Old Dominion University
Division of Talent Management and Culture

CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE SELF-EVALUATION · 2026 CYCLE · CONCEPTUAL GUIDE

Documenting Your Contributions

A practical guide to understanding expectations, recognizing evidence in everyday work, selecting ratings, and writing clear, credible comments.

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00 · Start here

The Central Idea

KEY IDEA

A self-evaluation is not a list of everything you did. It is a clear record of **what you accomplished**, **what supports your results**, **how you demonstrated expected behaviors**, and **what difference your work made**.

How to Use This Guide

STEP 1

Read

Go to the section of this guide that matches the part of your self-evaluation you are completing.

STEP 2

Observe Kate Simmons (Fictitious Employee Example)

See how evidence changes across the five rating levels.

STEP 3

Draft

We suggest creating a draft document in Word (or using the worksheets in Section 11) before entering your comments in your self-evaluation.

KS

Meet Kate Simmons

Kate is a fictional employee who serves as Administrative Assistant for Continual Development in Academic Affairs. She coordinates Provost-sponsored events, schedules, records, communications, and campus partnerships. Her examples show how the same job can produce different evidence at different performance levels. Use only evidence that is true for your own work.

Your Route Through the Guide

FIRST, UNDERSTAND

Prepare evidence and understand ratings

Sections 01–03

THEN, COMPLETE

Special Assignments (if you have them), Performance Objectives, Standard Competencies, University Competencies, Development Plan

Sections 04–07

FINALLY, SUMMARIZE

Overall Rating, Summary Comment

Sections 08–12

01 · Understand

What You Need to Document for Your Self-Evaluation

Review your individual Performance Plan first. It is the source for the exact objectives and competency language you must address.

Weighted Rating Tabs

Performance Objectives · 80%	Standard Competencies 20%			
	5%	5%	5%	5%

3–5 Performance Objectives, collectively

4 Standard Competencies, 5% each

Job Duties	Review the duties listed for your position.	Review only
Special Assignments	Comment on each special assignment listed in your self-evaluation, if any.	Comment only Not rated

Performance Objectives	Rate and comment on each of your 3–5 objectives.	Comment and rate 80% of rating
Standard Competencies	Rate and comment on each of the four competencies.	Comment and rate 20% · 5% each
University Competencies	Comment on assigned competencies. No rating.	Comment only
Development Plan	Comment on learning, progress, and application. No rating.	Comment only
Overall Rating	Select your overall self-rating and write one summary comment.	Comment and rate

TIMING AND WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Under Policy 1.40, you must be given up to 14 calendar days to complete your self-evaluation before your supervisor completes the annual evaluation. Your supervisor must review it and should consider it, but is not required to adopt your ratings or comments.

02 · Understand

Gather Your Evidence Before Choosing a Rating

Check off each source as you pull it together. Each one tends to show a different kind of result.

- [ ] **Calendars, emails, meeting notes**
  Show timing, coordination, commitments, follow-through

- [ ] **Reports, records, deliverables**
  Show completion, quality, accuracy, quantity

- [ ] **Feedback and follow-up**
  Show customer experience, collaboration, improvement

- [ ] **Training and applied learning**
  Show skills developed and used in actual work

- [ ] **Changes in assignments or priorities**
  Show relevant context, progress, and final status

LOOK ACROSS THE WHOLE YEAR

One strong moment, or one difficult moment, rarely tells the full story. The cycle runs January 1 through December 31.

03 · Understand

The Five Ratings

Every objective and Standard Competency receives one of these five ratings. The definitions below are quoted from DHRM Policy 1.40.

5	**Extraordinary** “The employee consistently exceeded the expectations of the performance objective and competency.”
4	**Highly Successful** “The employee exceeded the expectations of the performance objective and competency some of the time.”
3	**Successful** “The employee consistently met the expectations of the performance objective and competency.” The expected standard

2	**Partially Successful** “The employee occasionally met the expectations of the performance objective and competency but was not consistent and at times did not meet the expectations.”
1	**Unsuccessful** “The employee did not meet the expectations of the performance objective and competency.”

Source: DHRM Policy 1.40, Performance Management, Performance Rating Structure (rev. 8/22/2025).

THE TWO WORDS THAT MATTER

“Met” vs. “exceeded”

Levels 1–3 describe how well you met the expectation. Levels 4–5 require evidence that you went beyond it.

AND HOW OFTEN

“Some of the time” vs. “consistently”

Highly Successful means exceeding some of the time. Extraordinary means exceeding consistently across the cycle.

SUCCESSFUL IS A POSITIVE RATING

It means the established expectations were consistently met. Ratings above Successful require evidence of performance beyond the expectation.

04 · Complete

Performance Objectives: Document the Result

Objectives are 80% of the calculated overall rating. Compare what was required with what actually happened. Don't start with the rating you hope to receive.

The Objective Writing Sequence

1 · EXPECTATION

What was required?

What did the objective ask for?

2 · RESULT

What happened?

What was completed, by when, and to what standard?

3 · RATING

How does it compare?

How did the result compare with the requirement?

4 · EVIDENCE + IMPACT

What proves it?

What specific facts support the result, and what changed?

KS

Meet Kate Simmons

Kate is a fictional employee who serves as Administrative Assistant for Continual Development in Academic Affairs. She coordinates Provost-sponsored events, schedules, records, communications, and campus partnerships. Her examples show how the same job can produce different evidence at different performance levels.

KATE'S ESTABLISHED OBJECTIVE

By October 31, 2026, design and implement a standardized electronic invitation and RSVP tracking system using Microsoft Power Automate and related Microsoft tools for Provost-sponsored events, improving accuracy for at least two events.

5

Extraordinary: Sustained above-expectation results across six events; measurable accuracy gains; refined workflow adopted by other offices.

I implemented the standardized RSVP tracking system by October 15, ahead of the October 31 deadline, and used it across six events throughout the cycle. Across all six events, duplicate records were nearly eliminated and final headcounts were ready two days in advance, which helped catering and room setup plan accurately. I refined the workflow twice based on partner feedback, documented the process, and trained colleagues; two other Academic Affairs offices adopted the approach for their own events.

4

Highly Successful: Implemented October 15; used for four events; duplicates and prep time reduced; created instructions.

I implemented the RSVP system by October 15, two weeks ahead of the deadline, and used it for four events rather than the required two. Duplicate RSVP records dropped from about 15 per event to fewer than three, and final attendance lists were ready the day before each event instead of the morning of. I also created step-by-step instructions so colleagues could continue using the system.

3

Successful: Implemented by October 31; used for two events; accuracy improved.

I implemented the standardized RSVP system by October 31 and used it for two Provost-sponsored events. It reduced duplicate RSVP records and improved access to accurate attendance information.

2

Partially Successful: System tested and used for one event, not two, by the deadline.

I developed and tested the RSVP system and used it for one event. It improved access to RSVP information for that event, but I did not implement it for the required two events by October 31.

1

Unsuccessful: System not implemented; no qualifying events.

I reviewed options and completed initial Power Automate training, but did not implement the RSVP system or use it for the two required events during the cycle.

WHAT SEPARATES THE LEVELS

Differences in **completion, timeliness, scale, and sustained results** explain the rating. More impressive adjectives do not.

What Makes an Objective Comment Credible?

INCLUDE

The deliverable

Name what you produced.

INCLUDE

The deadline or measure

When, how many, how accurate.

INCLUDE

A supported outcome

What changed because of it.

INCLUDE

Relevant context

Changes that affected the work.

05 · Complete

Standard Competencies: Demonstrate the Behavior

The four Standard Competencies are 20% of the calculated rating (5% each). A competency is not one project to finish. It describes how you are expected to work across the whole cycle.

Use Behavior → Example → Impact

BEHAVIOR

What's expected?

What action does the competency expect?

EXAMPLE

Where did you do it?

What specific situation shows you doing it?

IMPACT

What did it help?

How did your action support the work, customer, or team?

The Four Competencies, Level by Level

ABOUT KATE'S EXAMPLES

Kate's examples are **hypothetical** and are **not automatic rating rules**. Match your own evidence to the exact expectation in your Performance Plan and the Policy 1.40 rating definition.

Problem Solving, Judgment, Planning & Organization

WHAT IT EXPECTS

Identifies challenges, makes sound decisions, plans and organizes work, manages priorities and deadlines.

WHAT IT REALLY ASKS

Do you recognize issues, make sound decisions, organize work, and manage priorities?

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN EVERYDAY WORK

- You notice a problem early and fix it or tell the right person
- When priorities change, you decide what needs to happen first
- You plan your week so deadlines don't sneak up on you
- You keep a list or tracker so nothing falls through the cracks
- You double-check your work and catch mistakes before they cause trouble
- When something goes wrong, you find a workable solution instead of stopping
- You think ahead about what you'll need before a task starts

5

Extraordinary: Consistently beyond expectations across the cycle.

Throughout the year, I anticipated scheduling and logistics problems before they disrupted events. I developed a pre-event logistics checklist covering rooms, technology, catering, and accessibility needs, shared it with colleagues, and the office now uses it for every Provost-sponsored event. After the checklist was in place, no events in the second half of the year required same-day room or technology changes.

4	**Highly Successful: Consistent planning plus some proactive improvements.** I consistently managed event deadlines and scheduling changes. On several occasions, I identified conflicting reservations in advance and coordinated alternative arrangements before they affected attendees. For example, I noticed a double-booked room three weeks before the spring reception and secured a comparable space, so no invitations had to be reissued and the event ran as planned.
3	**Successful: Routine challenges resolved; work organized consistently.** I maintained event schedules and deadlines throughout the year. When a reserved room became unavailable, I identified another suitable space, confirmed requirements, and notified those affected so the event proceeded as planned.
2	**Partially Successful: Some issues handled, but follow-through inconsistent.** I handled routine scheduling changes, but during several busy periods I missed follow-up items and needed reminders to complete arrangements.
1	**Unsuccessful: Repeated missed follow-through disrupts work.** I did not consistently track event deadlines or follow up on assigned actions, and colleagues frequently had to intervene to correct scheduling problems.

Citizen & Customer Interaction

WHAT IT EXPECTS

Responds appropriately to the needs of internal and external customers.

WHAT IT REALLY ASKS

Do you respond appropriately to the needs of people who rely on your work?

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN EVERYDAY WORK

- You listen carefully to understand what someone needs
- You explain things in plain, simple language
- You check your facts before giving someone an answer
- If you can't help, you send the person to someone who can
- You follow up to make sure the issue was actually solved
- You stay patient and respectful, even when someone is frustrated
- You keep private information private

5

Extraordinary: Sustained above-expectation service across the cycle.

Throughout the year, I regularly anticipated recurring guest needs, coordinated solutions across offices, and improved event information and follow-up practices. I created a standard event FAQ and a post-event follow-up message that were used for every event, and I worked with Parking and Accessibility Services so guests received complete arrival information in one place. Post-event feedback about the clarity of event information improved steadily across the year.

4

Highly Successful: Consistent service plus some meaningful improvements.

I consistently provided accurate, professional service. When multiple guests had difficulty accessing registration details, I developed and shared clear registration and arrival instructions with attendees and event staff. For the next two events, calls to our office about registration dropped from about a dozen to two or three, and several attendees noted that the instructions helped them arrive prepared.

3	**Successful: Accurate, professional, timely service consistently.** I consistently responded to faculty, staff, and guest requests. When a faculty member reported missing event details, I verified the information, provided the correct arrival instructions, and followed up to confirm the request was resolved.
2	**Partially Successful: Courteous service sometimes, but inconsistent follow-through.** I assisted many callers and visitors appropriately, but some inquiries went unanswered too long and several referrals required additional follow-up.
1	**Unsuccessful: Frequent inaccurate or incomplete responses.** I did not consistently respond to guest inquiries or provide accurate referrals, and several requests required colleagues to correct information or follow up.

BEING COURTEOUS AND RESPONSIVE IS AN AUTOMATIC EXPECTATION

Successful means consistently responding appropriately. Highly Successful requires evidence of exceeding that expectation some of the time. Being courteous or responsive is expected; it is not automatically above expectation.

Teamwork & Building Relationships

WHAT IT EXPECTS

Collaborates, cooperates, builds productive relationships, and follows through on shared work.

WHAT IT REALLY ASKS

Do you cooperate, maintain constructive relationships, and deliver shared work?

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN EVERYDAY WORK

- You let coworkers know right away when plans change
- You do your part on shared work and finish it on time
- You offer help when a coworker is overloaded
- You make sure everyone knows who is doing what
- You share information others need to do their jobs
- You work through disagreements respectfully
- You treat coworkers in every office as partners

5

Extraordinary: Sustained strengthening of cross-unit collaboration.

Throughout the year, I consistently brought the right partners together early, clarified responsibilities, and improved shared tracking practices across events. I set up a brief planning check-in with Facilities, AV, and catering two weeks before each major event, which surfaced issues early and reduced last-minute changes. Partner offices asked to continue the check-ins, and colleagues used the same coordination approach for their own projects.

4	**Highly Successful: Consistent collaboration plus occasional improvements to shared work.** I reliably coordinated with campus partners. For several events with changing schedules, I created a shared responsibilities tracker that made handoffs clearer and reduced repeated clarification among the participating offices. I used the tracker for three of the year's largest events, and Facilities and AV staff shared with my supervisor that it saved them time preparing.
3	**Successful: Reliable collaboration and constructive relationships.** I consistently coordinated with Facilities, AV support, and Academic Affairs colleagues. When an event schedule changed, I shared updates, clarified responsibilities, and completed my tasks so the team could prepare together.
2	**Partially Successful: Cooperates sometimes; communication inconsistent.** I worked with campus partners on assigned events, but I sometimes delayed updates and follow-through, creating extra coordination for others.
1	**Unsuccessful: Poor coordination regularly interferes with shared work.** I did not consistently share changes with event partners, which caused confusion about responsibilities and required others to resolve avoidable problems.

Coaching & Communication

WHAT IT EXPECTS

Exchanges information and feedback, helps colleagues succeed, and applies coaching.

WHAT IT REALLY ASKS

Do you exchange useful information, receive feedback, and help others succeed?

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN EVERYDAY WORK

- You show a coworker how to do something you know well
- You give clear updates so others aren't left guessing
- You ask questions when instructions aren't clear
- You share tips, checklists, or notes that make a task easier
- You give feedback that is specific, kind, and useful
- You listen to feedback and use it to improve your work
- You write emails and messages that are clear and to the point

5

Extraordinary: Sustained above-expectation coaching and communication.

Throughout the year, I regularly helped colleagues learn administrative processes, developed reusable guidance, sought feedback, and refined shared materials. I led two short walkthroughs for new staff, built a shared folder of job aids for recurring tasks, and updated each one when colleagues suggested improvements. As a result, new team members completed routine event tasks independently sooner and with fewer questions.

4	**Highly Successful: Consistent communication plus some extra support or improvement.** I consistently communicated event updates and used feedback. After learning the RSVP workflow, I created instructions, walked colleagues through the steps, and revised the guidance based on their questions. Three colleagues then used the instructions to manage RSVPs for their own events without needing additional help.
3	**Successful: Clear information, feedback, and help consistently.** I communicated event responsibilities and changes promptly, answered colleagues' questions, and incorporated feedback into event materials so others had accurate information to complete their work.
2	**Partially Successful: Some effective exchanges, but inconsistent.** I shared updates and accepted feedback in many situations, but I sometimes failed to clarify changes promptly and colleagues needed additional follow-up.
1	**Unsuccessful: Information frequently late or unclear; feedback not applied.** I often did not communicate changes in time for colleagues to act and did not consistently incorporate corrections, resulting in repeated confusion.

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A SUPERVISOR TO COACH

You do not have to supervise employees to demonstrate coaching. Explaining a task, helping a colleague, receiving feedback, and adjusting your work can all be relevant evidence.

Recognize This in Your Own Role

What happened?	**What did I personally do?**	**What changed because of my action?**	**Is this how I worked across the year?**

06 · Complete

University Competencies: Comment on What Is Assigned

These may differ by position or department. Read the exact expectations in your Performance Plan.

COMMENT ONLY

University Competencies receive comments, not ratings, and do not enter the calculated overall rating.

EXPECTATION

What's described?

What behavior is described in your plan?

EXAMPLE

Where?

Where did you demonstrate it?

CONTRIBUTION

Why it mattered

How did it help your work or the University?

07 · Complete

Development Plan: Document Learning and Application

Show progress toward the agreed learning goal, even if the learning is still underway.

A PROGRESS RECORD

The Development Plan is not rated. It is a record of progress, not another performance objective.

GOAL

What were you developing?

ACTIONS TAKEN

What training, practice, or feedback did you complete?

APPLICATION / PROGRESS

How did you use it, or what's your next step?

KATE'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN	
Learning Goal	Build proficiency in Microsoft Power Automate and related Microsoft tools to support event coordination through improved invitation and RSVP tracking.
Learning Steps	1. Complete LinkedIn Learning course: *Power Automate Essential Training* 2. Complete LinkedIn Learning course: *Microsoft Forms Essential Training* 3. Design and test an RSVP workflow using Microsoft Forms, Power Automate, and Excel or SharePoint 4. Implement the system for at least one Provost-hosted or Provost-sponsored event
Resources Needed	• LinkedIn Learning access • Microsoft 365 tools • Time during work hours • Supervisor feedback during testing and implementation
Target Completion Date	**May 30, 2026**

Kate's Development Plan Comment

> By May 15, 2026, I completed the LinkedIn Learning courses *Power Automate Essential Training* and *Microsoft Forms Essential Training* and applied the skills I learned to design and test an electronic RSVP tracking workflow using Microsoft Forms, Power Automate, and Excel. With feedback from my supervisor, I refined the workflow and implemented it for a Provost-sponsored event ahead of my May 30 development plan deadline. This experience strengthened my proficiency with Microsoft 365 tools and improved my ability to support event coordination through more accurate and efficient RSVP tracking.

Same Project, Different Story

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE ASKS

Did the system meet the deadline, event count, and accuracy expectation?

DEVELOPMENT PLAN ASKS

What tools did Kate learn, what practice did she complete, and how did she apply the learning?

ONE EXPERIENCE, TWO SECTIONS

One experience can support both sections, but the comments answer **different questions**.

08 · Summarize

Overall Rating: Find the Pattern

In your self-evaluation you select an overall rating and write one comment. When your supervisor completes the evaluation, the supervisor's overall rating is calculated from Objectives (80%) and Standard Competencies (20%).

Think Across the Year

- [ ] **Review objectives**
  What results and ratings are supported across your 3–5 objectives?
- [ ] **Review competencies**
  How consistently were the four expected behaviors demonstrated?
- [ ] **Consider the weighting**
  What does the overall pattern look like when objectives carry more weight?
- [ ] **Choose the rating**
  Which policy definition best fits the full body of evidence?
- [ ] **Write the comment**
  What are the most important results, evidence, impacts, and patterns?

Kate's Overall Comment Illustrative · Highly Successful

> Throughout 2026, I consistently met the expectations of my position while exceeding established expectations in several areas. My contributions included improving the accuracy and efficiency of event coordination, addressing planning challenges proactively, and supporting effective communication and collaboration across campus partners.
>
> One of my most significant accomplishments was implementing the RSVP tracking system ahead of schedule and expanding its use beyond the original objective. I also demonstrated initiative in improving event-planning processes and supporting colleagues through clearer instructions and shared information. Alongside these improvements, I consistently fulfilled my administrative responsibilities, provided professional customer service, and maintained productive working relationships.
>
> I strengthened my skills in Microsoft Power Automate and Forms and applied that learning to improve how I support the Office of the Provost.
>
> Taken together, my performance demonstrates consistent achievement of established expectations, with several documented contributions that exceeded those expectations. This overall pattern supports my assessment of Highly Successful.

---

09 · Summarize

Write Clearly: Specific Beats Lengthy

A good comment doesn't need to be long. It should be specific, accurate, and aligned to the item being evaluated.

AVOID		WRITE INSTEAD
“I am a great team player.”	→	Describe a shared task, your coordination, and its result.
“I always provide excellent service.”	→	Describe a real request, how you responded, and the outcome.

“I worked hard on events.”	→	State the deliverable, deadline, and evidence of completion.
“I deserve Highly Successful.”	→	Show where and how the expectation was exceeded.

10 · Summarize

Use AI as a Writing Partner, Not an Evidence Source

AI can help organize notes, reduce repetition, and improve clarity. It can't know what you accomplished unless you give it the evidence.

YOU STAY RESPONSIBLE

For the rating, the facts, privacy, and the final wording.

GET THE RATING DEFINITIONS FROM THE OFFICIAL POLICY

Copy the applicable definition from DHRM Policy 1.40 (official PDF), or from section 03 of this guide, into your prompt, together with the exact objective or competency from your Performance Plan.

Copy-and-Adapt Prompt: Performance Objective

```
I am completing my 2026 Classified Employee self-evaluation. Help me write a
concise first-person comment using only my evidence.
Objective: [paste exact objective]
Selected rating and Policy 1.40 definition: [paste]
My evidence: [dates, deliverables, measures, results, context]
Explain the result, supporting evidence, and impact. Do not invent or
exaggerate anything. Identify missing evidence rather than supplying it.
```

Copy-and-Adapt Prompt: Standard Competency

```
I am completing my 2026 Classified Employee self-evaluation. Help me write a
concise first-person competency comment.
Competency and exact expectation: [paste]
Selected rating and Policy 1.40 definition: [paste]
Examples from my work across the year: [2–4 actual examples]
Show the behaviors and supported impact. Do not invent facts, results, or
feedback. Tell me where my evidence does not support the rating.
```

PROTECT INFORMATION

Remove names and identifying details when they aren't needed. Don't enter student records, confidential personnel information, passwords, financial information, or sensitive personal details into an unapproved AI tool. Follow University guidance for approved tools and data handling.

Before You Paste AI-Assisted Writing into Your Self-Evaluation

- [ ] **Accurate**
  Did it happen?
- [ ] **Supported**
  Can you back it up?
- [ ] **Aligned**
  Does it address the expectation?
- [ ] **Authentic**
  Is it your work and voice?
- [ ] **Safe**
  Is private information protected?

Draft a Comment

Use these worksheets to draft each comment before you enter it in your self-evaluation.

Performance Objective Worksheet

Expectation

What did the objective require? Paste or paraphrase it.

Result

What did you complete, by when, and to what standard?

Rating you are selecting

Circle one: 5 Extraordinary · 4 Highly Successful · 3 Successful · 2 Partially Successful · 1 Unsuccessful

Evidence

What specific facts support the result?

Impact

What changed because of your work?

Standard Competency Worksheet

Behavior

What action does the competency expect?

Rating you are selecting

Circle one: 5 Extraordinary · 4 Highly Successful · 3 Successful · 2 Partially Successful · 1 Unsuccessful

Examples from across the year

Two to four real situations that show the behavior.

Impact

How did it support the work, customer, or team?

Pattern

How consistently did you do this across the year?

Development Plan Worksheet

Goal

What were you developing?

Actions taken

What training, practice, or feedback did you complete?

Application or progress

How did you use it, or what is your next step?

12 · Finish

Final Review

Confirm each item before you submit your self-evaluation.

- [ ] **Every Performance Objective has a rating and a comment**
- [ ] **All four Standard Competencies have a rating and a comment**
- [ ] **Assigned University Competencies have comments**
- [ ] **The Development Plan has a comment**
- [ ] **The Overall Rating and comment reflect the full year**

Your work. Your evidence. Your contribution.

NOTES

- **Rating definitions:** DHRM Policy 1.40, Performance Management (rev. 8/22/2025).
- **Kate Simmons** is a fictional example.
- This guide explains concepts. Follow your **Performance Plan** and your official evaluation instructions for requirements.