

Experiential Exercise

Evaluating Performance and Providing Feedback

Objective

To experience the assessment of performance and observe the provision of performance feedback.

Time

Approximately 30 minutes.

Procedure

Select a class leader—either a volunteer or someone chosen by your instructor. The class leader will preside over the class discussion and perform the role of manager in the evaluation review.

Your instructor will leave the room. The class leader is then to spend up to 15 minutes helping the class to evaluate your instructor. Your instructor understands that this is only a class exercise and is prepared to accept criticism (and, of course, any praise you may want to convey). Your instructor also recognizes that the leader's evaluation is actually a composite of many students' input. So be open and honest in your evaluation and have confidence that your instructor will not be vindictive.

Research has identified seven performance dimensions to the college instructor's job: (1) instructor knowledge, (2) testing procedures, (3) student–teacher relations, (4) organizational skills, (5) communication skills, (6) subject relevance, and (7) utility of assignments. The discussion of your instructor's performance should focus on these seven dimensions. The leader may want to take notes for personal use but will not be required to give your instructor any written documentation.

When the 15-minute class discussion is complete, the leader will invite the instructor back into the room. The performance review will begin as soon as the instructor walks through the door, with the class leader becoming the manager and the instructor playing himself or herself.

When completed, class discussion will focus on performance-evaluation criteria and how well your class leader did in providing performance feedback.

Notes:

1. This is a high risk exercise—for you. If it is done well, you can build rapport and trust and learn something valuable to your own teaching effectiveness. Be careful to neither be defensive nor take their comments too much to heart.
2. Remember you are probably dealing with an evaluation “team” made up largely of inexperienced young adults. Help them to understand that evaluation goes both ways. Ask them to use these same evaluation criteria on presentations that they have made recently. What criteria should be used for their work and how should feedback be provided?

Ethical Dilemma

Is It Unethical to “Shape” Your Résumé?

When does putting a positive spin on your accomplishments cross over the line to become misrepresentation or lying? Does a résumé have to be 100 percent truthful? Apparently, a lot of people don't think so. Studies have found that nearly half of all résumés contain at least one lie. Inflated credentials have cost many executives their jobs—some uncovered through the efforts of Barry Minkow, who served prison time for his role in the ZZZZ Best stock swindle and who now investigates corporations and their executives.

To help you clarify your ethical views on this issue, consider the following situations and answer the questions for each.

1. Sean has left a job for which his title was credit clerk. When looking for a new job, he lists his previous title as “credit analyst.” He thinks it sounds more impressive. Is this retitling of a former job wrong? Why or why not?
2. About 8 years ago, Michiko took 9 months off between jobs to travel overseas. Afraid that people might consider her unstable or lacking in career motivation, she stated in her résumé that she was engaged in “independent consulting activities” during the period. Was she wrong? How else could she have described this time period on her résumé?
3. David is the 46-year-old CEO of a Fortune 1000 company. He enrolled in Pacific Coast Baptist College 20 years ago but never got a degree. Just 9 months after he was appointed CEO, a local newspaper reported he had lied on his résumé by indicating a bachelor's degree in psychology that he doesn't have. Should he be terminated? If yes, why, and if not, what should his employer do about David's missing credentials? (This scenario is based on a true story; to find out more, enter “David Edmondson” and “résumé” in your favorite search engine.)
4. Kayla sent out 100 applications for an administrative assistant position but received only one callback. Believing her master's degree and past academic teaching experience were getting in the way, she removed them from her résumé. Lauren has 26 years of marketing experience but didn't want to show it, so she made her résumé look less senior by eliminating certain jobs and other experiences. Rashad was laid off from his VP post at Wells Fargo. In searching for middle management jobs, he removed his VP title from his résumé. Did Kayla, Lauren, and Rashad misrepresent themselves?

Sources: Based on J. Porter, “The New Résumé: Dumb and Dumber,” *Wall Street Journal* (May 26, 2009), p. D5; J. S. Lublin, “When Big Résumés Chase Small Jobs,” *Wall Street Journal* (March 3, 2009), p. D6; K. J. Winstein, “Inflated Credentials Surface in Executive Suite,” *Wall Street Journal* (November 13, 2008), pp. B1, B6.

Suggested Discussion:

There has been a considerable amount of discussion surrounding the embellishment of resumes. This will be an interesting discussion to have with students.

1. The job category “credit clerk” is fundamentally different than “credit analyst.” This would be a clear example of stepping over the line. Changing the title is clearly unethical and intentionally misrepresentative of the position.
2. Traveling overseas is not the same as “independent consulting activities.” This is an inappropriate embellishment. She could have been honest. Traveling overseas can be described as a cultural experience and gaining international insight is important in a global marketplace. It is also an educational experience and could have been described as such.
3. Misrepresentations on a resume are not only unethical, but should cost a candidate the position if discovered after the fact. He should be terminated since this is unethical and points to his character as the most senior leader of a company. The credentials weren’t missing, they were never earned. As CEO, how could he hold anyone else accountable or to a high standard when he was not honest and forthright?