

INCREASING EQUITY AT THE WORKPLACE

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT
AND FEEDBACK SYSTEM TOOLKIT



**STEP 4:
GENERATE IDEAS FOR
INNOVATION**



BOSTON COLLEGE

School of Social Work

WORK EQUITY

Directors

Marcie Pitt-Catsoupes, PhD

Samuel L. Bradley, Jr., DSW

Kathleen Christensen, PhD

Work Equity is an initiative of the Center for Social Innovation at the Boston College School of Social Work.

www.bc.edu/workequity

Questions?

Please contact us at workequity@bc.edu

Work Equity is grateful for funding received from WorkRise for the National Study of Workplace Equity. We are also appreciative of our partnership with SHRM and its support of this study. To read more about this study, go to: <https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/ssw/sites/center-for-social-innovation/projects/the-national-study-of-workplace-equity.html>



4.0 Introduction

We have organized Step 4 of the Toolkit for the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System into two sections.

Section 1: The tasks in this section will help your organization generate ideas for innovations that can strengthen the equity of your overall Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System, using the seven Levers for Change.

Section 2: Recognizing that innovations in employee performance assessment and feedback practices – one of the Levers for Change – can be catalysts for deep change in the equity of the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System, your organization will focus particular attention on employee performance assessment and feedback in Section 2.

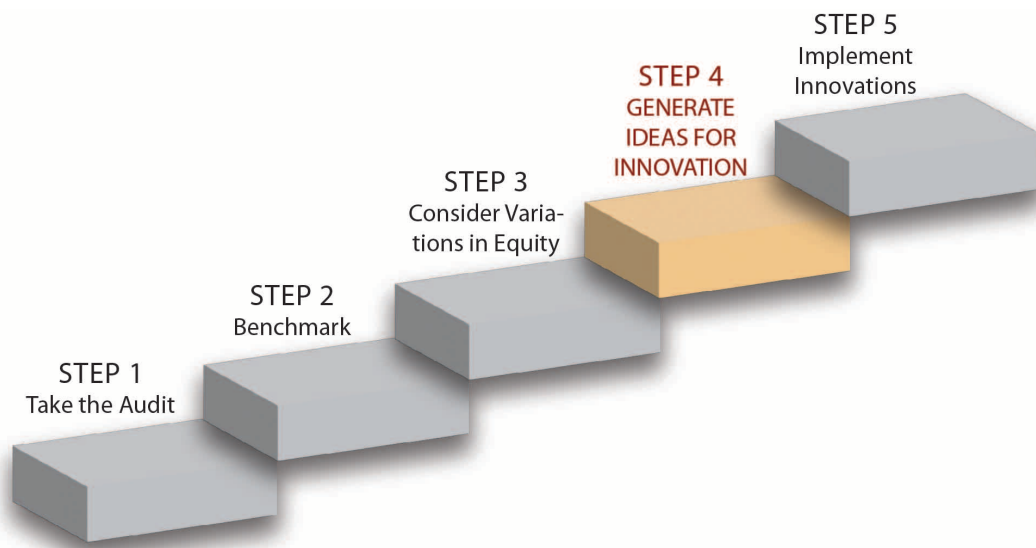


Figure 10: Step 4 of the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The process of design thinking values the diverse perspectives which can emerge from group conversations and debates. (See “Overview of the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit.”)

In consultation with your Equity Initiative Committee, the Leader(s) of your Equity Initiative should decide how to best engage different groups of employees in discussions about innovations that can strengthen the equity of your organization’s Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System.

Option 1: Your organization could invite the members of your DEI Committee to participate in one (or more) brainstorming activity.

Option 2: You might convene discussion groups (for example, brown bag lunches, focus groups, etc.) with employees who are affiliated with specific demographic and social identity groups to discuss innovations in your Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System that could address some of their priorities and preferences.

4.2 Step 4 Tasks (Section 1 and Section 2)

Section 1: Tasks to Assess the Equity of Your Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System

As noted in the Overview of this Toolkit, Work Equity recognizes that your organization has at its disposal seven mechanisms that have the potential to address some of the root causes of inequities embedded in your organization's employment systems. We refer to these mechanisms as Levers for Change. (Please see the "Overview of the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit" for the discussion of the Levers for Change.)

Each of the nine questions in the audit of the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System (Step 1) addresses one of the seven Levers for Change:

1. Policies (Question #1)
2. Practices (Question #2)
3. Planning/Evaluation (Question #3)
4. Assignment of Roles and Accountabilities (Question #4)
5. Workplace Culture (Question #5)
6. Workplace Climate (Question #6)
7. Communication (Question #7)

Task 1: Rank Levers for Change from the Audit Items

Directions:






The Leader(s) of your Equity Initiative should put the average scores of your organization's responses to the Audit questions for employee performance assessment and feedback that you calculated in Step 1.

First, in Worksheet #7 (next page) enter the scores into Column A for each of the Levers for Change (that is, the scores for each of the items computed for Worksheet #3). Then complete Column B, ranking each of the Levers for Change by comparing the scores for each Lever.




Continue to next page 

Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit Worksheet #7

Ranking the Scores for the Levers for Change in the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System

	<p><u>Column A:</u> What was your organization's score for each lever for change? (from Worksheet 3)</p> <p>Put these scores in the open boxes below.</p>	<p><u>Column B:</u> How strong is each lever for change? Rank order them for weakest to strongest.</p> <p>1 = weakest lever (lowest mean score) 7 = strongest lever (highest mean score)</p>
 <p>Policy Lever for Change</p>		
<p>1. To what extent does your organization have written policies which ensure that the assessment of employees' performance is fair?</p>		
 <p>Practice Lever for Change</p>		
<p>2. To what extent are employees in your organization able to question the content of a performance assessment which they perceive as being unfair?</p>		
 <p>Planning and Evaluation Lever for Change</p>		
<p>3. To what extent does your organization routinely audit the fairness of the Performance Assessment System?</p>		
 <p>Assignment of Roles and Accountabilities Lever for Change</p>		
<p>4. To what extent does your organization hold one or more employees (e.g., supervisors; Director of DEI, etc.) accountable for monitoring the fairness of employee performance assessment?</p>		
<p>Worksheet continued on the next page </p>		


Worksheet #7 (continued)

	Column A: What was your organization's score for each lever for change? (from Worksheet 3) Put these scores in the open boxes below.	Column B: How strong is each lever for change? Rank order them for weakest to strongest. 1 = weakest lever (lowest mean score) 7 = strongest lever (highest mean score)
 Workplace Culture Lever for Change		
5. To what extent do the actions of your organizational leaders indicate that they believe that there is connection between the organization's DEI initiatives and the fairness of employee performance assessment?		
 Workplace Climate Lever for Change		
6. To what extent does your organization set expectations that managers and supervisors will respect the unique experiences and competencies of employees from diverse backgrounds when conducting employee performance assessments?		
 Communication Lever for Change		
7. To what extent does your organization provide employees with equitable access to information about the process of employee performance assessments?		

The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can consider the rankings of the Levers for Change in your Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System and identify opportunities to build on those that are already **strong** (that is, those that are **ranked the highest**). Summarize the observations below.

The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can identify ways to strength those Levers for Change that are currently **weak** (that is, those that are **ranked the lowest**). Summarize the observations below.



Continue to next page 










Task 2: Highlight Ideas for Innovation in the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System

Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit Worksheet #8

Directions:

The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can use the worksheet below to specify possible innovations that can address root causes of inequities.

	Levers for Change	Your Ideas for Innovation	Organizational “Stakeholders” (including decision makers) in this Innovation
	Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback Policies		
	Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback Practices	<p>Please Note: Task 3, below, elaborates on practice innovations because they can have a “multiplier effect,” opening the doors for changes in other parts of the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System.</p> <p>You might want to save your ideas for Practice Innovation until you have</p>	
	Planning and Assessment (e.g., data collection) Related to Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback		
	Assignment of Roles and Accountabilities for the Equity of Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback		
	Workplace Culture Related to Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback		
	Workplace Climate of Inclusion Related to Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback		
	Communication Related to Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback		

Section 2: Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback Practice Innovations

Task 3: Consider Ideas for Practice Innovation in Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback


Directions:

Your organization may want to adopt a design thinking process to imagine possible innovations in employee performance assessment and feedback .

Design thinking is a process that can help your Equity Initiative Committee to move from insight to action by brainstorming ideas for your organization to pilot. You can leverage design thinking to create customized equity solutions for your organization.


The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can use Worksheet #9 (next page) to guide conversations about selected best practices innovations.



Continue to next page 

Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit Worksheet #9

Options for Practice Innovation

	Is this option available? Yes or No	If this option is not available, could it be adopted by your organization? Yes or No	If this option is available to some but not all employees, could it be offered to groups of employees who currently cannot access this option? Specify which employee groups.
FEEDBACK			
Does your organization provide resources/training to supervisors so that they can provide feedback to employees with diverse backgrounds in a respectful manner?			
As part of their feedback to employees, do supervisors discuss performance in behavioral terms (for example, what performance behaviors were observed)?			
Do supervisors provide feedback to employees about performance strengths as well as weaknesses at regular interviews so that employees have opportunities to address concerns before the annual review?			
During supervisory meetings, do supervisors and employees engage in a conversation about steps that could be taken to address performance weaknesses?			
After feedback sessions, do supervisors and employees discuss how conversations about performance “have gone”, making it possible to improve the conversations in the future (for example, conducting 360° feedback)			
Worksheet continues on next page 			

Worksheet #9 (continued)



	Is this option available? Yes or No	If this option is not available, could it be adopted by your organization? Yes or No	If this option is available to some but not all employees, could it be offered to groups of employees who currently cannot access this option? Specify which employee groups.
PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT			
Does your organization provide resources/training to employees with diverse backgrounds so that they can actively engage in conversations about their work performance?			
Do employees periodically provide information about the organization’s process for performance assessment (for example, as part of the orientation for new employees)?			
Do supervisors share performance expectations with employees when annual workplans are prepared?			
Do supervisors and employees discuss whether the goals for employees’ performance are realistic and achievable, as well as fair?			
When setting annual performance goals and objective, do supervisors and employees discuss factors that might affect employee performance (for example, workload, availability of training, etc.)?			
Do supervisors and employees agree on annual performance objectives that are measurable (that is, output/deliverables and target dates are specified for all objectives)?			
During annual performance review meetings, do supervisors connect employees performance goals and objectives to the organization’s strategic priorities?			
During annual performance meetings, do supervisors and employees engage in a conversation about steps that could be taken to address performance weaknesses?			
Do supervisors provide employees with written copies of their annual performance assessments?			

Task 4: Prioritize Your Ideas for Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback Practice Innovation

Directions:

The members of your Equity Initiative Committee can use the worksheet below to list their top ideas for employee performance assessment and feedback practice innovation. The Leader(s) of your Equity Initiative can develop an “elevator speech” that can be used to present your recommendations to top managers, decision-makers, and other key stakeholders.

Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit Worksheet #10 Your Ideas for Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback Practice Innovation

Ideas for Possible Innovation	Implementation Factors
Idea # 1: Summary of Key Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose (Goals/Objectives) Draft Statement _____ • Expected (Measurable) Outcomes Draft Statement _____ • Pre-implementation Preparation (e.g., informational materials, training, etc.) Draft Statement _____ • Announcement/Enrollment Draft Statement _____ • Steps 1, 2, 3, etc. of Implementation Draft Statement _____ • Estimates of Time and Resources Needed for Implementation Draft Statement _____
Idea # 2: Summary of Key Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose (Goals/Objectives) Draft Statement _____ • Expected (Measurable) Outcomes Draft Statement _____ • Pre-implementation Preparation (e.g., informational materials, training, etc.) Draft Statement _____ • Announcement/Enrollment Draft Statement _____ • Steps 1, 2, 3, etc. of Implementation Draft Statement _____ • Estimates of Time and Resources Needed for Implementation Draft Statement _____
Worksheet continues on next page ➡	



Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit Worksheet #10 (continued)

Ideas for Possible Innovation	Implementation Factors
Idea # 3: Summary of Key Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose (Goals/Objectives) Draft Statement _____ • Expected (Measurable) Outcomes Draft Statement _____ • Pre-implementation Preparation (e.g., informational materials, training, etc.) Draft Statement _____ • Announcement/Enrollment Draft Statement _____ • Steps 1, 2, 3, etc. of Implementation Draft Statement _____ • Estimates of Time and Resources Needed for Implementation Draft Statement _____

Task 5: Present Idea(s) to Leaders, Decision-Makers, and Other Stakeholders

Share your ideas for innovation with people/groups that might be stakeholders and decision-makers employee performance assessment and feedback , as well as people who will determine whether the innovation can be pilot tested.

👉 Go to Step 5 of the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit: Implement Pilot of Innovations

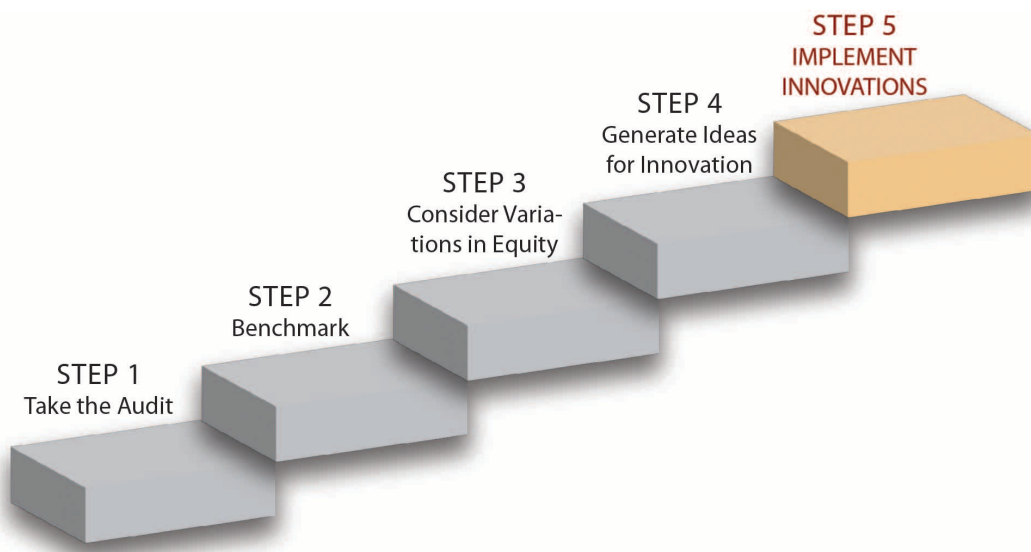


Figure 11: Step 5 of the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System Toolkit