



\*\*\* Some parking lot questions edited for grammar and style purpose \*\*\*



**1. To whom do we speak about suggesting amendments to the current HEAR Process guidelines**

Please submit your suggestions to [hear@houstontx.gov](mailto:hear@houstontx.gov). Your suggestions will be escalated to the appropriate HEAR project team member. While all suggestions may not be implemented, those that are must be approved by the HR Director.

**2. I have a suggestion; people who have not trained before should be partnered with an experienced trainer. Shouldn't trainers be paired with one person consistently so that each becomes familiar with the other person and can learn each other's strengths and weaknesses?**

All HEAR adjunct faculty will be paired with another faculty member in an effort to ensure a balance in knowledge, skills, and abilities. Adjuncts will not be activated until November and December, and it is recommended that the paired-adjunct spend some time getting to know each other and attend one of the face-to-face sessions together prior to facilitating their training sessions.

**3. Can the wording be changed to "required" to meet at least twice a year to discuss an employee's performance progress"? Referring to Page 7 of the Participant Manual, what happened to: "Empowering employees – Actually meeting with employee 2Xs a year (coaching opportunities)"? Who wrote the HEAR Process Guidelines, and who proof-read its content?**

The HEAR Process Guidelines were constructed by the Performance Management System Implementation (PMSI) team and reviewed by department directors, Legal, HR editorial committee, and HR Director. The HR Director had final approval authority. The language change to "required," will be reviewed and considered by the PMSI team, but most likely will not be changed due to the language approved by Legal.

**4. Should an exit HEAR (assessment) be completed upon termination or resignation?**

While the HEAR Guidelines are silent on the issue, it can be inferred from the duties of a manager / supervisor that one be conducted as a matter of record and for future reference.

**5. If a department has a training room, can we hold sessions on-site?**

Trainings are conducted at the EB Cape Center or at EB Cape Center-designated facilities only as a matter of accounting. Once official trainings have been completed at the end of December, 2012, if a department wishes to conduct their own unofficial trainings on the HEAR process, it will be at their discretion and direction.

At the direction of the HR Director, exceptions were granted to certain departments whose number of employees or other extenuating circumstance justified their facilitating



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 training at other external sites. However, these trainings are conducted within EB Cape Center training policy by EB Cape Center-trained adjunct facilitators.

**6. When are HEAR plans created / presented to the employee (for example: as a new hire, when promoted or transferred, annually)?**

For a new hire, as soon as practicable so the employee is duly informed of his / her duties and can proceed with at least some basis for assessment.

As stated in the AP 3-20, Pg 4 of 4, item 7.2.1 – 7.2.3:

“Performance assessments should be conducted during the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) and the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) month of a new hire’s probationary period, and then annually thereafter”.

“For promotions with a change in pay grade, a five (5) month assessment should be conducted”.

“For all municipal employees, annual assessments are to be conducted in April (non-supervisors) and May (supervisors and managers)”.

**7. Prior to HEAR Training, supervisors / managers should attend SMART goal training.**

Part of the structure of the face-to-face Train-the-Trainer training sessions is to incorporate SMART Goal training. It would have been nice to have separate training, but time constraints dictated incorporated training vice separate.

**8. Would it benefit supervisors / managers to have a ‘benefits of HEAR’ script that matches the audience of employees?**

The current facilitator’s manual was developed to disseminate the process. The actual audience-specific manual is still under development, but will be ready by the time it is necessary to address specific audiences.

**9. Would it be beneficial to develop audience-specific messages to ‘sell’ the personal benefits of the changes related to HEAR to managers?**

**10. When asked, “What is the HEAR system?” (Not the process), how do we respond?**



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HEAR *is* a process, not a system. For a system to work, you need People, Process, and Application. Currently, supervisors and managers (the People) are being trained in the Process of implementing HEAR. HEAR is a noun in this case, not a verb. The acronym reads, 'Houston Employee Assessment and Review'. The Application is forthcoming, and is still under development.

**11. Where is the information entered and stored?**

Currently, employee work plans are stored in the old PI (Performance Impact) system or other storage places. Supervisors / managers are to extract / export them and store them somewhere on their hard drive; they are still valid work plans and something for employees to work towards for the end of the 2012 assessment and review cycle. As the HEAR process continues to develop and the final application is rolled out, this information will be populated by the supervisors / managers.

**12. Is there a web-based system, and will training be provided on how to use it?**

The HEAR web-based application will be coming online soon with baseline functionality. Supervisors/ managers will be able to create work plans and complete reviews in 2013. When all core components, people, process, and application is working and online, that is when HEAR will become a fully functional system.