

Writing Your Self-Appraisal

There is no single, magical approach to self-appraisal. Employees should not view the self-appraisal process as a “make-or-break” situation. It is an opportunity for employees to highlight what they have accomplished during the year and how they’ve contributed to the [UM System mission](#) and departmental goals.

Some people like to talk about themselves at length and others are more reserved. For those who are reserved, being asked to perform a self-appraisal can cause more than a little trepidation. Despite our discomfort, the self-appraisal is a time when we are obliged to write confidently and accurately about ourselves.

Before beginning the appraisal process, make sure you carve out enough time to properly complete the self-appraisal. Your self-appraisal is about you and you’re worth it. Be sure to use the comment box provided on the appraisal form to describe your accomplishments.

Things to remember when completing a self-appraisal:

- You are your first and best advocate. State your achievements objectively and accurately, but don’t be shy about letting your supervisor know what you accomplished during the year.

“I feel that my contributions on the following projects show that I am a high-performing member of the team...”

- Don’t embellish your achievements. Be honest and detail your activities with specific terms. It may be tempting to give yourself high marks across the board, but it’s a little unlikely that you’ve done everything right.

“I served on 2 key teams this past year: the corporate social responsibility committee and the customer service process improvement team. On the customer service improvement team, I played a supporting role...”

- When it comes to addressing the negatives, be proactive about bringing up your “development area” in your appraisal:

“This is an area where I need to develop and here’s what I’m doing about it...”

- Share what you’ve learned by identifying the ways in which you’ve been able to enhance your skills and how they’ve helped you in your career development.

“This past year, I worked on improving my communication skills. After completing the Communication 101 course, I had a better understanding of how I can contribute more effectively in the various roles of team development...”

- Never state a weakness or a problem without a solution. It demonstrates that you're taking responsibility and you can self-manage.

“I believe I am very proficient and comfortable in terms of written communication, but have room for improvement in the way I verbally communicate with members of my team...”

- Be conscious of your word choices. Try to use measurable objectives such as “have demonstrated project management skill via coordinating this project.”

Example 1:

“I work well with fellow team members.”

Example 2:

“During Project A, I volunteered to stay late and help my supervisor prepare for the project. This helped save the unit money and kept a high level of service for our customers...”

✓ Better

The STAR Method

The STAR Method is a helpful way to write about your strengths, skills and accomplishments in your self-appraisal. This method involves briefly describing a situation (S) or task (T), the action (A) you took to accomplish it, and the results (R) you achieved:

“The challenge was to train employees in the new program by the opening of business on Tuesday (S/T). I designed, planned and managed training using classroom instructors and online learning (A). On Tuesday morning, 94 percent of employees reporting to work had been trained in the new system (R).”