

KANSAS Trustee Education Program  
Director's Template

**Topic: EVALUATING THE DIRECTOR**

**Discussion starter:** [Director, start off with this scenario and get board comments.] A new trustee has just realized that the board has never evaluated the director's performance in writing. Some trustees agree it's time to start doing so; others say it's just a waste of time. What's your opinion?

[Short discussion – track comments and reactions for recap at the end of the presentation.]

**Definitions:** Evaluating the director's performance means comparing expectations about achievements with what actually happened.

It is a "must do" library board task.

It should be written, allowing all parties to refer to the same document concerning strengths and areas of improvement. Reasons for evaluating the director's performance annually include:

- Establishing a formal line of communication between the director and the board
- Measuring progress towards achieving goals and plans
- Identifying concerns that either party may have
- Performing a task that's part of modern board operations
- Providing a sound basis for merit raises or corrective action (adapted from Mary Moore, see below)

**Points to cover:**

1. Many evaluations are based on the director's job description, which is a general list of duties and responsibilities. However, increasingly boards use the director's annual work plan, a list of expected specific achievements during the upcoming year. Often, that work plan is created cooperatively by the board and the director.
2. The annual evaluation may be linked to salary increase.
3. Many methods can be used. Often each trustee fills out the form; the chair then tallies the results. Separately, the director fills out the form. Next, the director and chair discuss the two versions, preparing a final one that is brought to the board for discussion in executive/closed session.
4. Alert: The written performance evaluation is the first place attorneys on both sides will look in the case of a personnel grievance or lawsuit.

[Referring to the beginning discussion, ask how the Library Board response is now different. Whatever they say, finish up with these points:]

- Evaluating the director's performance in writing is an essential governance tool that sets forth how closely actions matched expectations.
- It demonstrates respect; the busy board takes time out to reflect on the director's strengths and areas of improvement. All people have both.
- It links director performance with agreed-upon library goals.

See the resource list at the end of the Trustee Handout for additional information.

3/6/07