GENERAL

paraprofessional evaluation comment examples

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Paraprofessional Evaluation Comment Examples: A Complete Guide for Educators and Administrators

Paraprofessionals—often called teacher aides, instructional assistants, or classroom support staff—play a pivotal role in modern classrooms. They help manage student behavior, provide individualized support, and reinforce lesson objectives. Because their contributions directly affect student learning outcomes, it is essential for schools to conduct thorough performance evaluations. These evaluations not only recognize achievements but also guide professional growth and improve instructional quality.

Writing evaluation comments can be challenging. Comments must be specific, balanced, and aligned with school goals while remaining concise enough for supervisors to read quickly. This article offers a deep dive into the art of crafting effective paraprofessional evaluation comments, complete with examples, templates, and practical tips. Whether you are a principal, a teacher, or an HR professional, you'll find actionable insights to elevate your evaluation process.

Understanding the Role of Paraprofessionals

What Is a Paraprofessional?

A paraprofessional is a qualified individual who supports classroom instruction under the direct supervision of a certified teacher. They may assist with lesson preparation, classroom management, or specialized instruction for students with disabilities. While titles vary by district—"Teacher Assistant," "Instructional Assistant," "Special Education Support Staff"—the core responsibilities remain consistent.

Key Responsibilities in the Classroom

- Implementing instructional plans and activities
- Monitoring student behavior and providing positive reinforcement
- Assisting with individualized education plans (IEPs)
- Collecting and recording student data
- Facilitating small group or one to one instruction
- Maintaining a safe and organized learning environment

Because paraprofessionals often work behind the scenes, their performance can be subtle yet profoundly impactful. Accurate evaluation comments help surface these contributions and encourage continuous improvement.

The Importance of Paraprofessional Evaluations

Why Evaluate Paraprofessionals?

Paraprofessional evaluations serve multiple purposes:

1. Recognition of Effort: Highlighting successes boosts morale and fosters a culture of appreciation.
2. Professional Development: Constructive feedback identifies areas for growth and informs targeted training.
3. Accountability: Clear performance metrics align paraprofessionals with school standards and student outcomes.

4. Data Driven Decision Making: Evaluation results inform hiring, promotion, and resource allocation.

Key Evaluation Domains

Most schools assess paraprofessionals across four core domains:

- Instructional Support: Ability to reinforce lesson objectives and facilitate learning activities.
- Classroom Management: Skill in maintaining a conducive learning environment.
- Professionalism: Punctuality, communication, and collaboration with teachers.
- Student Interaction: Responsiveness to student needs and ability to build positive relationships.

When writing comments, it is essential to reference these domains, ensuring that feedback is comprehensive yet focused.

Components of Effective Evaluation Comments

Be Specific and Evidence Based

Comments should reflect observable behaviors or documented results. Instead of generic praise like “works well,” cite concrete examples: “Effectively guided the 5th grade reading group, resulting in a 12% increase in comprehension scores.”

Use the S.T.A.R. Framework

Structure comments using the Situation, Task, Action, Result (S.T.A.R.) method to provide context and impact:

- Situation: Briefly describe the context.
- Task: Identify the goal or responsibility.
- Action: Detail the specific actions taken.
- Result: Explain the outcome, ideally with measurable data.

Maintain a Balanced Tone

Positive reinforcement is crucial, but constructive criticism should be framed as growth opportunities. Use language that encourages rather than discourages.

Align With School Objectives

Link paraprofessional contributions to broader school goals—student achievement, inclusive education, or behavioral improvement—to demonstrate relevance.

Keep It Concise

While detail is important, brevity ensures that supervisors can quickly grasp the key points. Aim for 2–3 sentences per comment.

Sample Paraprofessional Evaluation Comment Templates

Instructional Support

Positive Example:

“During the unit on fractions, she facilitated a hands on activity that reinforced concept understanding, leading to a 15% improvement in class quiz scores.”

Constructive Example:

“While assisting with the science lab, she could enhance student engagement by incorporating more

interactive demonstrations."

Classroom Management

Positive Example:

"Consistently maintains a calm environment, using proactive strategies to reduce disruptions by 30% during transitions."

Constructive Example:

"Needs to refine behavior management techniques to address frequent off task behavior in the 3rd grade classroom."

Professionalism

Positive Example:

"Demonstrates punctuality and professionalism, arriving 10 minutes early to prepare materials for each lesson."

Constructive Example:

"Should improve communication with teachers by providing timely updates on student progress."

Student Interaction

Positive Example:

"Builds strong rapport with students, offering individualized support that boosts confidence and participation."

Constructive Example:

"Can improve responsiveness by promptly addressing student questions during small group sessions."

Step by Step Guide to Writing Evaluation Comments

1. Gather Evidence

Collect data from observation notes, student progress reports, teacher feedback, and self reflection logs. Having multiple data points ensures that comments are grounded in reality.

2. Identify Key Strengths and Areas for Growth

List at least two strengths and one improvement area for each domain. This balanced approach highlights a well rounded evaluation.

3. Draft Using the S.T.A.R. Format

For each point, write a concise S.T.A.R. statement. Example:

"During the week of September 4 8, she organized a peer mentoring session for struggling readers, resulting in a 10% increase in reading fluency."

4. Align With School Goals

Reference school initiatives such as literacy improvement plans or inclusive education strategies. This demonstrates that the paraprofessional's work supports institutional objectives.

5. Review for Clarity and Tone

Read the comments aloud to ensure they sound supportive and clear. Remove jargon and keep language simple yet professional.

6. Finalize and Save

Once approved by the supervisor or principal, integrate the comments into the evaluation form or digital platform. Ensure that the final document is accessible for future reference.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Over generalizing Praise

Statements like “good job” lack impact. Always tie praise to specific actions or outcomes.

Neglecting Evidence

Unsubstantiated claims weaken credibility. Reference observation notes or data whenever possible.

Using Vague Language

Phrases such as “needs improvement” without specifying the issue can confuse the paraprofessional. Clarify the exact behavior or skill requiring development.

Focusing Solely on Weaknesses

While constructive feedback is vital, consistently highlighting shortcomings can demoralize staff. Balance positives with areas for growth.

Ignoring Professional Development Opportunities

Evaluation should be a gateway to growth. Suggest relevant workshops, training, or mentorship programs to support improvement.

Tips for Supervisors and Administrators

Create a Structured Evaluation Framework

Use a standardized rubric that aligns with the four core domains. This promotes consistency across evaluations and simplifies data comparison.

Schedule Regular Check Ins

Mid term or quarterly feedback sessions allow paraprofessionals to adjust strategies before the final evaluation. These conversations can uncover challenges early.

Encourage Peer Observations

Paraprofessionals can learn from each other by observing peers. Incorporating peer feedback into evaluations can provide fresh perspectives.

Leverage Technology

Digital platforms like Google Classroom or Schoology can track student interactions, allowing supervisors to review real time data for evaluation.

Recognize and Celebrate Milestones

Public acknowledgment of achievements—such as a “Paraprofessional of the Month”—boosts morale and

reinforces a culture of excellence.

Integrating Evaluation Comments Into Professional Development Plans

Effective evaluation comments should feed directly into individualized professional development plans (iPDPs). For instance, if a paraprofessional struggles with classroom management, the iPDP might include a workshop on behavior intervention strategies. By aligning comments with actionable growth steps, schools demonstrate a commitment to staff development.

Case Study: Transforming Classroom Support Through Targeted Feedback

In a suburban district, paraprofessional evaluations revealed a consistent issue: low engagement during group instruction. Using the S.T.A.R. framework, supervisors wrote:

“During the 8th grade science unit, he facilitated a collaborative experiment but did not provide clear instructions, leading to confusion and a 25% drop in participation.”

Following this feedback, the paraprofessional attended a workshop on instructional scaffolding. Subsequent evaluations noted a 30% increase in student participation. This example underscores the power of precise, data driven comments to catalyze meaningful change.

Conclusion

Paraprofessional evaluation comments are more than routine paperwork—they are a strategic tool that recognizes effort, drives professional growth, and ultimately enhances student learning. By grounding comments in observable evidence, using the S.T.A.R. format, and aligning feedback with school goals, educators can create evaluations that are fair, motivating, and actionable.

Whether you are a teacher, administrator, or HR professional, the templates and examples provided here should serve as a practical starting point for crafting impactful paraprofessional evaluation comments. Remember, the goal is not just to assess but to inspire continuous improvement and celebrate the vital role paraprofessionals play in our schools.

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