

FACILITATING PRESIDENTIAL EFFECTIVENESS:

THE PERIODIC COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

What is a comprehensive performance assessment?

- Offers an in-depth look at presidential performance over a multi-year period. Sometimes referred to as a 360 degree assessment, it typically includes feedback from the key constituencies with whom the president interacts
- Typically conducted at the end of a multi-year contract prior to contract renewal
- Augments the annual performance assessment

Why conduct a periodic comprehensive assessment?

- Offers the president and the Board a more complete picture of leadership effectiveness. Most annual performance assessments are based on limited input. A comprehensive assessment provides a broad picture of performance from the viewpoint of all the key constituents
- Provides the Board important information for determining terms and priorities for the next multi-year contract
- Is an important component of an effective presidential compensation process and helps fulfill IRS requirements for compensation review
- Helps establish a culture of candid feedback and professional improvement within the institution. Often it is the catalyst to conduct similar comprehensive reviews with the senior leadership team

What are the hallmarks of an effective process?

- Included as a term of the multi-year contract prior to its occurrence
- Conducted by a neutral third party not affiliated with the institution
- Constituencies to provide input jointly determined by Board and president including who and how many individuals from each constituency
- Purpose and process for the comprehensive assessment clearly communicated to all involved. It should be clear the assessment is for the purpose of continued presidential growth and improvement, not in response to performance issues
- Areas to be assessed tailored to the individual and institution. Typically, these include a wide range of general leadership skills (communications, decision making, delegation, etc.) as well as specific job skills such as strategic planning, financial management, fundraising, etc
- A carefully designed survey instrument is administered electronically to generate constituency feedback. Small focus groups also may be used to expand on information gained via the surveys. Care must be given to maintain the anonymity of respondents
- Feedback is summarized by the third party conducting the assessment then given to the Board chair or chair of the performance review committee. It also is shared both in writing and in face-to-face discussion with the president
- Results are used by the president and the Board to identify presidential goals and professional growth priorities for the next contract.