

## **Professional Growth Rubric Speech Therapist**

The speech therapist professional growth rubrics are organized around seven areas of a therapist's job performance. These seven areas are:

- I. Planning and Preparing for Learning**
- II. Delivery of Instruction**
- III. Building Relationships with Students**
- IV. Classroom Management**
- V. Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-up**
- VI. Family and Community Outreach**
- VII. Professional Responsibilities**

The rubrics are designed to give speech therapists an assessment of where they stand in all performance areas with detailed guidance on what is expected to improve.

There are four levels of the speech therapist professional growth rubrics. The *Proficient* level describes solid professional performance. This level is the expected level of performance for therapists. The *Distinguished* level is reserved for truly outstanding teaching as described by the very demanding criteria of the area. This level may have relatively few scores. The *Professional Support Needed* level indicates that performance has deficiencies and speech therapists and principals should not be content with scores at this level. Performance at the *Does Not Meet Standard* level is unacceptable and needs to be remediated immediately.

The professional growth summary conference between the principal/director and the speech therapist can be greatly enhanced when each fills out the rubrics in advance (using the highlighter approach below). Once each has filled out the rubrics, they should meet and compare scores one page at a time. The principal/director has the final say, but the discussion should aim for consensus based on evidence of the fairest score for each criterion. Principals/directors cannot know everything about all rubric areas and must approach this with some humility while speech therapists must be open to feedback from someone with an outside perspective.

Using the highlighter approach, it is important to consider each of the nine criteria individually. Then, the speech therapist and principal/director move up and down the four levels (reading the descriptions for items at Distinguished, Proficient, Professional Support Needed, and Does Not Meet Standards level). Each finds the specific descriptor level that best describes the performances, and highlights the line. This creates a graphic display of overall performance, areas for commendation, and areas that need work. The back page will be completed together and put into the employee's file.

It is important that the principals/directors help speech therapists to continue to grow in their positions by giving candid, evidence-based feedback, and follow-up support. It is also important that speech teachers score themselves candidly and honestly. Working together can bring about professional growth and ultimately impact student achievement.

# I. Planning and Preparing for Learning

The speech therapist:

## 4 – Distinguished

- a. Demonstrates broad knowledge of subject area.
- b. Displays extensive knowledge of appropriate characteristics of child development.
- c. Plans a comprehensive IEP that is directly aligned to all of the students' communication needs.
- d. Designs lessons with clear measurable objectives aligned with the grade level standards mapped out throughout the course
- e. Designs highly relevant lessons that will motivate all students and engage them in active learning.
- f. Uses data collection to measure students' progress towards goals and objectives and alters plans accordingly.
- g. Designs lessons involving an appropriate mix of high quality materials and a wide range of teaching tools.
- h. Designs lessons that simplify complex tasks and addresses all learning needs, styles and interests.
- i. Utilizes the room arrangement, materials, and displays to maximize student learning of all materials.

## 3 – Proficient

- a. Knows the subject area well.
- b. Demonstrates an understanding of appropriate child development characteristics.
- c. Plans an IEP that is directly aligned to students' communication needs.
- d. Designs lessons based on measurable objectives aligned with unit goals meeting the content standards
- e. Designs lessons that are relevant, motivating, and likely to engage students in active learning.
- f. Uses data collection to measure students' progress towards goals and objectives.
- g. Designs lessons that use an effective mix of materials and various teaching strategies.
- h. Designs lessons that break down complex tasks and target diverse learning needs, styles, and interests.
- i. Organizes classroom furniture, materials, and displays to support unit and lesson goals.

## 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Is somewhat familiar with the subject area.
- b. Has a narrow understanding of how students develop and learn.
- c. Plans a basic IEP that is somewhat aligned to students' communication needs.
- d. Designs lessons with an objective, but objective is not aligned with unit goals and standards.
- e. Designs lessons that are sometimes motivating, but do not promote active learning.
- f. Drafts tests as instruction proceeds; does not utilize assessments to guide instruction.
- g. Plans lessons that involve a mixture of good and mediocre learning materials and instructional strategies.
- h. Plans lessons with some thought as to how to accommodate students' needs.
- i. The room is organized for general learning only with little thought regarding displays to support units and lessons.

## 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Has little to no knowledge of the subject area, how students learn, and few ideas to teach it.
- b. Has little familiarity with how students develop and learn.
- c. Plans a generic IEP for the students' communication needs.
- d. The lesson has no evident objective stated verbally or in writing.
- e. Plans lessons with very little likelihood of motivating or involving students; aims at covering tests.
- f. Seldom collects data to measure students' progress.
- g. Plans lessons that rely mainly on mediocre and low-quality textbooks, workbooks, or worksheets.
- h. Plans lessons aimed at the "average" speech caseload.
- i. Room arrangement is awkward; materials are hard to access; wall displays are lacking.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

## II. Delivery of Instruction

The speech therapist:

### 4 - Distinguished

- a. Indicates to students exactly what is expected by discussing essential questions, goals, or objectives.
- b. Captures students' interest by making connections to prior readings, knowledge, and experience.
- c. Presents material clearly and explicitly, makes connections, and uses vivid and appropriate language.
- d. Orchestrates highly effective teaching and learning strategies, materials, and student groupings to engage and motivate students.
- e. Engages all students in focused work in which they are active learners and problem-solvers.
- f. Uses higher level questioning techniques that encourage students' answers beyond the recall or rote level.
- g. Consistently gives appropriate reinforcement and encouragement while delivering instruction.
- h. Meets the communication needs of all students by differentiating, scaffolding, and modifying when necessary.
- i. Has students summarize and internalize what they learn and apply it to authentic communication.

### 3 – Proficient

- a. Gives students a clear sense of purpose by discussing the lesson's objectives.
- b. Activates students' prior knowledge and hooks their interest in each lesson.
- c. Uses clear explanations, appropriate language, and good examples to present material.
- d. Orchestrates effective teaching and learning strategies, materials, and student groupings to foster student learning.
- e. Encourages all students to actively think about, discuss and use the ideas and skills being taught.
- f. Instructs students therapeutically in higher level thinking skills that encourages students' answers beyond the recall or rote level.
- g. Occasionally gives appropriate reinforcement and encouragement while delivering instruction.
- h. Differentiates instruction to accommodate students' communication needs.
- i. Has students summarize what they have learned and apply it to authentic communication.

### 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Tells students the main learning objectives of each lesson.
- b. Tries to make the subject interesting and relate it to things students already know.
- c. Uses language and explanations that are sometimes ambiguous, confusing or inappropriate.
- d. Uses a limited range of therapy techniques learning strategies, materials, and student groupings with minimal success.
- e. Attempts to get students actively involved, but many students are disengaged.
- f. Limits questions to mostly rote and recall.
- g. Rarely gives appropriate reinforcement and encouragement while delivering instruction.
- h. Attempts to accommodate students' needs with limited success.
- i. Asks students to think about real-life applications for what they are learning.

### 1 – Does Not Meet Standards

- a. Begins lessons without giving students a sense of where instruction is headed.
- b. Does not engage most students' interest or make connection to their lives.
- c. Often presents material in a confusing way, using language that is inappropriate.
- d. Uses only one or two therapy techniques or types of materials and doesn't reach most students.
- e. Spends little effort in engaging students in learning.
- f. Fails to question students.
- g. Fails to give reinforcement and encouragement while delivering instruction.
- h. Fails to provide for differentiated instruction for students' needs.
- i. Moves on at the end of each lesson and/or unit without talking about real-life situations or contexts.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

### III. Building Relationships with Students

The speech therapist:

#### 4 – Distinguished

- a. Demonstrates genuine caring and respect for individual students.
- b. Is readily available to students before, during and after school.
- c. Shows great sensitivity and respect for students' cultures, values, and beliefs.
- d. Creates a therapy environment that nurtures positive relationships.
- e. Consistently smiles and uses a friendly tone of voice.
- f. Consistently seeks student input.
- g. Builds a comfort level that encourages students to take risks.
- h. Encourages students choices in instructional activities.
- i. Consistently uses effective praise to reinforce success.

#### 3 – Proficient

- a. Is friendly and demonstrates general warmth, caring, and respect.
- b. Is usually available to students before, during, and after school.
- c. Shows respect for students' cultures, values, and beliefs.
- d. Creates a therapy environment that develops positive relationships.
- e. Smiles and uses a friendly tone of voice.
- f. Seeks student input.
- g. Builds a comfort level that allows students to take risks.
- h. Allows students choices in instructional activities.
- i. Uses effective praise to reinforce success.

#### 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Is generally warm and caring, but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for students.
- b. Is sometimes available to students before, during, and after school.
- c. Tries to be sensitive to students' cultures, values, and beliefs, but sometimes fails.
- d. Appears unconcerned about creating a therapy environment that nurtures positive relationships.
- e. Occasionally smiles and may use monotone voice.
- f. Rarely seeks student input.
- g. Seldom builds a comfort level that allows students to take risks.
- h. Seldom allows students choices in instructional activities.
- i. Seldom uses effective praises to reinforce success.

#### 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Interacts negatively, sarcastically, or inappropriately with students.
- b. Is not available to students before, during, and after school.
- c. Is often insensitive to students' cultures, values, and beliefs.
- d. Creates a therapy environment that is negative or threatening.
- e. Does not smile; uses a sarcastic tone of voice.
- f. Does not seek student input.
- g. Does not build a comfort level that allows students to take risks.
- h. Does not allow students choices in instructional activities.
- i. Does not use effective praise to reinforce success.

Overall rating:\_\_\_ Comments:

## IV. Classroom Management

The speech therapist:

### 4 – Distinguished

- a. Sets significant and challenging expectations for students; communicates confidence in students' abilities to meet the expectations.
- b. Finds ways to integrate and reinforce social skills throughout the day that successfully develop positive interactions among students.
- c. Motivates students and creates a sense of urgency for classroom performance by utilizing effective praise and specific feedback.
- d. Has a highly effective discipline repertoire and is very responsive to student needs.
- e. Is keenly aware of student behavior; consistently responds to student misbehaviors with effective interactions.
- f. Uses instructional time effectively to maximize student engagement and achievement.
- g. Establishes efficient pacing and seamless transitions resulting in minimal loss of instructional time.
- h. Creates and implements effective classroom procedures and routines that maximize instructional time.
- i. Creates an engaging, safe, and efficiently organized environment to maximize learning opportunities.

### 3 – Proficient

- a. Clearly and consistently communicates, models, and enforces high expectations for students.
- b. Teaches appropriate social skills and fosters positive interactions among students.
- c. Motivates and encourages students utilizing effective praise and positive feedback.
- d. Has an effective discipline repertoire and is responsive to student needs.
- e. Monitors student behavior and responds to misbehaviors with appropriate interactions.
- f. Makes adequate use of time available; students are consistently engaged.
- g. Demonstrates successful use of instructional pacing and transitions with little loss of instruction time.
- h. Develops and implements effective management procedures and routines.
- i. Creates a safe and organized learning environment designed to stimulate students.

### 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Expectations are somewhat clear to students; teacher attempts to respond to student behavior with inconsistent results.
- b. Lectures students about the need for good behavior but may reflect occasional inconsistencies or favoritism.
- c. Relies on extrinsic rewards and general praise in an attempt to get students to cooperate or comply.
- d. Has a limited disciplinary repertoire; may overlook student behaviors.
- e. Makes an effort to respond to student misbehaviors, but interactions with students are hit or miss.
- f. Students are frequently off task or not engaged in the instructional process.
- g. Poor pacing and transitions may result in loss of instructional time.
- h. Some routines and procedure are in place, but instructional time is often lost.
- i. Has adequate organization and provides a somewhat safe learning environment; therapy environment is bland.

### 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Appears to have no standards of conduct in the classroom.
- b. Interactions with students are negative, sarcastic, or humiliating.
- c. Makes little or no attempt to motivate students; students demonstrate a lack of compliance.
- d. Does not appear to have a discipline repertoire; teacher is unresponsive to student behaviors.
- e. Does not respond to student misbehaviors or responds to misbehaviors inconsistently or inappropriately.
- f. Does not use instructional time effectively resulting in off-task behavior or poor student achievement.
- g. Much time is lost during instruction due to poor pacing and ineffective transitions.
- h. Has few classroom routines and procedures visible and apparent; much instructional time is lost.
- i. Has an unorganized therapy environment; therapy environment seems uninviting or may be unsafe.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

## V. Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-Up

The speech therapist:

### 4 – Distinguished

- a. Frequently provides clear criteria for proficient work including rubrics and examples.
- b. Uses a variety of standardized & functional assessments to differentially diagnose and monitor communication skills.
- c. Continuously checks for understanding, unscrambles confusion, and gives specific, helpful feedback.
- d. Continuously follows up with struggling students; gives time and support to reach proficiency.
- e. Constantly reflects on effective teaching and works every day to improve.
- f. Analyzes assessment data to draw conclusions; collaborates with colleagues on successful teaching/testing strategies.
- g. Regularly and promptly records and shares progress for students and parents to see.
- h. Assigns appropriate home practice opportunities, holds students accountable for turning it in, and provides rich feedback.
- i. Has students set ambitious goals, self-assess and self-monitor, and take responsibility for their progress.

### 3 – Proficient

- a. Usually provides clear criteria for proficient work.
- b. Uses a variety of standardized and functional assessments to diagnose and monitor communication skills.
- c. Frequently checks for understanding and gives students helpful feedback.
- d. Takes responsibility for students who are not succeeding and gives them extra help to reach proficiency.
- e. Reflects on the effectiveness of lessons and works to improve them.
- f. Draws conclusions on teaching strategies and periodically consults with colleagues.
- g. Records grades in a timely manner for students and parents to see.
- h. Assigns appropriate home practice opportunities, diligently works to have students return it, and gives feedback.
- i. Has students set goals, self-assess, and accurately state their communication goals.

### 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Tells students some of the criteria for proficient work, but lacks consistency.
- b. Uses only a basic battery of tests.
- c. Asks questions to see if students understand but lacks frequent quality feedback.
- d. Offers students who fail some additional time to study and do re-takes but rarely re-teaches or offers extra help.
- e. Thinks about what might have been done better but doesn't make changes.
- f. Infrequently analyzes test data or consults with colleagues.
- g. Infrequently records progress for students and parents to see.
- h. Assigns home practice opportunities and occasionally prompts students to return it.
- i. Urges students to set goals but does not follow up to help students manage them.

### 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Expects student to know or figure out what it takes to produce a quality product.
- b. Does not use tests appropriately.
- c. Rarely checks with students to see if they understand.
- d. Provides no follow-up with students who fail and the class moves on.
- e. Refuses or seems unable to modify approaches.
- f. Fails to analyze test data or consult with colleagues.
- g. Fails to complete progress reports.
- h. Assigns home practice opportunities but is resigned to the fact that many students will not turn them in.
- i. Does not help students set and manage goals.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

## VI. Family and Community Outreach

The speech therapist:

### 4 – Distinguished

- a. Shows great sensitivity and respect for family and community cultures, values, and beliefs.
- b. Shares with each parent information about their child and a strong belief he/she will reach standards.
- c. Gives parents clear, user-friendly learning and behavior expectations; shares examples of student work expectations.
- d. Makes sure parents hear positive news about their child first, and immediately flags any problems.
- e. Frequently involves parents in supporting and enriching the student progress as it unfolds.
- f. Deals immediately and successfully with parents' concerns; makes parents feel welcome any time.
- g. Gives parents detailed feedback on child's progress through the use of varied communications.
- h. Is successful in contacting and working with all parents, including those who are hard to reach.
- i. Successfully enlists resources from community agencies and professionals.

### 3 – Proficient

- a. Communicates respectfully with parents and is sensitive to different families' culture and values.
- b. Shows parents a genuine interest and belief in each child's ability to reach communication goals.
- c. Gives parents clear, succinct expectations for student learning and behavior.
- d. Promptly informs parents of behavior and learning problems, and also updates parents on good news.
- e. Updates parents on progress and suggest ways to support communication learning at home.
- f. Responds promptly and effectively to parents' concerns; makes parents feel welcome in the school.
- g. Uses IEP meetings, conferences, progress reports, emails, and phone calls to give parents feedback on their children's progress.
- h. Tries to contact all parents and is tenacious in contacting hard-to-reach parents.
- i. Occasionally reaches out to families and community agencies for additional resources.

### 2 – Professional Support Needed

- a. Tries to be sensitive to the cultures and beliefs of students' families but sometimes is indifferent.
- b. Tells parents that he or she cares about their child but does not share communication expectations.
- c. Gives general expectations for student learning and behavior for the IEP team.
- d. Lets parents know about problems their child is having but rarely mentions positive news.
- e. Sends home occasional suggestions on how parents can help their child with communication needs.
- f. Is slow to respond to some parent concerns; may give off an unwelcoming perception.
- g. Uses progress reports and conferences only to tell parents the areas in which their child can improve.
- h. Tries to contact all parents, but ends up talking mainly to the parents of high-achieving students.
- i. Notifies parents about extra resources but does not follow-up.

### 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Is often insensitive to the cultures and beliefs of students' families.
- b. Does not communicate to parents knowledge of their child or share concern about their child's communication needs.
- c. Does not share learning and behavior expectations with parents.
- d. Seldom informs parents of concern or positive news about their child.
- e. Rarely if ever communicates with parents on ways to help their child at home.
- f. Does not respond to parent concerns; makes parents feel unwelcome in the therapy room or at meetings.
- g. Expects parents to follow up on areas that need improvement by reading report cards or utilizing the on-line grades only.
- h. Makes little or no effort to contact parents.
- i. Does not reach out for extra support from parents or the community.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

## VII. Professional Responsibilities

The speech therapist:

### 4 – Distinguished

- a. Maintains meticulous records (student information, lesson plans) conscientiously and punctually, and is never late.
- b. Presents oneself as a consummate professional; always observes appropriate boundaries.
- c. Is ethical, honest, and above-board, using impeccable judgment; respects confidentiality.
- d. Is an important member of teams and committees; frequently attends school activities.
- e. Frequently contributes valuable ideas and expertise to promote the school's mission and District goals.
- f. Informs the administration of any concerns; reaches out for help and suggestions when needed.
- g. Actively seeks out feedback and suggestions and uses them to improve performance.
- h. Meets frequently with colleagues regarding students' communication needs.
- i. Devours effective practices from fellow professionals, workshops, readings, study groups, the Web, etc.

### 3 – Proficient

- a. Keeps accurate records of student information and lesson plans; is punctual and reliable with paperwork.
- b. Demonstrates professional demeanor and dress and maintains appropriate boundaries.
- c. Is ethical, honest, and above-board, uses good judgment; maintains confidentiality with student records.
- d. Volunteers to serve on committee and share responsibility for grade level and school activities.
- e. Is a positive team player and contributes ideas, expertise, and time to the mission of school and District goals.
- f. Keeps the administration informed about concerns; asks for help when it is needed.
- g. Listens thoughtfully to other viewpoints; responds constructively to suggestions and criticism.
- h. Collaborates with colleagues regarding students' communication needs.
- i. Seeks out effective therapy ideas from supervisors, colleagues, workshops, reading, the Internet, etc.

### 2 - Professional Support Needed

- a. Occasionally skips assignments, is late, makes errors in records, and/or misses paperwork deadlines.
- b. Occasionally acts and/or dresses in an unprofessional manner and/or violates boundaries.
- c. Sometimes uses poor judgment, is less than completely honest, and/or discloses student information.
- d. Will serve on a committee or attend a school activity when asked to do so.
- e. Occasionally suggests an idea aimed at improving the school.
- f. Is reluctant to share concerns with the administration or ask for help.
- g. Is somewhat defensive but does listen to feedback and suggestions.
- h. Meets occasionally with colleagues regarding students' communication needs.
- i. Keeps an eye out for new ideas for improving therapy and learning.

### 1 – Does Not Meet Standard

- a. Frequently makes errors in records and/or is late with required paperwork deadlines.
- b. Frequently acts and/or dresses in an unprofessional manner and violates boundaries.
- c. Acts in an ethically questionable manner, uses poor judgment, and/or discloses student information.
- d. Declines invitations to serve on committees or attend school activities.
- e. Rarely if ever contributes ideas that might help improve the school.
- f. Fails to voice concerns or constantly complains, and is not open to help.
- g. Is defensive about criticism and resistant to changing professional practice.
- h. Meets infrequently with colleagues; conversations lack educational substance.
- i. Is not open to ideas for improving therapy techniques and learning.

Overall rating: \_\_\_ Comments:

Professional Growth Rubric Summary Page  
Speech Therapist

Speech Therapist's name \_\_\_\_\_ School year \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Subject area/Grade level \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

Average Ratings on Individual Rubrics:

**I. Planning and Preparing for Learning**

Distinguished Proficient Prof. Support Needed Does Not Meet Standards

**II. Delivery of Instruction**

Distinguished Proficient Prof. Support Needed Does Not Meet Standards

**III. Building Relationships with Students**

Distinguished Proficient Prof. Support Needed Does Not Meet Standards

**IV. Classroom Management**

Distinguished Proficient Prof. Support Needed Does Not Meet Standards

**V. Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-Up**

Distinguished Proficient Prof. Support Needed Does Not Meet Standards

**VI. Family and Community Outreach**

Distinguished Proficient Prof. Support Needed Does Not Meet Standards

**VII. Professional Responsibilities**

Distinguished Proficient Prof. Support Needed Does Not Meet Standards

Overall Rating:

Distinguished Proficient Prof. Support Needed Does Not Meet Standards

Overall Comments by Principal/Director:

Overall Comments by Speech Therapist:

Principal's/Director's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Therapist's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Therapist's signature indicates he/she has seen and discussed the professional growth summary. It does not necessarily denote agreement with the report.)