

# Three Steps to Successful Camp Director Annual Evaluations

## Step 1: Set criteria for the evaluation

The annual review process should begin 12 months prior to the review with setting goals for the year and establishing the criteria against which the camp director will be evaluated. Consider in particular how you will measure the director's leadership and work to advance the camp's strategic plan or annual plan.

Using an evaluation form ensures key areas of the camp director's responsibilities are considered in the review and makes the written portion of the review process easier to manage. Many sample forms are available. The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits offers one version, available online.

Most sample forms need to be customized to address organizational needs. Before using a review form from an outside resource, take time to review and customize it.

- Trim or tailor "off the shelf" forms to focus on your priorities. Not all aspects of a camp director's job have equal weighting as implied by many forms.
- Be sure to allow enough space to capture comments and document examples. Don't rely solely on a form with number ratings.

Finally, keep in mind the form itself isn't the evaluation; it is just the starting point for the more important discussion with the camp director.

## Step 3: Gather input

A good review cannot be conducted in a vacuum. The goal is to gather enough perspectives and input from people who have worked with the camp director to provide an accurate assessment of job performance. Consider gathering input from:

- The Camp Committee
- Staff, both agency staff and camp staff
- The camp director themselves
- Key partners that support the camp

Many groups use an online survey to collect input for the review. Assure staff that their responses will remain anonymous (no names, no IP address tracking) and that you will share only a summary of themes with the camp director. Even with these protections, total anonymity may be difficult in very small organizations.

In addition to gathering input from the board, staff, and key partners, it is a good practice is to ask the camp director to evaluate his or her own performance. This is easily done using the same form as used for the review and sets the stage for a better discussion at the performance meeting.

## Step 4: Hold a face to face meeting and set goals

During the face to face meeting, the appropriate supervisor or camp committee should sit down with the camp director to discuss the performance of the past year and look to the future. This meeting is the time for dialogue, ensuring there is adequate time for the camp director to share insights about his/her work and to discuss priorities for the coming year. Allow enough time to discuss:

- Highlights and accomplishments from the year, what went well
- Areas of concern or needing improvement

- Plans for professional development
- Goals for the coming year

During the face to face meeting and in the written performance evaluation, don't shy away from areas needing attention if necessary. If the director needs to spend more time building partnerships or being the public face of the camp, let him or her know clearly.

After the meeting, the review committee should develop a final written review and summary, including the camp director's comments about their performance and goals for the coming year.

**Remember, the annual review does not take the place of feedback throughout the year.** Everyone needs recognition for a job well done and times to reflect on their workload, priorities, and needs. Schedule interim check-ins to be sure they happen. Additionally, address any major issues as they arise during the year rather than holding them for months waiting for the review time.