

June 2012

Best Practices for Communicating Salary Increases:

Salary increases are very important to employees at any level and as a supervisor, it is your responsibility to communicate directly with your staff members regarding their July salary increase. It is also an opportunity to provide feedback, in addition to conversations that occur within the performance review process.

The notice of the individual's salary increase is an opportunity to explain the application of the University's salary policy guidelines for non-organized staff, the salary policy of your college/division, and the application of this policy to individuals within your department and unit. The following are intended to serve as reminders of best practices for carrying out this important supervisory responsibility:

- Communicate directly with each of your staff members prior to the salary information becoming available to them through employee Self Service access. This means that this communication must be completed before July 15.
- A private, verbal conversation is the preferred means of communication; however, this may not be possible in all circumstances. A written communication may be used to supplement the verbal conference, or the information becoming available to the employee through other sources.
- It is important that your communication explains the process by which individual salary decisions are made and the factors involved in making the decision regarding that individual employee:
 - Discuss the application of the University salary policy guidelines within your college/division, including how the college/division policy may appear different from that of the University, as may be reported in the public media. Explain the factors causing these variances within the context of the college/division.
 - Discuss how the college/division guidelines are applied within your department/unit. As with the college/division policy, explain any variances in the departmental policy and the reason behind those differences.
 - Finally, discuss the factors used to make the salary decision for the individual. These should take into account individual job contributions/performance, as well as market, compression, comparable worth/pay equity, ability to pay or other issues impacting the salary of that individual.
- Once you have explained the context of your salary decision, provide the staff member with the amount of their increase and their new annual salary rate.
- Provide the individual with the opportunity to ask any clarifying questions.

- Where written communication is used, be sure that the message in the written and verbal communications is consistent with each other, so as to not create confusion or mistrust.

For merit system staff and those covered by a collective bargaining agreement, a similar communication process should be used for non-organized professional and scientific staff, although the application of the merit system and contracts may be more straightforward. Rather than making reference to the University's salary policy, the conversation should simply explain the application of the merit structure or collective bargaining agreement to the individual staff member. With regard to the contracts, all staff within the bargaining unit must be treated consistent with the labor agreement, regardless of union membership.

For assistance with this communication, please consult with your local Unit Human Resources Representative, or the Senior Human Resource Leader in your college/division office.