

Announcing Updated Staff Performance Evaluation Process - University of Vermont

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Executive Summary

This article addresses the University of Vermont's (UVM) transition from its legacy performance evaluation platform (PeopleAdmin) to PeopleSoft's ePerformance tool for annual staff performance reviews, effective January 2025. The institution's central argument is that this system migration, developed through a year of engagement with staff and leaders, aligns with performance management best practices and reduces administrative burden. Key features of the updated process include a simplified rating structure, continuous feedback functionality, co-created role-specific goals, additional rater functionality, and performance notes capabilities. The article outlines a detailed evaluation timeline spanning January 2025 through January 2027, and describes a comprehensive support infrastructure including live training sessions, self-paced micro-courses, drop-in hours, and HR Partner consultative services. The implied conclusion is that the new system will produce more meaningful and effective performance conversations across the institution.

Key Insights

1. UVM transitioned its staff performance evaluation system from PeopleAdmin to PeopleSoft's ePerformance tool following approximately one year of stakeholder engagement with staff and leaders.
2. The updated process introduces continuous feedback functionality, co-created role-specific goals, and an additional rater feature — reflecting a shift toward more collaborative and ongoing evaluation models.
3. A structured multi-tiered support rollout was deployed, including synchronous in-person and remote training, asynchronous self-paced courses, drop-in sessions, and HR Partner-led department-specific coaching.

Practical Takeaways

- UVM's phased evaluation calendar — spanning review completion, goal-setting, mid-year check-ins, and criteria finalization across a two-year cycle — illustrates one institutional model for structuring continuous performance management cadences.
- The combination of reduced required fields and co-created role-specific goals reflects an organizational approach to balancing compliance-driven documentation with employee-centered goal ownership.

Critical Analysis

This article is an internal institutional announcement, not a research or analytical piece. Its primary strength is practical specificity: it provides clear timelines, tool names, training schedules, and contact pathways. However, it presents no empirical evidence, outcome data, or comparative analysis to substantiate claims that the new system aligns with 'performance management best practices' — a phrase used without citation or definition. The claim of reduced administrative burden is asserted rather than measured. There is no baseline data, employee feedback results, or pilot outcomes reported. The article reflects an inherently promotional tone for the institutional change, and the term 'best practices' carries normative weight without substantiation. Bias toward the new system is structural, as the announcement originates from the institution implementing the change.

Organizational Practice

The University of Vermont conducts annual staff performance evaluations on a structured calendar cycle. The process includes a formal review period, a mid-year optional check-in, annual goal-setting, and criteria finalization phases. Evaluations are completed within an HRIS platform (PeopleSoft ePerformance), and the Talent Development function provides multi-format training and HR Partner consultative support for both employees and managers.

Strategic Implications

The migration from a standalone applicant tracking-adjacent tool (PeopleAdmin) to an integrated HRIS evaluation module (PeopleSoft ePerformance) reflects a broader trend in higher education toward consolidating talent management functions within enterprise HR systems. The introduction of continuous feedback and additional rater functionality suggests movement away from purely hierarchical, annual review models in institutional settings. The emphasis on co-created goals points to growing interest in employee agency within formal evaluation frameworks, even in compliance-oriented public university environments.

Validation Status: passed
