

Rater Evaluation Errors

When evaluating an employee's performance, be aware of the following evaluation errors:

	Definition	Example
Recency Effect	The tendency to evaluate an employee's performance based on his/her most recent behavior	Terry gave her employee a low rating on Teamwork and Cooperation because he did not solicit input from another department in the last project. However, throughout the year, Terry had actively worked with other groups from various departments.
Halo Effect	The tendency to make generalizations from one aspect of the employee's performance to all other behaviors	Pat's outstanding communication skills caused his manager to give him high ratings on other competencies where he actually needed development.
Similar-to-me Effect	The tendency of a rater to rate employees who resemble themselves more highly than other employees who are different from the rater	Karen was a manager who was happily married with two children. She tended to rate other women with families higher than their performance warranted.
Central Tendency	The tendency to rate employees in the middle even when their performance warrants a higher or lower rating	Michael did not want to confront his employee with negative feedback therefore he gave him with a Successful Performer rating on all the assigned competencies.
Positive or Negative Leniency	The tendency to rate employees higher or lower than their performance warrants	Diane rates all her employees lower than they deserve because she has created impossibly high standards for Exceptional Performance.
Contrast Effect	The tendency to evaluate employees in comparison to their peers rather than against the standards of their jobs	Chris had an outstanding employee on his team that always exceeded expectations and therefore gave all other employees Successful Performer – Minus ratings when in fact they met the expectations of the job.

Ways to improve rater accuracy:

- Focus on behavior over time
- Gather behavioral examples to validate performance
- Look for patterns and trends
- Verify your understanding with the employee