

Sample Supervisor's Narratives

Example 1 (Meets/Exceeds Standards):

Dr. Renee Researcher has been a member of my laboratory team for the past two years, and I am very pleased with her progress during this time. She started with limited experience in Vanilla Bean Cultivation, but is now an integral part of our Bean Program. Her ability to master new techniques is exemplary. Dr. Researcher has undertaken to train herself in Bean Breeding through careful study of the most current literature, and her enthusiasm is an inspiration to others in the lab. Dr. Researcher is a dedicated scientist, and she is also considerate and helpful in the workplace, always willing to assist colleagues.

Dr. Researcher has been highly productive over the past year, contributing her efforts on four papers and two grant applications. Her communication skills, both orally and in writing, are strong. I attribute Dr. Researcher's steady level of output, as well as her clear expression of ideas, in large part to her solid organization skills.

My hope for Dr. Researcher's continued professional development is that she will cultivate a more specific area of expertise with the Vanilla Bean. We have spoken about her career path on several occasions, and she seems somewhat undecided on her long-term goals. While I applaud her broad-ranging interests, I suggest that some greater focus will better further her career, irrespective of whether she elects to move to a position in industry or stays in academia. In the coming year I would like to see Dr. Researcher phase out her involvement with several of her smaller projects to devote herself more fully to only one or two main projects, with a concentration, perhaps, on Madagascar Vanilla. As she specializes, she will have the opportunity to seek grant funding and acquire supervisory experience. She has been both receptive and appreciative in our discussions.

Overall, Dr. Researcher's performance has been outstanding, and I expect to be able to report substantial achievements as she continues to grow professionally.

Example 2 (Needs Improvement):

Dr. Steve Scientist joined the lab over five years ago, bringing with him a wealth of experience with the Tahitian Vanilla Bean. He was able to immediately set up independent projects, and he quickly became our resident expert on the technical aspects of Tahitian Vanilla. His work was steady and fruitful, resulting in the publication of nearly a dozen papers in his first four years. Dr. Scientist's ability to identify new directions for research led to a major grant award for our program during this time. In short, his performance was stellar.

During the past two review periods, however, I have observed decline in Dr. Scientist's productivity. While he continues to work very hard, he has had more failures

than successes lately. It seems unlikely that he will be ready to put out a paper by the end of the year, and funding sources could be uncertain.

My concern is that Dr. Scientist has become somewhat isolated from what his peers are doing in the field. By nature, he is an internally focused person, but I would encourage Dr. Scientist to make the necessary efforts to interact with colleagues. Not only would the exchange of ideas benefit his research, but it would also help to develop his oral communication skills. Though Dr. Scientist is a competent writer, his ability to communicate orally can be less than effective. While this was evident at the outset of his employment, I had expected much greater progress by this point.

Dr. Scientist needs to take direct action to return to his previous level of performance. I suggest that he make a point of attending seminars and conferences relevant to his research area, as well as routinely survey the newest literature on the Tahitian Vanilla Bean. I recommend that Dr. Scientist welcome new collaboration opportunities that will enhance his research and provide the opportunity for scientific interchange. Also, we have spoken about setting a rough timeline for what he intends to accomplish over the coming year. Dr. Scientist and I plan to meet on a monthly basis to assess his progress.

While Dr. Scientist's performance has fallen below expectation during this review period, I have every confidence that, with careful guidance, he will soon be achieving to his potential again.