

One of the elements of my role is planning out the Supervisor Development Series to help staff grow as leaders within their positions to help their departments be more successful. My focus is on having at least one session each month for staff to join in on. However, it takes a lot of steps for one of these workshops to be successful: you need to research to make sure the information is credible and helpful, you need to spread the word and get people to register, you need to identify a space to hold the session in, and so on. And it's not just event planning that we have a standard set of steps to follow: what is something you do in your role that has cyclical steps from start to finish? **The more we look at our roles through a project management lens, the more successful we will be.**

Easy enough, right? The goal of this newsletter is to help you consider this approach to your role and help you create a more effective and efficient workflow. This can help create more conduciveness within your teams, helping your staff find their groove and work to the best of their ability within their roles.

Until next month!

Let us know what you think about the newsletter and what you'd like to see in the future!

[Jesse Heath](#)
Employee Relations Coordinator
[Human Resource Services](#)

[Feedback Form](#)

Performance Appraisals

P&S Annual Performance Appraisal - Suggested Timeline

Date	Action
March 11-29	Employees initiate and complete optional Self-Appraisal. Supervisors initiate and draft Annual Performance Appraisal.
March 29	Supervisors review Employee's Self-Appraisal. Can integrate comments into Employee's Performance Appraisal.
April 1	Supervisors submit form into workflow to generate PDF to share with employees during performance appraisal meeting.
April 1 - May 2	Supervisors schedule and hold performance appraisal meeting with employees. Discuss appraisal and then submit for acknowledgement.
By May 3	Employees add final comments and acknowledge form. Supervisors add final acknowledgements submit form.
May 6-10	Next-Level Supervisors review and acknowledge form.
May 17 (Hard Deadline)	Final signatures MUST be received for Performance Appraisal to be considered FINALIZED.

[Performance Appraisal Form: User Guide](#)

[Performance Appraisal Supervisor Training Video](#)

[Performance Appraisal Form](#)

[Performance Self-Appraisal Form](#)

Additional Considerations:

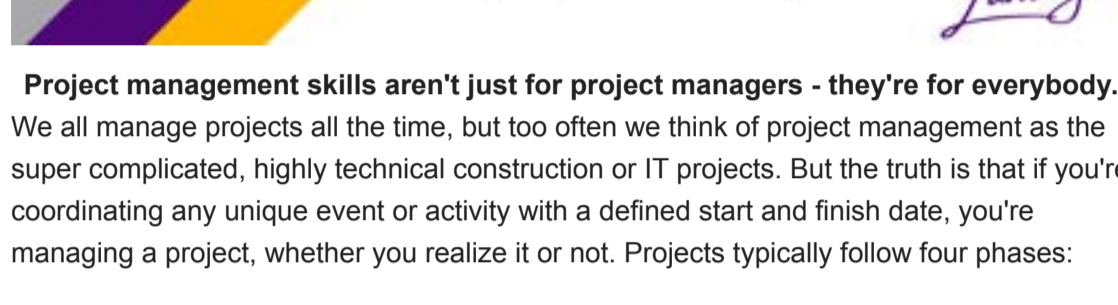
All P&S non-temporary staff hired before 2/1/2024 must receive an appraisal.

P&S staff leaving their role before 5/17/2024 aren't required to receive an appraisal.

Supervisors cannot have past due appraisals for Merit/P&S Staff they supervise in order to be eligible for a salary increase.

Reach out to hrs-support@uni.edu for assistance in retrieving an employee's previous performance appraisal.

Project Management



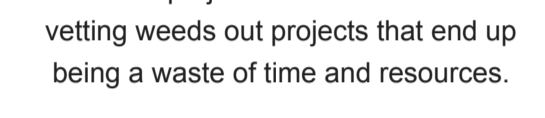
Project management skills aren't just for project managers - they're for everybody. We all manage projects all the time, but too often we think of project management as the super complicated, highly technical construction or IT projects. But the truth is that if you're coordinating any unique event or activity with a defined start and finish date, you're managing a project, whether you realize it or not. Projects typically follow four phases:



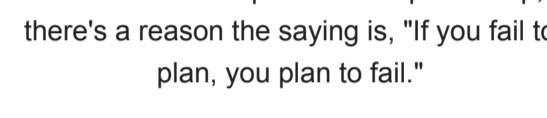
Vetting (1) - Projects require precious time, money, and resources. It's important to consider what is feasible, analyzing risk and if the project is warranted. Careful vetting weeds out projects that end up being a waste of time and resources.



Planning (2) - Pull together the right team, establish expectations, create a timeline and overall plan for the project, and more! While there's temptation to skip this step, there's a reason the saying is, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."



Execution (3) - This is where the team follows the plan that's been established and starts completing their assigned tasks. This is when you'll want to have team meetings to discuss progress and any hurdles that may be affecting areas.



Closeout (4) - After the project, you'll want to evaluate what went well and what can change for the future. This will help set the next team up for success if the process is repeated and provides an endcap before transitioning to other work.

To encourage healthier, more productive meetings, remember the acronym, BLISS:

B Be efficient. It's typically better to have shorter meetings that happen on a less frequent basis compared to long meetings. Make sure to cut the fluff and focus on the information everyone needs to know.

L Look backward and forward. Ask task owners to summarize recent activity and next steps for each phase of work. You might include these components, potential risks, and what the task owner needs to be successful for team updates.

I Insist on accountability. A core team ground rule should be ownership. Develop a habit of always starting my meetings by reviewing action items and where more attention is needed. These tactics were specifically designed to cultivate a culture of accountability.

S Simplify the agenda. Don't use the status meeting as an opportunity to address other issues, just focus on obtaining status updates. Everyone breathes a bit easier when meetings and updates can get minimized.

S Stay focused. Focus on agenda items only and avoid topics that will tempt the team to get bogged down in the weeds. Ask team members to use the status update template as a guide for their verbal updates, and also use the parking lot to help manage that off-topic discussion.

Get your team back on track with Three Questions

When you're assigning a task that's complicated or maybe you don't have a long history of working with the person who's taking on delegated tasks, consider them asking these three questions to ensure that expectations are clear:

What is your understanding of the task? Here, you're essentially asking them to repeat back what they heard in their own words similar to the way a pilot repeats back coordinates provided by air traffic control.

What will the final deliverable actually look like? Oftentimes, when we request deliverables, we use names like requirements document, communications plan, and so on. But one person's plan might look very different from someone else's. With this question, you're asking them to specify exactly what the deliverable will look like.

What will be your first three steps as you begin working? This is usually the answer that lets you sleep at night. Their response should either confirm that they're on the right path, or if not, it offers you an opportunity to redirect them or fill in any gaps.

Additional Resources for Project Management

Articles

[Perfecting Project Management / SHRM](#)

Making use of the right tools can help you stay on track and avoid potential hurdles while working through the planning process of your project. Identify what can help set you up for success and effectively map out what you need to accomplish with your project.

[How to Help an Employee Who Struggles with Time Management / HBR](#)

Whether time management is a struggle for someone you manage (or it's a challenge for yourself), take some time to reflect on growth and how to get set up for success for the future. This is a skill that takes time to develop and even longer to perfect.

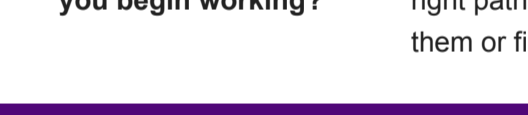
[The Importance of Communication in Project Management / Indeed](#)

Strong communication ensures that team members are in alignment on goals and allows the project to progress smoothly. It is important to reflect on how to become an effective delegator and successfully communicate

[Two Questions for More Effective Communication / Forbes](#)

Effective project management relies heavily on effective people management. Understanding the perspective of your employees is an important element to being a strong leader to your staff. This article can help shift your perspective.

Videos



The Life Cycle of Project Management (6:02)

As you look at your responsibilities and through the lens of a project manager, it's helpful to understand the different phases of the process. While it's often you'll follow this exactly as it's outlined, it is a good resource to reflect on how you can be most prepared for your initiatives and ensure that they are effectively executed.



Become a Strategic Thinker (6:20)

Utilizing project management requires strategic thinking and challenging the status quo through innovation. The process of thinking strategically means that we need to be okay with being wrong but looking for the reasons why. This video focuses on a global perspective but connects to university operations too!



How Do You Measure Success? (7:40)

Goals are an important element of project management. Most of the time these are lofty and ambitious, aiming for something that could be unattainable. If you miss your goal, it doesn't mean you're a failure: it's all about momentum! Think about where you're heading for the long game rather than a one-time achievement for success.

Read Recommendation

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team by Patrick Lencioni

A critical element to project management is ensuring that you have an effective team to make the dream a reality. Equal parts leadership fable and business handbook, this definitive source on teamwork by Patrick Lencioni reveals the five behavioral tendencies that go to the heart of why even the best teams struggle. He offers a powerful model and step-by-step guide for overcoming those dysfunction and getting every one rowing in the same direction.

Notable Quotation: "Great teams do not hold back with one another. They are unafraid to air their dirty laundry. They admit their mistakes, their weaknesses, and their concerns without fear of reprisal."

Available at [Rod Library](#) and the [Cedar Falls Public Library](#).

LinkedIn Learning: Class Highlight

Project Management Skills for Leaders / Dana Brownlee

[LinkedIn Learning](#)

To access this class and other content from LinkedIn Learning, click on the blue button above and enter your UNI email address. If your personal email address populates, please ensure you click on the "change" link first to update your email address. Once entered, click on "Continue to the University of Northern Iowa LinkedIn Learning account" to access content.

It's easy to think of project management as some specialized magic that only certified project managers possess, but the truth is, we all manage projects at one time or another. In this course, instructor Dana Brownlee shows how project management skills can help you to become a better, more effective leader and make a measurable impact in the new world of work. Get the skills you need to develop a schedule with realistic estimates, analyze risk, design a kickoff meeting, delegate tasks, elicit effective status updates, and build a strong team culture.

Upcoming Learning & Development

Fundamentals of Supervision // Supervisor Development Series

April 3 / 8:30am-2:30pm / Gilchrist Hall 009

This introductory training session is the first in the Supervisor Development Series (SDS). This interactive session will focus on the fundamentals of supervision. This training is recommended for those who supervise Merit and/or P&S staff but ALL supervisors are encouraged and welcome to attend.

While priority registration based on capacity is given to current supervisors, this training may be shared with employees looking to promote into leadership roles. Duration is 5.5 hours with a 10-minute break and a 30-minute lunch. Offered in-person only.

[Register Here](#)

Supporting Someone Who Is Grieving // My Well-Being Series

April 3 / 10:00am / State College Room, Maucker Union

Human Resource Services will host a session led by Cedar Valley Hospice. Cedar Valley Hospice counselors will provide information on how to support someone who is grieving and resources available in the community. Please register in advance.

[Register Here](#)

FMLA & ADA Supervisor Responsibilities // Online Learning

This session provides supervisors with high-level information about how to identify a potential leave or accommodation request from an employee, and clarifies a supervisor's role in complying with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This training takes approximately 45-minutes and will save your progress if you are unable to finish in one sitting.

[Access Here](#)

Our Vision All employees will be positively engaged in achieving their greatest potential while contributing to the success of the university.

Our Mission Human Resource Services fosters and environment of integrity and collaboration through innovative solutions and communications contributing to the successful recruitment, development, and retention of university employees.