

Conferencing Template for Summative Evaluations

Conferencing Phase I: Providing a Focus for the Conference

To best provide a focus for the conference, set the proper tone by letting the teacher know that the conference will be a professional experience. Sample statements include:

- “I appreciate you taking the time to meet today to discuss your overall performance for the school year.”
- “Thank you for meeting with me today to discuss your summative evaluation.”
- “Thanks for meeting today. I appreciate how seriously you take your professional growth.”

Next, provide an overview or outline for the conference. People like it when they know what to expect during a conference. Use this phase of the conference to lay out the plan for your time with the teacher. Sample statements include:

- “During this conference, I’d like to share some of my thoughts about your performance this school year. I’d then like to hear some of your thoughts or feedback about how you feel you’ve done. Then we’ll talk about how we can use both perspectives to develop your summative evaluation document.”
- “In today’s summative conference, I’ll share the overall strengths I saw when looking at multiple data sources related to your performance. Then we’ll work together to develop your professional growth plan for the next school year.”
- “Today, we are here to discuss your summative evaluation conference. I’ll ask you to sum up your thoughts and perspectives for the year, and then I’ll share my feedback on your overall performance. Finally, we’ll look at strategies for the next school year.”

Conferencing Phase II: Gaining Information and Feedback About the Teaching Performance

During the second phase, ask the teacher questions to help him or her reflect on his or her performance for the year. Also ask the teacher to share the data used to develop his or her conclusions (used for all summative conferences). It is important to gather the teacher’s perceptions of his or her performance during the year and the evidence or data he or she used to develop these perceptions. Be sure to ask the teacher to share the data he or she used to develop this conclusion and tell you how these data relate to his or her performance. Don’t just accept a teacher’s perception if you have a different opinion about his or her performance. Sample statements include:

- “As you think back on your year, how do you think things went overall? What went well? What didn’t go as planned?”
- “From your perspective, what are some of your strengths as a teacher? What are some of your limitations or areas where you could continue to grow as a teacher?”
- “As you think about your performance this year, talk about your areas of growth, and then share areas that continue to challenge you.”

Next, provide specific feedback including examples of effective teaching practices. Share your positive rating or score within each area. Share the evidence or rationale you used to develop that rating. Ask the teacher for his or her perspective.

During this part of the conference, provide the teacher with his or her effective performance ratings and the evidence you used to develop these ratings. In many cases, you may not have comprehensive data to document each score, so you'll want to involve the teacher in the discussion of the effective measures. You may decide to adjust your ratings as a result of the teacher's feedback or perspective of his or her overall performance. Sample statements include:

- "I have had a chance to review all of the data related to your teaching performance this year. Let me share your areas of strength and how I rated your overall performance. The strongest area for you is _____. In this area, I have found _____. Your efforts in this area are well above the expectations of the building; therefore I'm rating you as _____."
- "In my observations, I've been able to see some positive trends in your teaching. Let me share a few of them here and how they impacted your overall summative evaluation rating."
- "While there are many areas where you are doing a good job, three teaching areas stand out above the others. Let me share specific examples, of when I've seen these used in your classroom, and the impact I observed on the students in your classes."

Next, present information about growth needs or areas that need to be changed in the future. Share the summative scores for these areas and the data or rationale used to develop these scores. Let the teacher share his or her perspective on the areas for growth and the summative scores.

In this part of the conference, discuss or explain any areas in the summative report where the teacher has scores that indicate growth is needed. You'll want to get the teacher's perspective on these areas so you can determine if there are data you missed in determining the teacher's summative performance score. You'll also want to let the teacher share any background information that might help explain any apparent deficits in the area. Some of the information you gain from the teacher may justify adjusting his or her summative score, may help you establish a focus for the upcoming year, or may require the teacher to be more involved in gathering data for documentation. In any case, you'll want to be open to listening to the feedback of the teacher while also being aware that you may need to stand firm on your summative score even if you and the teacher have different perspectives. As the evaluator, you are the authority who determines the final performance evaluation score. Sample statements include:

- "In your overall teaching performance, one area that was not quite as effective as it could be was _____. I rated the area as needs continued emphasis. I'll share the data I used to rate this area and then let you share some of the data you have for this area."
- "As a result of the walkthroughs I've conducted this year and our work together in examining your curriculum units, I notice the area of content knowledge is still an area

where you need to continue to grow. Let's talk about this area, your summative score, and plans to continue to address this area in the future."

Conferencing Phase III: Ensuring the Major Recommendations From the Conference and the Summative Evaluation Are Applied in the Classroom

In the third phase, begin by asking questions to make sure the teacher understands both the strengths and the growth areas related to his or her performance and the expectations for the next evaluation cycle. Understanding the teacher's strengths and areas of needed refinement are key to the evaluation process. If you are working to measure the teaching performance (evaluation), you'll want to ensure that the teacher understands the scope of his or her performance. If you are working to help your teachers grow (supervision), you'll want to make sure the teacher understands the needed areas of growth and the strengths he or she possesses that may assist in his or her growth. Example questions include:

- "I want to make sure you are successful in changing _____. What are the areas we talked about today that are strengths for you? What are the areas we talked about where you need to grow? How can you use your strengths to help work with your areas for growth?"
- "If you were going to share the major points of our discussion with _____, what would they be?"
- "This conversation was very productive and important to your future here at _____. What's your understanding of my expectations for your teaching?"
- "Before we leave today, let's take a minute to review what was discussed and what we agreed on as a result of our time together."

Finally, share the plan for follow-up to ensure that the recommended changes are made in the classroom. Follow-up is essential to the success of any teacher evaluation process. In this section of the conference, you'll develop strategies to work with the teacher to maintain his or her existing skill set and to make the needed changes to help him or her grow as a teacher. Sample statements include:

- "We both agree that _____ is an important area for you to use in your teaching. How do you plan to continue to grow in this area?"
- "Now that we both are on the same page about your teaching, let's talk about how we can integrate this aspect into your next professional growth goal."
- "In order to support you through this change, it would be good for you to think about how you can use the peer review part of our evaluation plan to _____."
- "You are scheduled to be in the informal evaluation phase next year. I want to continue to formally observe you in the area of _____ so we can work together to help you keep growing. Let's talk about _____."