# Managing Essentials

## Introduction

A manager is someone who has the ability to lead others and a desire to engage in continuous learning and development of themselves and their employees. It is a manager's responsibility to train, mentor, inspire, lead, and motivate his or her team towards accomplishing individual, department, and school goals. As a manager at SPH, your success is measured not simply by your individual contributions, but by how effectively you manage others.

This section will provide managers the basic knowledge and resources to effectively lead, manage, and create a high-performing culture within your department, unit, or team. High-performing employees strive for performance excellence through shared goals and vision, good leadership, effective communication, clear understanding of expectations, and a strong sense of accountability.

In this section of the Handbook, we will cover the following topics

1. Training and mentoring
2. Delegating
3. Communication and feedback
4. Approving time requests
5. Performance evaluation
6. Reward and recognition

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## 1. Training and mentoring

Training and mentoring your employees is an important component of management and requires continuous effort. Mentoring is a powerful professional and personal development tool defined as a supportive relationship where mentors shares the knowledge they have gained through their professional and career experience with their employees. Employees benefit from this relationship by further managing their own learning to maximize their potential, develop their skills, and improve performance. Managers who see their job as helping employees be successful through training and mentorship create a competent, confident workforce that is engaged and productive.

Whether you are a faculty member managing a research group or an administrator managing employees, you are required to invest time in both training and mentoring your employees. When mentoring employees, it is important to focus on behaviors, rather than results; influencing and guiding employee behavior will lead to improved performance. Managers should also identify what training employees may need to be successful in their role, and then provide employees with proper training opportunities. Training opportunities may be identifying a skill set to strengthen, providing developmental feedback, or taking on a new challenge. Please refer to the Best Practices section on staff development for further information.

Employees want to work for a manager who takes an interest in their development, values their contributions, and assists in developing their skills and expertise. Training and mentoring your employees will help guide them through the next phase of their career, enabling them to sharpen and expand their skills and achieve both professional and personal goals.

## Helpful Links

SPH Faculty Mentoring Program
BU Faculty Development Mentoring Program
SPH Staff Development

TIP - Check in often, evaluate progress, and share honest observations and feedback. Share your successes and challenges with your employees. This will set the stage for an open and trusting relationship.

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## 2. Delegating

Delegation is a way to appropriately and consistently provide direction to staff. Delegation is the assignment of any responsibility, along with the authority, to another person to do what is need to produce desired results. By delegating properly, you enable your employees to gain new skills and expertise to become more productive and self-confident. It is essential for managers to assess their employees' current abilities and their potential to take on delegated assignments. Managers must be able to plan and coordinate appropriately and then monitor progress. Delegation relies heavily on many management skills including organization and planning, coordination, communication, motivation, and leading.

Delegation must be purposeful and not simply a way to get something off your plate. As a manager, delegating assignments to your staff can increase morale, motivation, and self-confidence. Delegation provides employees growth and development opportunities and empowers employees to be responsible for the work. For delegation to work, it is important for employees to clearly understand your expectations and what is being asked of them. There are several things managers can do to increase effectiveness in delegation.

- Select the individual or team for the defined tasks or project who have the experience to perform well
- Clearly state your expectations and roles and responsibilities of the employees
- Establish deadlines and milestones that need to be met
- Check in often, monitor progress, and provide regular feedback and support throughout the duration of the task/project
- Recognize employees for their results
- Debrief once the project/task is complete and provide constructive feedback



TIP - Be patient and understanding when delegating work. Employees may be afraid of failure in the beginning so it is increasingly important to answer questions and provide clear directions.

## Helpful Links

Article: Why Aren't you Delegating
Article: How to Decide Which Tasks to Delegate

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## 3. Communication and feedback

Effective communication is an important and necessary skill for any manager. Being able to effectively communicate with your staff will help to explain expectations, address challenges, resolve differences, and collaborate on solutions.  It is the responsibility of managers to clearly communicate expectations as it relates to an employee's job performance, competencies, behaviors, and how individual goals align with department and school goals.  Managers who communicate well are better motivators and problem-solvers and have more ability to give meaningful positive and constructive feedback.

Feedback can be the most important part of communication.  The ability to deliver high-quality feedback is one of the core communication skills of effective managers.  Managers should provide regular feedback on performance, as this promotes professional and personal growth and development.  Feedback can be positive or constructive and should be as specific as possible.  Positive feedback reinforces desired behaviors and motivates employees by recognizing specific job performance that has met or exceeded expectations. Constructive feedback is used to correct performance issues as well as to address issues that may become significant challenges in the future.



We encourage using the STAR feedback model for both positive and constructive feedback conversations.  This model helps managers communicate specific and clear feedback and the acronym serves as a reminder to describe a particular situation or task (ST), the action (A), and result (R).

- Situation or task the employee faced that you want to provide feedback on.   The situation or task provides context for the employees' actions and helps explain their importance.
- Action the employee took.  Describe what the person said or did to handle the situation or task.  When having a constructive feedback conversation, be sure to explain what the employee did that

was ineffective.  Managers can provide an alternative action or encourage employees to think about what could have been done differently.

- Result of the action.  Describe what was achieved by the action, the impact of the action, and why it was effective.  When having a constructive feedback conversation, it is important to highlight the impact or consequence of the ineffective actions.  Managers can suggest an alternative result the alternative action might have produced.



TIP - By focusing on a specific situation or task, identifying the action taken, and directly tying it to the result, your employees will know exactly what they did right or wrong and the impact of their actions.

# Helpful Links

Article: How to Give Feedback People Can Actually Use
SPH Staff Development
Terrier eDevelopment
LinkedIn Learning

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## 4. Approving time off requests

Essential to supervising the workplace is being able to manage attendance.  Managers need to know which employees are working, when they are working, and when to anticipate scheduled time off.  At Boston University, managers are responsible for maintaining the accuracy of accrued sick and vacation leave records for all employees, as well as hours worked for non-exempt employees.

Non-exempt (hourly) employees are required by law to complete and submit weekly time sheets, while exempt (salaried) employees are not.  Managers are required to review and approve these weekly timesheets electronically through Manager Self-Service (MSS) in BUworks.

All employees, non-exempt and exempt, are required to request time off through Employee Self Service (ESS) using the Time Off Request function in BU Works.  As a manager, you are required to check their worklist on a daily basis to approve or reject time off requests from the employees who report to you.  You have the ability to apply an absence on behalf of your employee and also assign a nominee to cover your absence through the process of manager substitution.



Time off Requests include

Vacation - All regular full-time employees and regular part-time employees scheduled to work at least 50 percent effort are eligible upon hire to accrue and use vacation leave.  Employees are eligible to use their accrued vacation leave after completing three (3) months of continuous service.  Employees must submit a written request to their immediate supervisor at least two (2) weeks in advance of the desired vacation leave.  The two (2) week requirement may be shortened in unusual situations.
Sick - Sick leave provides employees with an authorized paid absence from work for medical care, personal illness or injury, or the care of an ill member of the employee's immediate family.  Immediate family members include the employee's spouse, parents, parent-in-law, grandparents, brothers, sisters, and children.  Employees are eligible to use their accrued Sick Leave after completing three (3) months of continuous service. During an employee's first three (3) months of service, time off that would normally be taken as sick time will be taken as unpaid time off.

Personal Days - Non-exempt employees are granted two personal days on January 1st of each calendar year. Personal days do not carry forward or accumulate from one calendar year to the next.

Leave of Absence - Employees are required to submit a written request for a Leave of Absence to their immediate supervisor at least one (1) month in advance of the desired time off. The request must specify the reason for the leave, and specific dates requested. Once managers receive this request, it should be forwarded to People Services (sphpeopleservices@bu.edu) who will work with the employee on next steps. Should a manager request a Leave of Absence, it is important to work directly with the Associate Dean of Administration to plan and coordinate coverage for the duration of the leave.

Other types of time off include compensatory, bereavement, jury duty and military leave. Additional information can be found in the BU Employee Handbook.

TIP - All BU employees are required to enter time off requests into BU Works via Employee Self Service (ESS) without exception. All BU managers are required to approve weekly timesheets for non-exempt employees and time off requests for both non-exempt and exempt employees.



# Helpful Links

BU Employee Handbook
Time Related Instructions BUWorks
Entering Time off Request – Exempt Employees
Entering Time off Request – Non Exempt Employees
Exempt Employee - Time Off Related FAQs
For Managers – Time Management FAQs
For Managers - Checking Vacation/Sick Balance for an Employee

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## 5. Performance management

Performance management is a year-round process that enables managers to evaluate and measure individual performance and optimize productivity.  Supervisors are expected to meet with their employees on a regular basis throughout the year to review an employee's accomplishments, areas of continued development and improvement, and progress on established goals.

Performance evaluations are conducted on an annual basis at the BU School of Public Health (SPH) starting in September, and completed evaluations are due back to People Services (sphpeopleservices@bu.edu) no later than November 1st.

**BU SPH Annual Performance Evaluation Timeline**

|  | September | October | November |
|---|---|---|---|
| Managers write performance reviews for all direct reports | ✓ |  | All completed and signed performance evaluations are due to SPH People Services by November 1st |
| Managers meet with all direct reports for annual performance review | ✓ | ✓ |  |
| Employee provides comments and signs off on review | ✓ | ✓ |  |
| Manager submits completed and signed performance evaluation to SPH People Services | ✓ | ✓ |  |

It is important to take the time to establish clear, well-defined goals use the SMART approach.  A SMART goal is defined as one that is **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound.
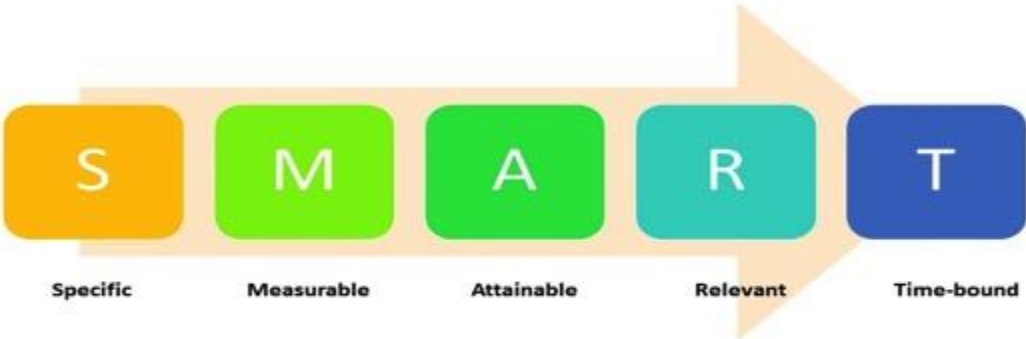
As managers and employees create goals, use the following questions to be sure you are using the SMART approach

- **S**   What is specific about the goal?
- **M**  Is the goal measurable? What metrics will you use to determine if the goal was met?
- **A**  Is the goal achievable? Does the employee have the right tools/skills needed?
- **R**  Is the goal relevant to performance expectations or professional development?
- **T**  Is the goal time-bound? When will this goal be accomplished? How often will this task me done?

Example of a SMART goal
Attend an excel training course within the next three months to learn and begin utilizing Excel's advanced functionality as it relates to managing the department's budget.

> TIP - Schedule quarterly feedback sessions, including a mid-year check-in, in advance to review progress. Performance management is a continuous process, not just once a year.

# Helpful Links

Performance Evaluation Program Manual
Performance Evaluation Form Administrative Employees

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## 6. Reward and recognition

Employee recognition is a tool used by managers to reward and reinforce actions and behaviors that exemplify the School's mission as well as individual achievements.  Most employees want their hard work and contributions recognized.  Whether you recognize ongoing contributions or exceptional performance, creating a culture of recognition can enhance engagement, encourage a sense of ownership in the workplace, increase job satisfaction, increase loyalty, and retain top talent.

A few examples on how to provide recognition

- Words of encouragement and motivation can be highly important to ensure your employees feel encouraged and valued
- Publicly praise individuals by calling attention to their achievements.  This can be done in an email, internal newsletter, group meeting, or other appropriate forums
- Provide opportunities to work on high visibility projects
- Get everyone involved – encourage peer to peer recognition.  This helps builds a positive and supportive work environment

Current Recognition Programs

A subcommittee comprised of members from the SPH Administrative Council has been created to research the development of a rewards and recognition program specific to our community. Professional organizations connected to various job families at SPH provide annual recognition for outstanding work and performance.

Currently, the following reward and recognition programs are in place

- Dzidra J. Knecht Award – Highest award for school service that can be given to a staff member at SPH
- John S. Perkins Award for Distinguished Service – Award for important contributions towards the goals of Boston University.
- Service Recognition Awards (10 & 25 year, Retirement)

## Helpful Links

Dzidra Knecht Award for Distinguished Service
John S. Perkins Award for Distinguished Service

> TIP - Make recognition easy, timely, and fun. It is important to recognize contributions and actions immediately following the behavior you seek to reinforce.