

Moving from Informal to Formal Appraisal (Case Study)

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An institute had a very informal appraisal system of its faculty members. The top management through its informal sources and HOD will get the feedback of faculty members. The performance feedback however will have no visible impact on the salary and / or job. In the sense that an 'Okay' performance will also get 03% annual hike and 'extra ordinary' will also get the same.

The HOD was quite unhappy with the system of appraisal and was constantly after the top management to get in place a formal appraisal system. He designed a three way appraisal system for the faculty member which included appraisal by HOD, student and self – appraisal. After much perusal, the top management reluctantly agreed.

The HOD spent quite a good time in detailing and making the appraisal format. A meeting was called separately of all the faculty members and students to explain the appraisal format and its details.

In faulty meeting it was told that the appraisal will have two fold objectives – 1. The annual increment will be based on it and not the usual 3 % i.e. increments can range from 0 to 9%. 2. The appraisal is being carried out with a positive bend of mind – not to punish but to correct the performance. The students were told to be as honest as possible. Some of the faculty members were apprehensive regarding the objectives of appraisal. The root of the apprehension was in the perceived political nature of HOD. These members of faculty believed that the appraisal formats will be skewed and will not reflect the 'true picture' to the management. Their self- appraisals were filled to reflect the perceived image by HOD. They were sure that giving a 'high-rating' to self will not match with the HOD's rating, so they decided to just keep it 'good'. Even some members were apprehensive regarding the maneuvering of student feedback.

The day of the exercise arrived. All students were engaged for almost 2 hours of form filling for each faculty and every subject. Similarly the faculty members were to fill and give the self – assessment in sealed envelope to the HOD office.

The data analysis was carried out for almost a month to obtain the final scores of all the appraisals. The data was presented to the management, with recommendation. Everyone was waiting for the meeting with management. Days, weeks and months passed by but 'nothing' happened – neither the increment nor meeting with management. The filled forms were finally transferred to store from where they were distributed to the entire office as one-sided papers for internal communication.

Why the appraisal system failed?