

Examples of Great Performance Appraisal Answers to Common Questions in self-appraisal

Below, we list out six examples of common performance appraisal questions and answers that are strong, well-structured, and help managers get a better understanding of employee contributions. Take a look, or jump to a certain question using this list:

1. What was your greatest accomplishment during the last review period?
2. What was the biggest challenge you've faced?
3. What are your long- and short-term career goals?
4. Which goals didn't you meet, and why?
5. Which part of your job is your favorite?
6. How could you contribute more to the company?

1. What was Your Greatest Accomplishment During the Last Review Period?

As part of the appraisal process, your manager will always want to know what you consider to be your biggest achievement since your last performance appraisal.

The biggest mistake most people make with this question is they assume that their manager remembers not only all of the projects that the team is working on but everyone's individual involvement. Regardless of if you're in daily contact with your manager or you rarely see them, it's best to make sure that your answer to this question contains enough context for them to understand how your behavior led to success or accomplishment.

Self-appraisal Example Answer:

Project: Last year, our team started work on a project to design a new range of activity books for children.

Goal: During our initial design phase, we knew that we wanted to focus on a cut-out-and-stick activity, as this isn't something that was currently in our range.

Problem: However, previous feedback from parents showed that they wanted activity books that they could complete with their children, which is something we knew our previous range didn't encourage.

Proposed solution: So, I suggested that we design this range to encourage cooperative play. We came up with a design that bundled child-safe scissors and non-toxic glue with books of themed scenery – like a farm, or a zoo – with simple shapes to cut out in a separate book.

Result: Since launch, we've received positive feedback from parents who love these activity books, their educational value, and the time they get to spend together with their children.

Statistics: Compared to our previous launch, we sold 20% more units in the first weekend, and sales remain consistently ahead of previous ranges.

2. What was the Biggest Challenge You've Faced?

This question gives you a great opportunity to ask your manager for additional support in your job, provided that you frame your answer to this question well. The chances are that your manager is already asking this question to find out what areas you need to improve on, so make sure to use this to highlight what you want to work on.

With this, you should always remember not to point the blame on other employees, compare yourself to your coworkers, or generally appear to be “passing the buck” in any way. While some circumstances may be outside of your control, you should always discuss what you can do to improve.

Self-appraisal Example Answer:

“When Jane was let go three months ago, I was tasked with ordering the office supplies in her stead. However, I’ve found it challenging to fit this responsibility into my schedule alongside our department’s tight deadlines, and on multiple occasions, I forgot to reorder items that were requested. I think the process of restocking office supplies could be organized better with an online request form, but unfortunately, I haven’t had the opportunity to explore this option myself”

3. What are Your Long and Short-Term Career Goals?

Once you’ve [mapped out your performance goals](#) for the next review period, your manager might ask you what you want to achieve in your career or during your time with the company. This gives you the chance to highlight the areas you personally want to improve on, whether that’s learning a new skill, taking a new qualification, or working towards a promotion.

When you answer this question, make sure you emphasize how important your development will be to the company. So, if you want to pursue a new qualification, you could mention that you think there’s a skills gap in your department.

Self-appraisal Example Answer:

“In 2021, I’d like to take an advanced qualification in IT management. Of the 20 people in our department, only one other person has this qualification, so I think I can help to fill that skills gap by taking this exam”

4 Which Goals Didn’t You Meet, and Why?

This question isn’t just asking you to be accountable for falling short, but it also helps your manager to identify any gaps in your knowledge that they need to support you with. It’s your manager’s job to support you, so it’s important to answer this question honestly, and emphasize any areas that you need additional support in.

There are a wide range of reasons why you might not have met a goal, all of which can range from personal circumstances to company-wide changes that you have no control over. If you’re comfortable with talking about the reasons behind why you didn’t achieve your goal, it’s best to be honest. This demonstrates not only that you want to hold yourself accountable, but also that you know when to ask for support when you need it.

Self-appraisal Example Answer:

“I didn’t meet my goal of closing 100 tickets this month because I received multiple tickets that were outside of my current knowledge base. While I closed those tickets eventually with support from my colleagues, I think I would benefit from taking a course in IT support so I have the knowledge to handle complex tickets”

5. Which Part of Your Job is Your Favorite?

Most of the time, this feels like a trick question. However, managers genuinely want to know what their employees are passionate about and interested in, so in the future, they can assign you work that they know will work to your strengths.

It’s important to answer this question honestly, but it’s entirely possible that you’ve lost some passion for the tasks you used to enjoy. In this case, you can mention to your manager that something used to be your favorite, but changes in the company means that you no longer have any passion for it.

Self-appraisal Example Answer:

“I used to love solving tickets for the Accounting department because I have a background in this type of software. However since the IT team changed so we don’t have set departments that we respond to, I don’t get to use my software expertise to close tickets”

6. How Could You Contribute More to the Company?

This question gives you the chance to approach your larger career goals, even if that involves taking on a role in a different department. Whether you want to take on a set role in your team or want to discuss a career change, this question opens the possibility to discuss that with your manager.

Plus, if you’ve spotted a business need for your skills and want to demonstrate your proactivity, then this question gives you the ability to talk about how you can help your company in the future.

Self-appraisal Example Answer:

“Given that I have a background in SaaS, I’d like to help the company explore options for creating SaaS software that complements our products and services. I believe that our clients would greatly benefit from this, and I already have some ideas as to how I could lead this project”

Performance Appraisal Answers: In Summary

While it’s not always clear-set which questions you’ll be asked in your performance appraisal, there are certain questions that will commonly arise during your meeting. Knowing the right way of answering these questions can help you stand out in the workplace and impress your manager, as well as demonstrate your proactivity and professionalism. It’s a good idea to prepare answers to these questions ahead of time, as this can help you to avoid feeling anxious and flustered during your performance appraisal.