

Performance Management System Overview & Instructions

Introduction

Performance management is not an annual event but an ongoing process. There should never be any surprises at the end of a performance rating period, as managers who are properly managing performance are providing continual feedback, both formally and informally, throughout the rating period.

The intent of performance management is to enable all employees to fully understand their job responsibilities and performance expectations, to understand how their contributions help their organization to meet its goals and objectives, and to identify employee developmental needs. This is beneficial for employees, supervisors and the organization as a whole.

The performance management process has cooperation and support as its core. The objectives are:

1. to foster and enhance job-related communication between supervisors and employees;
2. to update and revise job expectations on a regular basis;
3. to provide motivation to employees;
4. to provide supervisory support;
5. to identify methods to achieve the goals and objectives of the Department and the organization; and
6. to provide the basis for recommendation of a salary step increase.

These guidelines are designed to answer some basic questions about the performance management process. Should additional questions arise, feel free to contact your Manager or your Personnel Officer.

Performance Management Overview

What is it?

An Organizational and management system that relates performance objectives to organizational goals and objectives so that all employees understand how their jobs contribute to the success of the organization.

A Planning and Evaluation system for each employee's performance expectations and developmental needs as they relate to the overall effectiveness of the organization.

An Accountability system to assure that responsibilities are well defined and being met.

A Communication System for two-way discussions about organizational goals and objectives, continuous improvements of work methods, individual job expectations, actual job performance, and employee developmental needs.

Why is it done?

Because people need to know what is expected of them. Additionally, it is an opportunity to enhance communication, organizational planning, and employee growth and development. Performance management will serve to provide an opportunity to:

1. Develop an employee's understanding of how the employee's job contributes to organizational goals and objectives;
2. Enhance employee understanding of how his/her performance compares with expectations;
3. Identify and discuss key worker behaviors and traits that contribute to a quality organization;
4. Assess work unit efficiency and effectiveness;
5. Define and alter individual responsibilities and expectations;
6. Identify potential problems before they become major;
7. Document performance problems and build on successes.

Finally, the law requires that managers must document satisfactory performance in order for employees to progress from step to step in the salary grade.

When are Performance Interviews conducted?

For all employees - Constantly, on an informal basis and formally, upon initial appointment, appointment to another position, at the beginning of each performance review period, or at the request of the supervisor or employee to discuss progress toward or changes to previously established work expectations.

For permanent employees - Once a year prior to the employee's performance review date. Employees selected for or denied merit increases will be notified prior to the anniversary date. Merit increases will be processed as expeditiously as possible so as to ensure

payment of the increase in the pay period in which it is earned.

For probationary employees - Supervisors must provide employees who are on initial probation with an assessment of progress after three months of employment. Supervisors are required to complete the Performance Management Form prior to the end of the employees probationary period in order to recommend permanent status, extension of probationary period, or termination.

Where is it done?

Wherever the work is being performed. The essential factors for successful meetings are privacy and absence of interruptions.

Who does it?

The supervisor to whom an employee is directly responsible and the employee.

Elements of the Performance Management Process

1. **Ongoing Communications.** It is extremely important to both the supervisor and the employee communicate frequently regarding performance expectations or changes. This dialogue is a crucial element of successful performance management.

2. **Description of Major Job Responsibilities.** This is developed by the supervisor and the employee. It provides a written description of the (major) job responsibilities that an employee is expected to perform during the rating period. This description must be:

- current (revised when responsibilities change)
- developed jointly, preferably agreed to by the supervisor and employee but in all cases communicated by management and understood by employees;
- reasonable and attainable
- within classification requirements
- understood by the reviewer
- focused on critical, important aspects of the job
- reviewed and updated at least annually

3. **Performance Expectations.** These written statements are developed by the supervisor with the employee's participation that serve to clarify and quantify the employee's job responsibilities. Performance expectations always contribute to organizational goals and objectives.

4. **Employee Attributes and Behaviors.** These are rated in order to identify employee strengths and opportunities for improvement. These include core competencies required of all employees, terms and conditions of employment, job knowledge and skills, and where applicable, managerial competencies.

5. **Developmental Plans.** Plans are designed to indicate recommendations of further development and training, to prepare the employee for additional responsibilities or to improve current job performance.

6. **Performance File.** The supervisor will maintain a file in order to provide employees with documents of successful and/or problematic performance. All such documentation must be discussed with, signed and dated by the employee at the time of entry into the performance file.

7. **Periodic Review.** From time to time, it may be necessary to review progress toward or changes to previously established expectations during the rating period.

8. **Performance Management Form.** In completing the form, evaluators must review the employee's performance file, strengths and weaknesses, as well as areas for growth and change, using as a starting point previously developed:

- job responsibility descriptions
- performance expectations
- developmental plans
- organizational goals and objectives

When completing a Performance Management Form, supervisors must use only that performance experience and file material that pertains to the current performance period.

9. **Performance Management Interview.** The interview consists of a face-to-face meeting between the supervisor and the employee to review past performance expectations and plan for the future performance period.

Guidelines for Conducting the Performance Management Interview

While there are relatively few requirements of the Performance Management Process, it is important that the intended purposes of communication, cooperation and support be adhered to in the ongoing process of performance management. In addition, successful completion of this process is dependent on **joint preparation for the interview.**

Prior to the interview, the supervisor asks the employee to prepare by reviewing a copy of the performance management form for the current evaluation period and come prepared to discuss:

- Changes to the description of job responsibilities;
- An assessment as to how well the employee has met performance expectations;
- Personal attributes critical to the job; and
- Plans to further develop the employee's job skills and competencies

Additionally, the supervisor asks the employee to come prepared to discuss any ideas that the employee may have to improve work processes and methods.

The supervisor conducts the interview with the employee, using the following recommendations as a guide. Instructions for using the Performance Management Form as an effective tool are contained on the form.

1. Discuss the extent to which the employee met performance expectations.

This time is used to compare the supervisor's observations of the employee's performance with the employee's perceptions of their own performance. A mutual understanding is developed of how well the employee met performance expectations. The supervisor allows the employee to present their view of their performance first and compares and contrasts the employee's perception with their own evaluation. The employee's performance file is used as a source of information about the employee's performance during the rating period. Additionally, the supervisor should reflect on work performed during the past performance period that was either exceptional or in need of improvement.

2. Discuss the employee's work behaviors as they relate to job performance. Discuss the employee's strengths and make suggestions for improvement. Section 4 of the Performance Management Form lists core competencies, knowledge and skill, basic conditions of employment, and where applicable, managerial competencies. These are discussed with the employee, highlighting areas where the employee has performed very well and/or areas where there is an opportunity for improvement.

3. Discuss the recommended areas for growth, change or improvement as related to job competencies and work behavior.

As part of the performance management process, supervisors and employees are **encouraged** to consider any areas of the employee's performance that could be improved or changed in any way to benefit both organizational and employee needs. Section 5 of the form is used for this purpose. Supervisors are **required** to complete this section when an unsatisfactory area has been identified.

4. Develop the job description, performance expectations, and developmental plan for the coming year. Complete sections 1,2,3 and 5 on a new form that will be used as the performance management document for the coming review period.

An integral part of the performance management interview is developing these key elements for the coming review period. Use a blank form for this purpose (sections 1,2,3 and 5). This form, with these sections completed, will constitute the individual's performance plan for the coming performance rating period. The supervisor should review the overall goals and objectives of the organization to ascertain needs. The supervisor should also obtain a copy of the class specification from the agency's personnel office. The job description and performance expectations must be consistent with the employee's job classification.

5. Encourage Employee Comments.

The supervisor should encourage employees to make any comments they wish to add to the Performance Management Form, including suggestions for improved service delivery or areas of disagreement with the performance ratings.