

### **Introductory Note – The Anxieties of Evaluation**

According to Gaipman and Anthony (1993), although performance evaluation may be anxiety-producing, supervisors cannot simply sweep critical incidents or significant facts under the rug. What is more, evaluation may create uncertainty or confusion for students. We note, too, that the evaluation process must include a learning component!

We have singled out six reasons why supervisors may delay a performance evaluation.

- 1) The evaluation is time consuming and causes anxiety for both supervisor and student.
- 2) The supervisor may lack the tools and skills to evaluate students constructively and efficiently.
- 3) The subjective aspect of the evaluation may create apprehension. The supervisor may fear being accused of undue subjectivity; the student may see the evaluation as a personal attack.
- 4) The supervisor may feel uncomfortable or ill-prepared concerning the “authority” aspect of the situation and the need to judge.
- 5) The supervisor may be worried about the student’s possible negative reaction.
- 6) Supervisors may perceive evaluation as an indirect assessment of their supervisory skills which reveals the quality of their supervision.

Here are two concluding factors to bear in mind. First, a supervisor is first and foremost a human being who can make mistakes and has personal limitations. Second, sensitivity is critical when evaluating a student’s performance. Indeed, students may construe the evaluation as an opportunity to emphasize their weaknesses, and supervisors may put the entire focus on the final outcome: passing or failing the placement.