

The Director of Music Ministries in the Parish

Annual Reviews



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National Association of Pastoral Musicians
Director of Music Ministries Division

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The National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM) fosters the art of musical liturgy. The members of NPM serve the Catholic Church in the United States as musicians, clergy, liturgists, and other leaders of prayer.

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Part I: The Annual Review

What is an annual review?

The annual review or evaluation is a tool that is used in many businesses and professions. It gives both the employer and the employee an opportunity to assess the work of the past year and to share the joys and challenges found in the position. It gives the pastoral musician a chance to reflect on those aspects of the job that are particularly joyful and life-giving and to seek advice on those matters that cause frustration and worry.

An opportunity to increase communication

A yearly review provides an avenue for two-way input into a variety of issues. For example: Is the current position description accurate? Does it need to be adjusted for the coming year? If there is no job description, the evaluation meeting presents an opportunity to create a job description and to discuss what should be included in it. A good job description will clearly delineate the expectations of the position in writing and will help to prevent serious misunderstandings in the future.

Another potential topic for discussion is the relationship among the pastoral musician, other staff members, volunteers, and parishioners. Is the attitude of the staff and parish positive and supportive of the pastoral musician and music ministry and vice versa? If not, why? What can be done to help improve troubled relationships? What support does the pastoral musician need that he or she is not getting, and how can that support be obtained?

Benefits

Many pastoral musicians become uncomfortable at the prospect of an annual evaluation. However, the review is a great benefit to the musician, helping to build communication between the pastor and musician and providing a forum for feedback that is primarily positive, supplying support and affirmation. A review of positives and negatives on an annual basis can provide an early warning of potential problems and nip them in the bud before they spin out of control, becoming irresolvable issues. Reviewing and setting goals is an indispensable part of planning for the future.

Who should be present at the evaluation?

Ideally the evaluation is a private meeting between the immediate supervisor—often the pastor—and the musician. Privacy allows for a level of honest exchange that might not be possible if more people are present. It is to be hoped that communication has been open through the past year and there are no big surprises. The discussion should take place in a private setting where there will be no interruptions.

When should it take place?

The time of the annual review is important. Times of the

year when stress levels are high, such as just before Holy Week, are less likely to result in a positive experience for either party. The meeting must be held early enough to allow for planning for the coming year yet late enough to include a review of the progress of the past year. It should always occur before any commitment is made for the coming year.

Follow-up

Finally, the evaluation should be followed up with a written report, and copies should be given to both the pastor and the musician for future reference. This summary of the meeting will be a good starting point for next year's review.

Part II: Sample Forms

A Sample Evaluation and a Sample Follow-up

A: A sample evaluation

_____ Parish
(_____ Year) Employee Self Appraisal

Reflect on and answer the following questions:

1. How is your current ministry in this parish fulfilling your personal goals for your life ministry and/or as a musician?

2. What aspects of your job and work environment are you most passionate about?

3. How have your gifts and talents been used? How could they be better used in your present position?

4. Considering your performance this past year, rank yourself on a scale from 1 to 5 (5 is the highest) in the following areas and explain. Then write one or two positive steps you would like to take for each of these areas in which you most need to grow.
 - a. Collaborative ministry (attitude, spirit of cooperation, flexibility, sharing the work, communication.)

 - b. Liturgy and liturgical skills

 - c. Musicianship and musical skills

 - d. Empowering other music staff (those who are paid)

e. Recruiting parishioners to volunteer

f. Public relations (dealing with parishioners, vendors, returning phone calls, handling complaints)

g. Office organization, time management

h. Technical skills (computer skills, etc.)

i. Project management

j. Financial Management

5. What opportunities will you embark upon for continuing education?

6. What will you do to continue to develop your spirituality this year?

7. What do you feel were your greatest achievements this past year?

B: A sample follow-up

_____ **Parish**
(_____ YEAR) **Performance Appraisal Summary** *(Completed by pastor or supervisor)*

Self appraisal *(Supervisor's comments on employee's self-evaluation):*

Agreement for next year
(Adjustments to work load, work schedule, plan for growth, areas for greater effort, etc.)

Employee _____
Signature Date

Pastor _____
(or supervisor) Signature Date

Adjustments regarding compensation/benefits: *(Completed by pastor or immediate supervisor)*

Pastor _____
(or supervisor) Signature Date

Employee _____
Signature Date

Bibliography/Sources

Association of Anglican Musicians, *Handbook for the Selection, Employment and Ministry of Church Musicians*, revised 2000.

Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, *Guidelines for the Employment of Musicians in the Lutheran Church*.

American Guild of Organists, *Professional Concerns Handbook*, June 1990.

Additional Resources

Available from the National Association of Pastoral Musicians

Virgil C. Funk, *An NPM Workbook: Job Descriptions, Contracts, Salary*, revised edition, 1996. \$15.00

DMMD Professional Concerns Committee, *Hiring a Director of Music: A Handbook and Guide*. 1991. \$5.00

DMMD Education Committee, *Qualifications for a Director of Music Ministries*. 1995. \$3.50

DMMD Professional Concerns Committee. *The Director of Music Ministries in the Parish: Work and Remuneration*. 2001. \$5.00