments:*
Is a performance improvement plan suggested? Yes No *If so, attach documentation.*	

Employee's Signature: **Date:**	**Supervisor's Name:** **Date:** **Supervisor's Signature:**

Appendix G

February 1, 2010

Peter O'Leary, Fire Chief

Fond du Lac Fire Department

815 S. Main Street

Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Dear _____

Over the past several months I conducted a research assignment for a class I took at the National Fire Academy entitled Executive Leadership. As a requirement of that class, I was asked to explore a problem within our organization as it relates to executive leadership.

I chose to research how employee performance appraisals are utilized in the City of Fond du Lac and why we as a fire department do not have any formal evaluation method for our employees.

I would like to invite you and several other members of our organization to an introductory meeting to discuss how we can create an evaluation process from the ground up, in an effort to strengthen our ability to lead the department into the future.

The meeting will be held March 1, 2010, at 9:00 a.m. at Station One in the training room. I hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

Peter O'Leary

Appendix H

City of Fond du Lac Fire Department

Performance Appraisal Development Team Meeting List

Peter O'Leary, Fire Chief

Steve Beer, Assistant Chief, Operations

Randy Cunzenheim, Assistant Chief, Training and Safety

Todd Janquart, Assistant Chief , EMS

Larry Wunsch, FdL Fire Supervisors' Group

Erick Gerritson, President, I.A.F.F Local 400

Luanne Bridenbaugh, Administrative Assistant

Rodney Pasch, Director of Human Resources, City of Fond du Lac