

# PERSPECTIVES FROM A 2003/4 NRF RESEARCH PROJECT ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN SA HIGHER EDUCATION

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## Performance management trends

- Effective management & development of people is a key challenge in 21st century
- Performance improvement is a “need to know” for HR practitioners of tomorrow
- *Definition*
  - Jones (1999) defines performance management as an approach to achieve a shared vision of the purpose and aims of the organisation. It is concerned with helping individuals and teams achieve their potential and recognise their role in contributing to the goals of the organisation

## Key changes in Performance Management

From	To
System	Process
Appraisal	Joint review
Outputs	Outputs/inputs
Reward orientated	Development orientated
Ratings common	Less rating
Top-down	360 degree feedback
Directive	Supportive
Monolithic	Flexible
Owned by human resource manager	Owned by users
Profession/ Cadre-based	Service-Based

(Armstrong & Baron,1998)

## Overview of the NRF project

- Policy developments necessitated change
- *Research question*
  - *How does one establish an effective and efficient performance management system for academic staff in higher education institutions?*
- *Research methods*
  - Case study design using qualitative interviews & documents
  - 2 Institutions
    - Management, support and academic staff

## Overview of the NRF project

- *Aim*
  - Get as comprehensive a set of perspectives as possible
  - Not to compare but to understand system in context

## Results

- Organisational environment of PM systems
  - Restructuring
- Development of PM systems
- Institutional priorities and the PM systems
  - Strategic plans well aligned to HE environment
- Staff consultation & institutional reviews of the PM system
- Learnerships and the PM systems
  - Learnerships were not linked to systems
- Strengths of PM systems
- Weaknesses of the PM system
  - Developmental problems
  - Format & procedures
  - Lack of management capacity
  - Rewards

## Lessons learnt

- "... performance management is always going to be a complex and difficult reality,..."
- Development of PM systems should be a **collaborative process** across academic and support staff "divides"

*J.Francois Strydom (Wits)*  
Email: [strydomf@umthombo.wits.ac.za](mailto:strydomf@umthombo.wits.ac.za)