



# Annual Performance Review



**Success through Feedback:**  
Team Member's Guide to Annual  
Reviews and Self-Evaluation

Welcome to the Annual Performance Review Guidebook! This guide will help you understand the review process with ease. Your contributions are vital to our success and this guidebook will give you the tools you need for a great review. Dive into the chapters to make the most of your review and take charge of your career. Let's work together to create a culture of excellence, meaningful feedback and continuous learning.

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# Preparing for the Annual Performance Review Process

At WellSpan, we believe performance management should be personal, trustworthy, and consistent — key principles of our One Size Fits One promise. We also believe that performance management is more than just yearly reviews. It's a continuous feedback cycle to create opportunities for personalized growth and meaningful conversations that positively impact everyone we serve.

Take a moment to review our process. This guidebook focuses on the annual performance review (APR) and how you can prepare for it effectively.



## Moment of Reflection

When thinking about performance reviews, remember a time you got meaningful feedback. What made it special?



Maybe it was because:

- The person told you what you did well.
- They listened and understood you.
- They asked questions and helped you reflect.
- They made it comfortable to hear their feedback.
- They supported and coached you on how to improve.
- They cared about your growth, even if it was hard to tell you.
- The feedback was specific, so you knew what to keep doing or improve.

Feedback can have a big impact on us, both good and bad. It's necessary for growth. In fact, neuroscience contends that organisms use feedback to survive. In the work world, feedback helps you adapt, improve and succeed.



Meaningful feedback can put us on the path to discovery and it requires the active contributions of each person in the feedback conversation.

So, the question now becomes, how do you prepare for a feedback conversation, specifically your annual performance review, to ensure that the feedback sets you up for success?

## Getting in the Right Mindset

Preparing for the annual performance review is not about checking off items on a checklist but it is a much more involved process. Many of us think about annual performance reviews as a meeting in which one individual is the reviewer and the other is the reviewee. In this scenario, the reviewer is seen as the expert and all-knowing while the reviewee is seen as feeble and powerless. Additionally, some of us may even associate words like confrontation, hostility or other unpleasant terms with performance reviews.

**Through WellSpan's One Size Fits One promise and performance management strategy, we are transforming performance reviews into opportunities for real connection, trust-building and growth. By making feedback more personal and constructive, we ensure every team member feels valued and supported.**

We get it — your annual performance review can feel like a hassle. You just want to get through it, turn it in and get back to the other stuff that needs your attention. But rushing can lead to mistakes, missed chances, poor communication and a less meaningful discussion.

WellSpan encourages everyone, leaders and team members, to take enough time for a thorough and meaningful performance review process. This means gathering enough data for your self-evaluation and any peer feedback, and thoughtfully answering all review questions and sections.

To get in the right mindset, see your performance review as a chance to grow and succeed. Approaching feedback with a growth mindset means believing you can improve through effort and learning.

Annual reviews are a time to reflect on your work and plan for future success. Meaningful feedback helps us discover new paths and requires everyone's active participation.

Preparing well for your review leads to a better conversation with your leader. It lets you show your achievements, address improvements, align goals with the organization and actively shape your professional development.

## Collaborative Feedback Discussions

At WellSpan, we use collaborative feedback discussions for performance management conversations. Our One Size Fits One promise encourages collaborative feedback by prioritizing trust, empathy and appreciation. When we engage in open, two-way discussions, we create an environment where feedback strengthens both performance and relationships.



**Traditional  
Perspective**



**Collaborative  
Feedback  
Perspective**



**Hurried  
Approach**



**Reserving  
Time**



Collaborative discussions are:

- not just for annual performance reviews or just for leaders.
- an active, two-way conversation that builds partnership, trust and continuous improvement.
- a tool to create a culture of growth and development.

The key foundations and core skills of collaborative feedback discussions include:

### Maintain Self-Esteem

**Feedback Giver:**  
Provide clear, direct and respectful feedback for the other person to maintain their self-esteem.



**Feedback Receiver:**  
Recognize that your own level of self-esteem plays a role in understanding and accepting feedback.

### Display Empathy

**Feedback Giver:**  
Acknowledge and repeat the other person's perspective to reduce anxiety.



**Feedback Receiver:**  
Help contribute to workplace culture that values understanding and continuous improvement.

### Get Involved

**Feedback Giver:**  
Provide opportunities for the other person to share their thoughts; consider changes that can be made.



**Feedback Receiver:**  
Ask questions, develop an action plan, seek assistance, take time to self-evaluate.

**“We all need people who will give us feedback. That’s how we improve.”**

**-Bill Gates**

To illustrate the concept of collaborative feedback discussions and meaningful feedback, review the videos then pause to reflect on the follow-up questions.

This video demonstrates the use of the three hallmarks of collaborative feedback discussions to have a two-way dialogue focused on encouraging new insights and behaviors.

This video demonstrates collaborative feedback conversations using the STAR framework (Chapter 2). Observe the power of effective communication as the leader and team member work together navigate the feedback session.

What techniques did the team member use?  
How did they contribute to the conversation?  
What improvements could be made next time?

To have an effective collaborative feedback discussion, team members should:



Gather data and  
compile notes



Prepare questions



Set goals

These activities can be done in any order but must be completed before writing a self-evaluation, giving peer feedback, or having a feedback discussion.

Let's explore each responsibility to prepare for a meaningful feedback experience.



## Gather Data and Compile Notes

In our fast-paced work environment, it's easy to forget or lose track of daily contributions and achievements. Leaders are busy too and may not always remember specific successes. Research shows we often overestimate how much others notice our accomplishments.

Tracking your achievements throughout the year ensures they are highlighted in your annual review. This strategic approach helps showcase your growth, supports a meaningful discussion with your leader and strengthens your professional development.

**How do you gather data or keep track of your accomplishments?**

**What data do you gather?**

There are two kinds of performance data you can gather:

### Operational Data

- Documents, emails and messages
- Reports or records
- Project timelines and milestones
- Feedback surveys

### Behavioral Data

- Direct observations
- Comments or feedback from peers or customers



**Operational data** tracks progress on goals and job performance, measuring quality, quantity, cost and timeliness.

**Behavioral data** captures how goals are achieved, including observable feedback from customers or peers on your interactions.

Start the process of tracking your accomplishments with a Success File. Use this document to note specific accomplishments, details about your performance and any other key contributions made.



**ST: Situation/Task**  
**A: Action**  
**R: Result**

Use the STAR technique to build your success file. It helps you track key facts by noting the specific facts about the situation, the actions you took and the result or consequences of those actions. We'll explore this method more in Chapter 2.

Collecting data lays the foundation for your self-evaluation, helping you answer performance review questions with real-world examples.

It's important to track data based on specific review criteria. WellSpan has adopted a job family model for organizational development. A job family is a grouping or classification of related job positions within an organization that share similar characteristics, skills, responsibilities and career paths.

At WellSpan, each job family has **five** accountabilities that align with its responsibilities. Here's an example for the Administrative job family.

#### **Job Family: Administrative**

- Accuracy
- Active Communication
- Communication
- Customer Service & Relationships
- Social Perceptiveness



Job accountabilities can be found in Oracle under the “Career and Performance” widget. Click **job description** to display your job title. Next, click the **hyperlink** to open details that include your job description and job accountabilities.

**To understand how each accountability is defined, please access our [Job Accountability Definitions](#).**



**That seems like a lot of work.  
What's the benefit? How does gathering  
data/compiling notes help you in your career?**

Collecting data strengthens your feedback discussion with your leader by:



**Objective Evaluation to Show Achievements & Alignment**

Using concrete data makes performance reviews more objective. Highlighting measurable achievements shows your impact on the team and organization. Connecting your work to company goals reinforces your commitment and strategic value.

**Boosts Career Growth & Development**

Tracking accomplishments shows you're ready for new challenges. It also highlights training, skills, and certifications, proving your commitment to continuous growth and learning.



**Proactive Goal-Setting for Growth**

Tracking data helps set future goals and plan ahead. It allows you and your leader to collaboratively prepare for challenges, support career growth and demonstrate how past successes position you for new opportunities.

## Encourages Open & Focused Feedback

Sharing data opens the door for a more meaningful and two-way conversation, constructive feedback and clear plans for growth. It invites discussion, questions and a collaborative dialogue between you and your leader.



### Prepare Questions

Engage in collaborative feedback discussions by actively listening.

Active listening is a communication skill that involves fully concentrating on what is being said and unsaid, responding thoughtfully and asking questions.

What value do you see in asking questions during feedback discussions?

How can asking questions contribute to creating collaborative feedback discussions?

Asking questions:

- Shows you're engaged and interested.
- Helps clarify feedback for better understanding.
- Creates a more open and trusting conversation.
- Builds empathy and an open mindset.
- Supports teamwork in solving challenges.



Asking thoughtful questions can lead you and your leader to deeper insights, discuss specific examples and create actionable feedback.

What kind of questions do you think you should be asking during feedback discussions?

There are two types of questions: open ended questions and close ended questions.

Close-ended questions:

- Receive brief, specific answers (often “yes” or “no”).
- Help gather facts or clarify details quickly.
- Start with are, do, did, is or would.

Open-ended questions:

- Encourage detailed responses.
- Spark deeper conversation and engagement.
- Start with what, how, why, or tell me about.

**What are some questions you might ask during a feedback discussion?**

- How can I align my goals with the team's or organization's goals?
- What career paths are available for someone in my role?
- What are your expectations for my role this year?
- What strengths have you noticed in my performance?
- How can I keep contributing to the team's success?
- What development opportunities do you see for me?
- What areas should I work on improving this year?
- What new projects can I help with?

Asking questions during your performance review is important because it:



### **Shows Engagement**

Asking questions shows you're involved in your review, committed to improving and care about your success and the organization's.

### **Builds a Strong Relationship with Your Leader**

Questions invite feedback and create a two-way conversation, helping you and your leader discuss achievements, challenges and growth. This builds trust and rapport.

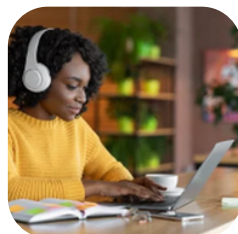


### **Clarifies Expectations and Recognition**

Asking questions helps you understand goals and feedback clearly. It also gives you a chance to celebrate your successes with your leader.

### **Promotes Career Growth**

Asking about career advancement shows your interest in learning and growing within the company. It opens up discussions on opportunities for skill development and future roles.





## Set Goals

Annual performance reviews are about both where you've been and where you're going. Setting goals helps align your work with the company's mission and shows how your efforts contribute to the bigger picture. Goals are what you aim to achieve and help measure your progress.

At WellSpan, we focus on goal-setting and professional development to keep team members engaged and growing. Setting goals should be a team effort with your leader. Research shows that when you're involved in goal setting, you're more motivated and accountable.

Goals are “the object or aim of an action, for example, to attain a specific standard of proficiency, usually within a specified time limit.”

(Locke & Latham, 2002, p. 705)

In alignment with our One Size Fits One promise, your goals should be personal, meaningful and adaptable — designed to support both your success and WellSpan's mission. By setting goals, you clarify what you want to achieve and how it helps both you and WellSpan. Regularly discussing goals with your leader connects your work to the company's bigger objectives, boosting your success.

**NOTE:** Goals may change! As priorities, team dynamics, or functions shift, goals previously set may no longer make sense in June. That's okay! Change is normal in business. The key is to adapt with those changes to remain relevant and effective.

Setting goals during performance reviews offers several benefits:



### **Clear direction**

Goals help you focus on what matters most and support learning and career growth.

### **Motivation and engagement**

Clear, achievable goals give you purpose, boost energy and increase commitment to your work.



### **Alignment with company goals**

When your goals align with the organization's, your efforts help drive overall success.



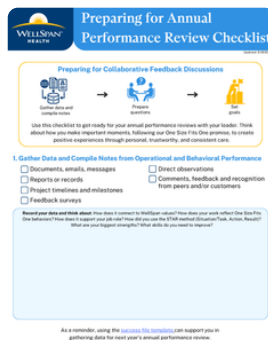
### **Evaluation and recognition**

Goals provide a way to measure progress, recognize achievements and get feedback for improvement. Celebrating accomplishments keeps you motivated.



# Preparing for Annual Performance Review Checklist and Success File Template

To prepare for the APR process, review the Checklist. It helps you record thoughts, questions and data as you get ready for your review. You can use it to write your self-evaluation and during your feedback discussion with your leader.



There's also a Success File template being provided to track your contributions, achievements, and feedback from others, like emails or patient forms. You can adjust the template as needed. Update it at least twice a month and use the STAR method to clearly describe your accomplishments.

Access the [Preparing for Annual Performance Review Checklist](#)



View and download a copy of the [Success File Template](#)

## Chapter 1 Summary

This chapter covers key steps for preparing for your annual performance review:

- Embrace a growth mindset and see feedback as a chance to improve.
- View performance reviews as collaborative discussions for open communication between you and your leader.
- Prepare by gathering relevant data on job performance and behavior.
- Prepare questions to clarify expectations and address concerns.
- Set goals that support both personal growth and organizational success.

### Resources:

- Preparing for Annual Performance Review Checklist
- Team Member Development: Success File Template
- LMS: Casual Connections: Accepting the Gift of Feedback
- LMS: Casual Connections: Setting Goals for Success

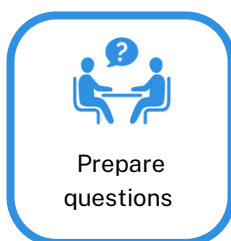
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# Unlocking Your Best Self-Evaluation

As a reminder from Chapter 1, team members should prepare carefully and use plenty of data and examples for any performance conversation, especially self-evaluations. To have a helpful and meaningful feedback discussion or annual review, team members are responsible for the following:



**Now that you're organized, you're ready to begin writing your self-evaluation.**

If you're like many team members, the thought of sitting down and writing a self-evaluation for your next performance review can feel daunting. It's no secret that nobody really loves the self-evaluation performance review process. However, it's an essential piece of the performance management process. Here's why it matters:



### **Provides insights**

- It helps you reflect on your strengths, areas for growth, and career goals.



### **Gives you a voice**

- It's your chance to speak up, ask for support and take charge of your career.



### **You know yourself best**

- You have the best understanding of your work, achievements and areas to improve.

## **What is a Self-Evaluation?**

Your self-evaluation is an opportunity to tell your unique story. In keeping with WellSpan's One Size Fits One promise, this process allows you to reflect on and highlight your strengths, reflect on your growth and set goals that align with your personal and professional aspirations. Think of them as a roadmap for your development and future success.

A self-evaluation is a process of evaluating one's performance, skills and capabilities. It lets you reflect on strengths, achievements and areas to improve.

During your self-evaluation, you'll assess your performance based on job expectations, WellSpan values and goals. This is your chance to see how well you met expectations and identify areas for support or improvement.

A self-evaluation helps you reflect on your performance, set goals and grow. It supports learning, self-improvement and career development.

Before writing your review, we'll go over what it includes and how you'll rate yourself.

For team members, your annual review will consist of WellSpan Values, Job Accountabilities and Goals. You'll rate each value, accountability and goal, and then provide a summary statement for each section.

WellSpan Values	
<i>Respect for All</i>	Rating
<i>Working as One</i>	Rating
<i>Assume Positive Intent</i>	Rating
<i>Do the Right Thing</i>	Rating
<i>Find a Better Way</i>	Rating
Comments:	

Job Accountabilities	
<i>Accountability 1</i>	Rating
<i>Accountability 2</i>	Rating
<i>Accountability 3</i>	Rating
<i>Accountability 4</i>	Rating
<i>Accountability 5</i>	Rating
Comments:	

Goals	
<i>Goal 1</i>	Rating
<i>Goal 2</i>	Rating
Comments:	

The rating continuum that is available includes:

- Does Not Meet Expectations
- Partially Meets Expectations
- Fully Meets Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations
- Far Exceeds Expectations

<div>  <div> Annual Performance Review Descriptive Ratings </div> </div>					
	Far Exceeds Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Fully Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
 As applied to WellSpan Values	Clearly, consistently, and uniquely far exceeds the established expectations of the WellSpan Value.	Frequently exceeds the established expectations of the WellSpan Value.	Fully, consistently, and completely meets the established expectations of the WellSpan Value.	Partially and inconsistently meets the established expectations for the WellSpan Value.	Does not meet the established expectations for the WellSpan Value.
 As applied to Job Accountabilities	Clearly, consistently, and uniquely far exceeds the established expectations for the job accountability in terms of quality, timeliness, processes, results, etc.	Frequently exceeds the established expectations for the job accountability in terms of quality, timeliness, processes, results, etc.	Fully, consistently, and completely meets the established expectations for the job accountability in terms of quality, timeliness, processes, results, etc.	Partially and inconsistently meets the established expectations for the job accountability in terms of quality, timeliness, processes, results, etc.	Does not meet the established expectations for the job accountability in terms of quality, timeliness, processes, results, etc.
 As applied to a Goal	Far and uniquely exceeds the established measurements and expectations for achieving the goal.	Exceeds the established measurements and expectations for achieving the goal.	Fully, consistently, and completely meets the measurements and expectations for achieving the goal.	Partially and inconsistently meets the measurements and expectations for achieving the goal.	Does not meet the measurements and expectations for achieving the goal.
 As applied to Overall Rating	Clearly, consistently, and uniquely far exceeds the performance expectations in the achievement of goals and the skills and knowledge required to perform the job responsibilities.	Frequently exceeds the performance expectations in achievement of goals and the skills and knowledge required to perform the job responsibilities.	Fully, consistently, and completely meets the performance expectations in achievement of goals and the skills and knowledge required to perform the job responsibilities.	Partially and inconsistently meets the performance expectations in achievement of goals and the skill and knowledge required to perform the job responsibilities.	Does not meet the performance expectations in achievement of goals and the skills and knowledge required to perform the job responsibilities.
 As applied to a New or Recently Promoted Team Member	Performance uniquely far exceeds expectations for team member in the first year of a new job with similar skills, experience, and capabilities.	Performance exceeds expectations for team member in the first year of a new job with similar skills, experience, and capabilities.	Performance is consistent with the normal expectations for team member in the first year of a new job with similar skills, experience, and capabilities.	Performance is below normal and inconsistent for team member in the first year of a new job with similar skills, experience, and capabilities.	Performance does not meet expectations for team member in the first year of a new job with similar skills, experience, and capabilities.

An additional component to the annual performance review is peer reviews. Please check with your leader for guidance on peer feedback requirements.

Despite their bad reputation, self-evaluations are worth taking seriously. They help you take charge of your growth, set goals, showcase strengths and share your needs and achievements with your leader.

It eliminates performance review bias and ensures mutual understanding.

It boosts your confidence and satisfaction.

It's the key to your career development and future success.

## What to Include in Your Self-Evaluation

At WellSpan, we recognize that growth is personal. Using the One Size Fits One approach, we encourage honest reflection and individualized development plans that support your career journey while aligning with organizational success.

When writing a self-evaluation, focus on key parts of your performance. Be sure to include:



### **Overall performance:**

Focus on entire review period, not just recent accomplishments. Include achievements, challenges and growth.



### **Job responsibilities and accountabilities:**

Evaluate how well you have fulfilled your job responsibilities and accountabilities. Provide specific examples to support your assessment.



### **Goals and objectives:**

Assess your progress in achieving the goals that were set. Discuss accomplishments, adjustments, and obstacles and how you managed them.



### **Skills and competencies:**

Consider your skills and competencies relevant to your role. Provide examples on how you have utilized these skills to contribute to projects or tasks.

**Collaboration and communication:**

Reflect on how well you have worked with others, contributed to a positive team dynamic and effectively communicated information.

**Strengths and areas for growth:**

Highlight unique capabilities and their positive impact in your work. Be honest where you could enhance your skills or knowledge.

**Professional development:**

Reflect on your commitment to professional growth and development. Share training that you've attend as well as your plans for future growth.

**Self-reflection and feedback:**

Demonstrate your ability to reflect on feedback and learn from it. Emphasize your commitment to continuous improvement.

## Writing Self-Evaluation Best Practices

Writing a self-evaluation is an important career skill. It gives you a voice in your review and helps shape your growth. Let's go over some best practices to make it meaningful.

**Be honest, objective and most importantly be yourself.**

A strong, authentic self-evaluation reflects your real strengths and achievements while openly acknowledging areas for growth.

**Expert tip:**

When sharing an area for growth, include what you're doing to improve and how your leader can support you.

This shows honesty, accountability and a growth mindset.

**Expert tip:**

Using the Success File tool helps you track accomplishments all year, making it easier to find strong examples for your self-evaluation.

**Use specific examples.**

Your self-evaluation is stronger with clear examples. Share a few key accomplishments with data that show how you uphold WellSpan values and job accountabilities. Focus on results to highlight your success.

**Review performance materials.**

Your job description and accountabilities are helpful for identifying key responsibilities and goals. Use them to assess your performance in each area.

**Expert tip:**

Start by reviewing your last performance review. It helps you see progress, address feedback and guide your self-evaluation.

## Use positive language.

Focus on growth, not failures. Even when discussing challenges, show your willingness to improve and offer solutions when possible.

### Expert tip:

Avoid negative words like “failed.” Instead, focus on what you learned and how you’re improving. For example, say, “Missed deadlines showed me I need better time management, so I’ve started...” Use phrases like “I found benefit from...” or “I work best when...”

### Expert tip:

Link achievements to WellSpan’s culture or goals.

At WellSpan, we value innovation. In your self-evaluation, highlight any new ideas you’ve shared or put into action.

## Link achievements to goals.

Review your goals, highlight progress and share key accomplishments. If you faced challenges, explain how you handled them to show your commitment.

## Review and revise

After writing your self-evaluation, check for anything missing. Make sure it reflects your thoughts and goals for the review.

### Expert tip:

Proofread for spelling, grammar and clarity. A well-written self-evaluation shows professionalism and ensures your message is clear.



## Seek feedback

Your self-evaluation should be a two-way conversation. Get input from peers to highlight teamwork, growth and progress on key skills.

### Expert tip:

Check past reviews, emails, chats, meetings and recognition tools for feedback. Use it to show growth and how you've responded to past advice.

### Expert tip:

Set clear career goals, like:

- “I want to improve communication by...”
- “I will build emotional intelligence by attending...”
- “I plan to develop programming skills by learning...”

## Share career goals

Use your self-evaluation to discuss growth opportunities. Highlight skills to build and how they benefit you and the team. Clear goals help your leader support your development.



## Feedback Form

Getting feedback from peers gives a full picture of your performance. During the annual review, you and your leader can request input from others to gain different perspectives and create a holistic view of your performance.



Peer feedback boosts growth, teamwork and well-being. A 2015 study found it has twice the impact of leader feedback on workplace happiness.

So many of us shy away  
from providing  
our peers with feedback.

What do you think  
contributes to our shyness?

**If a team  
member solicits  
feedback, their  
direct leader  
must approve  
the request to  
ensure that the  
feedback is  
unbiased.**

## STAR Framework

Meaningful feedback supports the One Size Fits One promise by ensuring that every team member receives guidance tailored to their unique contributions. But this can be tricky. One way to navigate this is to use a feedback framework or method. A framework gives you a tool to adapt your feedback based on the situation and person.

The STAR method by DDI, Development Dimensions International, helps give clear, fact-based feedback. It focuses on actions and results, showing impact while reducing emotional reactions. By using the STAR method, you can provide clear, personal and impactful feedback that drives improvement and recognition.



**Situation/Task:** Describe the specific task or situation, including details like the project, team, challenge and goal.

**Action:** Explain what you did to address the task or situation. Be specific.

**Result:** Share the outcome of your actions, showing why they were effective. Include both measurable and non-measurable results.

## STAR Framework Example:

**S/T (Situation/Task):** “You’ve been working on the team that’s implementing our new supply chain software.”

**A (Action):** “In the stand-up meetings, you are constantly interrupting the conversation and refusing to accept other people’s ideas.”

**R(Result):** “Everyone has shut down, and, to make matters worse, the implementation is at least three months behind schedule.”

The STAR method works for positive feedback, but for developmental feedback, we add Alternative Action (AA) and Alternative Result (AR). This helps turn missed opportunities into learning moments for better future performance.



ST: Situation/Task  
A: Action  
R: Result  
A: Alternative Action  
R: Alternative Result

Let's revisit the same example and add the alternative action and alternative result.

### **Extended STAR Framework Example:**

“You’ve been working on the team that’s implementing our new supply chain software. In the stand-up meetings, you are constantly interrupting the conversation and refusing to accept other people’s ideas. Everyone has shut down, and, to make matters worse, the implementation is at least three months behind schedule.”

**AA (Alternative Action):** “Instead, during the stand-up meeting, you could’ve asked the team for their ideas.”

**ER (Enhanced Result):** “I think this would have led to more engagement and greater input from the team which could have helped keep the implementation on track.”

Even better than sharing, asking the person to suggest an alternative action and result increases their commitment to change.

Whether using STAR or STAR/AR, feedback should be timely, balanced and specific. It can highlight what went well or suggest a better approach for future success. Both methods focus on behavior and impact, not personal opinions.

# Self-Evaluation Feedback Examples

## Example 1:

Self-Evaluation Performance Statement:

*"I always use excellent listening skills with patients."*



## A better response may be:

*"I showed strong listening skills in many patient interactions by addressing both subtle and obvious concerns. For example, with an elderly patient, I asked her about her best care experience to understand her needs better. I used this information to improve her care plan. After her discharge, she gave high marks on the feedback survey, mentioning how I took the time to listen and address her concerns. She also continues to recommend WellSpan as the top healthcare provider."*

## Example 2:

Self-Evaluation Performance Statement:

*"I understand the business and as a result am a real asset to our team."*



## A better response may be:

*"This year, I focused on understanding University General's challenges and how our OR products could help. Within two weeks, I set up OR observation visits. After my first visit, I realized how often probes are used. I met with the client to ask questions, which led to two key findings:*

- 1. Adding one new system would reduce patient downtime to 40% and increase daily procedures by 10, still within guidelines.*
- 2. An in-service would improve efficiency and help the team understand the system's benefits. As a result, University General bought an additional system and praised the improved efficiency and knowledge from the in-service."*

Self-evaluations can feel overwhelming, so prepare by reviewing your progress and goals. Use specific examples, focus on people and encourage open communication when giving feedback. This supports growth, celebrates success and promotes learning at WellSpan.

Self-reflection questions help you understand your thoughts, behaviors and experiences. The catalog includes questions to guide career reflection and phrases to assist in writing self-evaluations or peer feedback. Use it anytime, especially during performance reviews.

Need help? Check out our self-reflection catalog: [“Unlocking Your Best Self-Evaluation: Key Questions & Phrases.”](#)



## Chapter 2 Summary

This chapter covered key steps to prepare for your annual performance review, including:

- Adopting a growth mindset and seeing feedback as an opportunity to improve.
- Viewing performance reviews as collaborative discussions to enhance communication and understanding with your leader.
- Preparing by gathering job performance data and examples of professional behavior.
- Asking thoughtful questions to clarify expectations and concerns.
- Setting goals to align with your development and organizational objectives.

These steps help you approach your review confidently, focused on growth and improvement.

### Resources:

- LMS: Casual Connections: Developing Positive Self-Talk
- Team Member Development: Job Accountability



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# Engaging in Collaborative Feedback Discussions

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Your annual performance review is a chance to discuss your progress with your leader. Let's review key ideas from the last two chapters to help you prepare for this conversation.



Growth  
Mindset



STAR  
Feedback  
Framework



Preparation  
Items



Power of  
Words



Collaborative  
Feedback  
Discussions

Most people would rather visit the dentist than get an email about annual performance reviews! These reviews can feel stressful and like just another task on your to-do list.

Take a moment to write down words you associate with performance reviews. Do they match the word cloud below?



Before we dive into strategies for performance feedback, let's take our word association a step further and explore the worries you may be experiencing when it comes to annual performance discussions.

Take a moment to write down your concerns about performance discussions. Then, compare them to the list below.

- Fear of negative feedback
- Concern about impact on salary or growth opportunities
- Anxiety about the unknown in the review process
- Doubts about fairness, bias or inconsistencies
- Frustration with the time and effort required
- Worries about clear and effective communication

Pause and reflect.

Did any of your concerns match the list? How do they connect to having effective, meaningful feedback discussions?



Next, write down your hopes or aspirations for your performance feedback discussions, then compare it to the list below.

- Feeling valued for hard work and contributions
- Getting helpful feedback for growth
- Clarifying goals and expectations for the year ahead
- Access to support, training and career opportunities
- Open and honest communication with leadership
- A motivating review with clear action steps



Pause and reflect.

What inspired your desire for better feedback discussions?  
What steps can you take to make them a reality?

## Seeking Feedback

Seeking feedback means asking others for input on your performance, behavior or ideas. At WellSpan, we seek feedback with an open mind, knowing it helps us grow. By embracing appreciation, empathy and trust — key components of One Size Fits One — we create stronger, more effective teams.

What steps or actions can you take to ensure that you are effectively seeking feedback?  
How can you ensure that you receive the specific feedback you are seeking?

### Tips for Seeking Feedback:

- Be clear about what feedback you need.
- Ask for honesty.
- Focus on how it helps you grow.
- Listen with curiosity.
- Seek feedback often.
- Show appreciation.
- Reflect and take action.

Regularly seeking feedback helps you improve, stay engaged and build strong relationships while showing your commitment to learning and growth.

# Types of Feedback

Feedback is a powerful tool for growth. It helps with teamwork, problem-solving and building trust. Seeking feedback can unlock your full potential.

There are two types:

- Positive feedback – reinforces what's working.
- Developmental feedback – helps improve and grow.

## Positive Feedback

- Communication that focuses on strengths, achievements or successes
- About helping an individual feel motivated and engaged in their work
- Recognizes skills that have positively contributed to the organization
- Creates a supportive environment characterized by increased engagement and productivity

## Developmental Feedback

- Useful tool to improve the standard of work
- Aimed at achieving a positive outcome
- Encourages long-term growth
- Promotes future development and success
- Fosters open communication
- Demonstrates care
- Builds trust

Despite understanding that developmental feedback is necessary, it can still lead to feelings of uncomfortableness, uneasiness or even intimidation and other defensive reactions.

### How do you combat this deflective or defensive response?

To handle feedback without getting defensive, focus on managing emotions, staying open and building a growth mindset.

Being receptive to feedback helps you learn, adapt and improve. It requires openness, humility and a willingness to grow.

Here are some techniques to stay open to feedback and avoid the "fight or flight" response, where you either reject feedback or shut down.

Transform your thinking to avoid defensiveness; adopt a growth mindset.

Actively listen to learn, reflect on what was said, and seek details by asking questions.

Be mindful of your body language, emotions and engage in self de-escalation.



## Effective Communication

Receptivity skills help you listen, process feedback and build trust. As a team member, it's important to actively engage in feedback discussions. Strengthening these skills promotes open communication, teamwork and continuous growth.



Active  
Listening



Nonverbal  
Communication



Emotional  
Intelligence  
and Empathy



Deescalation  
Techniques /  
Strategies

# Active Listening



What do we mean by active listening?  
How is this different from “normal” listening?  
How do you know when someone is actively listening?

In communication, especially in feedback discussions, active listening is important because it shows respect and value for the other person’s needs, concerns and ideas as the listener is actively signaling the other person matters to them. Active listening embraces WellSpan’s One Size Fits One promise to build trust and create a supportive workplace culture.

Active listening means being fully present — putting away distractions, focusing on the speaker and using all your senses.



Active listening is a communication skill that involves going beyond simply hearing the words that another person speaks. It's about actively processing and authentically seeking to understand the meaning and intent behind them. It requires being a mindful and focused participant in the communication process.

## Key aspects of active listening:

- Be Present –
  - Avoid distractions and internal dialogue.
- Be Patient –
  - Listen without interrupting or rushing to respond.
- Clarify & Summarize –
  - Ask questions and restate key points to ensure understanding. Some examples are listed below.
- Take Notes –
  - Record key takeaways and next steps.

Restating or summarizing could sound like:

It sounds like  
what you're  
saying is...

So, what I'm  
hearing is...

If I understand  
correctly, you're  
expressing that...

Active listening creates a safe space for open, effective feedback discussions.



If you find active listening techniques difficult, **you are not alone**. Active listening is a skill that can be developed. Please see Casual Connections: How to Be an Active Listener in the LMS.

## Nonverbal Communication



While the key to success in both personal and professional relationships lies in your ability to communicate well, it's not the words that you use but your nonverbal cues or "body language" that speak the loudest.

Gestures, posture, tone and eye contact send strong messages, even in silence. These cues can build trust or cause confusion.



Eye contact



Facial expressions



Cadence of speech



Gestures



Space & proximity



Silence



Posture



Tone of voice



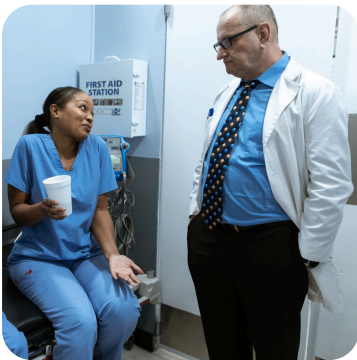
Touch

As much as 65% of a person's communication is unspoken. Paying attention to these nonverbal cues can tell you a lot about the person and what they are trying to say.

What types of nonverbal communication do you know?

How can nonverbal cues help meet personal needs and support a helpful feedback discussion?

Nonverbal communication in feedback discussions enhances the richness and effectiveness of the communication process. Positive body language builds trust and improves communication. However, nonverbal cues can vary across cultures. Be mindful of differences, watch for reactions and ensure your message is understood to avoid misunderstandings and strengthen relationships.



# Emotional Intelligence and Empathy



Empathy and emotional intelligence are key skills in feedback discussions.

## Let's think about this:

What would a feedback discussion be like without empathy or emotional intelligence? How would the person giving feedback come across? How might the person receiving feedback react?

**Emotional intelligence** is defined as the ability to understand and manage your emotions, as well as recognize and influence the emotions of those around you.



Feedback can stir emotions like embarrassment, anger or pride. Since feedback may not match how someone sees themselves, it can trigger strong reactions. In these moments, having empathy is important, especially if the other person gets defensive. People become defensive when they don't feel safe. As part of the conversation, it's your job to understand and care about their experience.

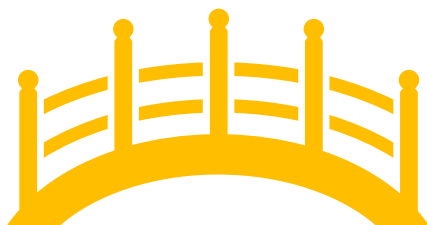
Empathy, which is part of emotional intelligence, helps create a safe, supportive space for growth and teamwork.

Empathy:

- Builds trust
- Encourages open communication
- Promotes collaboration
- Strengthens relationships

**Empathy** is the ability to emotionally understand what other people feel; seeing things from their point of view and imagining yourself in their place.

Empathy in feedback discussions establishes trust, creates a positive environment and facilitates effective communication.



Just as a bridge connects two separate shores, emotional intelligence and empathy bridge the gap between leaders and their team, foster strong relationships and drive team engagement.

If you are interested in learning more, please see Emotional Intelligence: For Staff and Casual Connections: Self-Awareness: The Foundations of Emotional Intelligence in the LMS.

# Self De-escalation Technique: P.A.U.S.E Framework



Emotions can run high in conflicts caused by misunderstandings, disagreements or built-up frustration. It's important to regain control before things escalate. De-escalation starts in the mind, using social cues, verbal and nonverbal communication to calm the situation. It takes patience and commitment, as resolution may take time.

Learning to self de-escalate is a mix of awareness, strategy and communication. The P.A.U.S.E. framework can help you stay in control during tense moments.



**P**ay attention to my body, thoughts and feelings.  
*What happens to my body when I get upset?*



**A**ssess what is activating me.  
*What feelings am I having? Do I feel heard or misunderstood? Am I upset by this or something else?*



**U**nderstand the roots of my feelings.  
*What values feel challenged? Am I disagreeing or trying to maintain control?*



**S**et boundaries, separate, ensure safety.  
*If you can't show respect, step away, set boundaries and return when calmer. Everyone deserves to feel safe.*



**E**mpathize with those involved.  
*Everyone deserves respect. How am I perceived? How do my actions affect others? What are they expressing? How can we build understanding?*



Remember that every conversation is unique. Ensure to align your behavior with what is needed to foster a healthy and productive work environment.

Self-De-escalation resources are available to support you. For more information, please see [Casual Connections: Psychological Safety: Can We Create It?](#) in LMS.

## Concluding the Discussion

Before ending the feedback discussion, take these key steps:

1. **Summarize & Confirm Understanding** – Review key points, goals and any agreed-upon actions, especially for developmental feedback.
2. **Create an Action Plan** – Outline next steps to support growth and improvement.
3. **Look Ahead** – Performance reviews lead into goal setting and development planning.

Every conversation should leave you feeling heard, valued and supported — hallmarks of WellSpan's One Size Fits One promise. Meaningful feedback fosters continuous growth and strengthens our commitment to each other.

## Chapter 3 Summary

This chapter explored collaborative feedback discussions and the emotions tied to performance reviews.

- **Seeking Feedback:** Embrace both positive (strengths) and developmental (areas for growth) feedback as tools for improvement.
- **Effective Communication:** Use active listening, nonverbal cues, emotional intelligence, and empathy to foster understanding.
- **Self-De-escalation:** Apply the P.A.U.S.E. technique to manage emotions during feedback discussions.

Collaborative feedback drives growth, accountability and strong work relationships.

Resources available in the LMS:

- Casual Connections: How to Be an Active Listener
- Emotional Intelligence: For Staff
- Casual Connections: Self-Awareness: The Foundation of Emotional Intelligence
- Casual Connections: Psychological Safety: Can We Create It?

## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## **Maximizing Your Performance Review**

At WellSpan, we believe that feedback should be personal, trustworthy and consistent - hallmarks of our One Size Fits One promise. By embracing open communication, appreciation and meaningful discussions, we ensure that every performance review is a stepping stone toward growth, engagement and success.

Your annual review is more than a formality — it's a chance to grow, reflect and plan for the future. By preparing, writing a thoughtful self-evaluation and staying open to feedback, you can shape your development and drive meaningful change.

