

Performance Management

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The Supervisor's Role in Performance Management

Responsibility



As a supervisor, it is your responsibility to communicate to your employees the requirements of their positions. You must also manage performance in your unit so that the best products and services are offered in the most efficient manner possible. Performance management has two essential ingredients:

- Ensuring that employees are aware of supervisory expectations by having written performance plans
- Providing employees regular feedback measuring their performance against the requirements in the performance plan

Implementing the process

The following steps should be taken to implement the performance management process:

- Establish the performance requirements for your organization and for individual positions.
- Discuss these requirements with your employees, making sure they understand your expectations, then consider their concerns and recommendations.

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- Make sure that your employees are made aware of the final product and the requirements of their performance plan.
- Track employee performance.
- Compare employee performance against the established performance plan and prepare the appraisal.
- Discuss performance with employees on a regular basis throughout the year and at annual appraisal time.
- Use the performance appraisal as the basis for rewards and for improvements.
- Repeat the process over and over again. If your efforts are successful, your employees' individual performance and your organization's overall performance will continue to improve with each cycle.

Developing Performance Requirements

Bases of the requirements

The cornerstone of an effective performance management system is the development of clear requirements that govern your employees' performance. These are contained in two documents:



- The position description which describes the work of the position and the level of authority and responsibility exercised by the

incumbent. Development of position descriptions is covered in the Classification module of the DLA Online Supervisory Training Program.

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- The performance plan which communicates the supervisory expectations and evaluation factors to the employee. To develop a performance plan, the supervisor must determine the critical elements of the job and then decide how to measure them and the level of performance required for each.

Critical elements

The decision of what to measure—the critical elements—is the most important one, since it establishes the framework for the rest of the performance plan. A critical element is a work assignment or responsibility that is of such importance that unacceptable performance in the element would result in unacceptable performance in the position.

Determining critical elements

To determine critical elements, first list the major duties and responsibilities of the job. Normally, the essence of the job can be captured in 8 to 10 major duties, but more or less is acceptable. After listing the major duties, ask yourself: "If the employee failed to perform at an acceptable level in this duty, would that alone be sufficient reason to remove him/her from the position?" If so, this duty should be a critical element.

Tips on determining critical elements

Here are some tips on determining critical elements:

- Generally, performance plans should contain five or six critical elements. Rarely should performance plans contain more than 10 critical elements.
- Critical elements should be substantially similar for positions of the same title, series, and grade when: (1) the duties and responsibilities of the position are the same; (2) the work procedures, technology, and

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equipment used are the same; and (3) the work situation, level of supervisory control, and work expectations are the same.

- Critical elements should be broad in scope and few in number.
- Critical elements should center on the products and outcomes of the job.

Measuring the critical elements

Performance can be measured against a variety of criteria—quality, quantity, and timeliness, to name a few. Your choice of measurement criteria will depend on what you are measuring. Each performance plan must describe what is required for an employee to meet the fully successful level of each critical element. You may also include descriptions for other levels, such as the minimally acceptable level, but it is not required. There are two types of measures for establishing performance levels: numerical and narrative.

Examples of numerical standards

Here are some examples of numerical performance standards at the fully successful level:

- Employee must pack 25 items per day with no more than a 12 percent error rate.
- Typed documents can contain no more than 3 errors per page.

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- Final, typed documents are returned to originator within 3 days of receipt.

Examples of narrative standards

Here are some examples of narrative performance standards at the fully successful level:

- Processes correspondence, establishes and maintains files and suspense systems accurately most of the time.
- Communicates in day-to-day relationships in a manner that demonstrates personal interest, solves problems, and facilitates assigned work.

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)

The GPRA requires that individual employee performance be linked to organizational mission and/or goals. The purpose of the Act is to initiate program performance reform by

- requiring the creation of strategic plans with program goals
- measuring employee performance against organizational goals, and
- reporting publicly on progress.

The Act is designed to place a new focus on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction from Federal Government employees.

In order to comply with this requirement, activities are encouraged to develop, to the extent that it is feasible to do so, standard critical elements for all employees—regardless of grade level and/or pay plan. These critical elements can be linked to the DLA Strategic Plan and/or the employee's organizational plan.

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Developing Performance Standards

Employee participation

Performance requirements should not be developed in a vacuum. No one, probably even you, knows the job better than the employee doing the job. That knowledge should be taken into account in developing performance plans.

Employees should be allowed to participate in the development or substantial revision of performance plans. Experience has shown that people are more likely to try and reach goals they've personally had a hand in setting. You can decide how to involve your employees in performance plan development.

Methods

Here are two methods you may want to consider:

1. Draft the critical elements and standards or revisions yourself, then discuss them and invite employee comments.

OR

2. Ask the employee, or a group of employees, to draft the critical elements and standards themselves, with your review and critique.

Documenting the performance plan

After you have prepared the final plan with participation of your employee(s), document the results on the DLA Form 46a, Position Performance Plan, available on FormFlow, <http://www.dla.mil/DSS/forms/>.

Discussing the plan with the employee

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You then must communicate the contents of the performance plan to the employee. You should take ample time to

- discuss the plan with each employee
- explain how the performance levels differ for the various elements and exactly what you're looking for, and
- invite the employee to question you about the plan and to bring questions and concerns to you throughout the rating period.

Reviewing the performance plan

The end of the performance period is the proper time to review the performance plan with the employee for the coming year. This is true whether the plan will be revised or not. It is also the time when the supervisor should review the Individual Development Plan (IDP) with the employee to determine necessary training for the coming year. Further information on IDPs can be found in the Career Planning and Development module of the DLA Online Supervisory Training Program.

Tracking performance

Once you have established performance requirements and communicated them to your employees, you will need to track their performance against those requirements. The obvious reason we track performance is to accurately evaluate employees. There are two other significant reasons why it is important to track performance:

1. Appraisals are prone to the "recency" factor, the tendency to appraise performance based primarily on events that occurred late in the rating period. By tracking

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performance through the entire rating period, you'll have a better picture of the employee's overall performance.

2. If the employee challenges his or her appraisal, you'll be much better able to defend your judgments if you can demonstrate a factual basis for your appraisal decisions. A consistent record of performance throughout the year demonstrates that you did not appraise the employee frivolously and provides a solid basis for the rating.

Completing the performance rating

At the end of the rating cycle it is necessary to complete the performance rating itself. This is done on DLA Form 46, Performance Rating. A DLA Form 46 is due to J-19 not later than February 15 of each year, unless the rating period has been extended. If the rating period has been extended, the rating should be completed as soon as possible after the expiration of the extended rating period. Information on extending rating periods is provided later in this module.

1. Carefully review the employee's performance against the performance standards for each rating element. Performance for each rating element is rated at the performance level met by actual performance.
2. Enter in Section I of DLA Form 46 each rating element (or a summary) from the DLA Form 46a for the employee's position.
3. Select the performance level number for the level of performance the employee has achieved for each rating element and enter that number in the appropriate column. The level numbers are:
 - Level 3: Fully Successful
 - Level 2: Minimally Acceptable
 - Level 1: Unacceptable

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Summary rating

A summary performance rating must then be determined and is based on the rating levels assigned for all rated critical elements (unratable elements will not be considered in determining a summary rating). The table below explains summary ratings.

If . . .	Then . . .
any critical element is rated 1	the employee's summary rating is unacceptable.
any element is rated 2, and no critical element is rated 1	the employee's summary rating is minimally acceptable.
all rating elements are rated 3	the employee's summary rating is fully successful.

Approval of ratings

For summary ratings of fully successful, approval by the appraising supervisor is all that is required. For summary ratings of unacceptable or minimally acceptable, the appraising supervisor's as well as the next level supervisor's certification is required.

Keeping Track of Performance

Process

Performance management is a continual process that should involve periodic meetings/discussions between you and your employees. Scheduled work reviews should occur on a regular basis, i.e., weekly, monthly, end of each project, or other regular intervals. Each discussion need not cover all aspects of performance but collectively should inform the



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employee how he or she is doing in relation to the standards.

Rule

At a minimum, performance must be discussed with employees twice a year: at the end of the appraisal period when the performance rating is given and once at about the halfway point of the rating period. Between these reviews you should establish a routine of recording and documenting performance.

Performance records

Performance records can be observations of your employees' performance or you can use existing records such as

- computer listings
- notes of discussions
- notes of review
- work results and work samples
- production logs, and
- error listings.

Critical incidents

Another way of tracking performance is to record critical incidents. Critical incidents are events that are especially noteworthy. They can be examples of especially good or especially poor work, or accounts of unusually important events or ones with especially great impact on the employee or the organization. These incidents are recorded as they occur, rather than on any established schedule, and they form the basis of an "appraisal by exception" in which those items that differ from the norm are given special weight.

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There are many other ways to track performance. These are just a few examples. What is important is that you do track performance and that you keep notes of your observations.

Procedural Requirements in Appraising Performance

Performance appraisal cycle

The appraisal cycle begins January 1 of each year and ends on December 31 of each year. The appraisal is based on an observation period of at least 90 consecutive days under the same performance plan with the same supervisor. New or revised plans should not be issued during the last 90 days of the cycle to ensure that employees receive their rating on time.



Extending the rating period

The rating period should be extended to complete a 90-day observation period in the following three cases:

- An employee has been on long-term training or other lengthy absence from duty and has not completed the minimum 90-day observation period.
- An employee first enters the position during the last 90 days of the appraisal cycle.
- The employee is placed in an "opportunity to improve" period (given a written warning of unacceptable performance), during which the rating becomes due.

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Re-rating performance consistency

Except as provided in this subparagraph, employees will receive only one performance rating of record per year. There are a few instances where performance may be re-rated during the rating period:

- Performance may be re-rated during the rating period in connection with settlement of an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) grievance or other formal complaint.
- Performance may be re-rated during the rating period when performance in one or more critical elements becomes unacceptable. This should only occur after an opportunity period has been completed.

Note: A re-rating may not take place until the employee has completed a minimum of 90 consecutive calendar days working under a performance plan for the appraising supervisor and at least 90 days have elapsed since the previous rating of record was rendered.

Appraising Performance on a Detail or Other Temporary Assignment

Policy



The gaining supervisor will acquaint a detailed, temporarily promoted, or temporarily reassigned employee with the work expectations of the position. When a detail, temporary promotion, or temporary reassignment within DLA is expected to last 120 days or more, the gaining supervisor must furnish

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the employee with a copy of the performance plan for the position not later than 30 days after the assignment begins.

Summary rating

Upon completion of a detail, temporary promotion, or temporary reassignment within DLA of 120 days or more, the gaining supervisor will prepare a summary rating. One copy will be given to the employee and one copy sent to the employee's regular supervisor.

The summary rating is for information only and does not become the rating of record. The employee's regular supervisor must consider such a summary rating when preparing the employee's regular rating of record at the end of the performance period.

In instances of details outside of DLA, the regular supervisor must make a reasonable effort to obtain appraisal information from the borrowing organization and consider that information in preparing the employee's next rating.

Ratings for assignments longer than 9 months

The fact that an employee is on a detail, temporary promotion, or temporary reassignment at the end of the rating period does not relieve the appraising supervisor of the responsibility to rate the employee's performance. However, when either a temporary promotion or a temporary reassignment is processed and the assignment lasts more than 9 months, the gaining supervisor will prepare the employee's official performance rating. In addition, the gaining supervisor must also ensure that an appropriate performance plan exists for the position.

Employees who are detailed for the entire rating period will not be able to receive an official rating of record, so

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supervisors should be careful to ensure that employees are not kept on details for overly long periods.

The Appraisal Meeting

Preparing for the meeting

You, and your employee, will get out of the appraisal meeting as much as you put into it. Appraisal meetings can take place in a variety of ways. The appraisal meeting will run much smoother if you decide in advance what your expectations are for the meeting. You don't need a written agenda, but you should have clearly defined objectives and be prepared in advance. Here are some tips for preparing for the meeting:

- At a minimum, plan to address each critical element and to describe to the employee you've matched his or her performance to the standards for each element.
- For those areas in which you expect the employee to explore ways to improve performance for the next appraisal, identify specific actions the employee could take, or specific results he or she should achieve to reach a higher level.
- Don't neglect your outstanding performers. You may think there's nothing left to say to the person who is exceptional in every element. But even the best performers need praise for their accomplishments and will have some areas in which they could improve.
- Assemble in advance of the meeting all the backup material you expect to need. Few factors are more disruptive to open communication than to be in a session with a supervisor who keeps hopping in and out of his or

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her chair to get one thing or another. This kind of disorganization sends a message to the employee that you didn't think the appraisal session was important enough to prepare for.

- Schedule the date for the meeting several days in advance, at a time that is mutually convenient and in a private setting.

Conducting the meeting

Once you have given some advance thought to the appraisal meeting, keep in mind the following tips for actually conducting the appraisal meeting:

- Set up a comfortable place for the meeting, establishing an atmosphere that encourages communication. Sitting behind your desk as you talk with the employee conveys an impression of "us" versus "them," authority and subordination. If you come out from behind your desk and sit with the employee during the discussion, you convey a greater sense of equality, which encourages the employee to speak freely.
- Set the tone of the meeting as a free and open discussion of ideas. Let the employee know that it's okay to disagree. You want to know what the employee has to say, not what the employee thinks you want him or her to say.
- Briefly identify what you want to cover in the meeting before you get into the "meat" of the discussion. See if there are items the employee also wants to cover that you haven't mentioned.
- Be direct, objective, and sincere. Although it may not be immediately apparent, employees do appreciate knowing the truth. If no one tells them what they could have done better, they'll probably never know. Honest and direct

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appraisal allows employees to respond to the real issues; hidden agendas don't facilitate communication or improvement.

- Remember to praise the employee for things done well. That's no problem for good employees. But for average or poor workers, it's easy to get so caught up in explaining what could have been done better or in defending the rating you've assigned that you forget to offer positive reinforcement for the things that have been done well.
- Keep the session focused on the objectives you and the employee discussed at the beginning of the meeting. Don't allow the session to descend into a discussion of irrelevancies. Know what you want to cover and make sure you cover it.
- Let the employee do his or her share of the talking. The employee may be able to talk through issues better without your interjections, and conclusions reached through self-examination will be much more effective than ones that are imposed from the outside.
- Use open-ended questions. These are questions that require something other than a single word or yes/no answer. Instead of asking, "Did you like that assignment?" try asking, "What did you like or dislike about your assignment and explain why." The response to the second question is likely to yield a lot more information.
- Use probing techniques to keep the employee talking. Probing techniques ask the employee to explain a previous answer. You can also rephrase the employee's statements, which may result in the employee modifying or rethinking what was just said.

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- Try silence as an alternative. Few people are comfortable in a void, and if you're not saying anything the employee probably will.
- Use the appraisal discussion as an opportunity to review the employee's career goals and development plans. Talk about training that would be useful—either formal classroom training or on-the-job training.
- At the conclusion of the appraisal session, discuss your mutual expectations for the next appraisal period. Leave the meeting on a positive note, with a reminder of your availability and interest in the employee and his or her work. Give the employee a copy of the performance plan that will apply in the coming rating year.

Employee self-appraisal

While it's important for employees to know how you, as their supervisor, view their performance and your expectations of them in their jobs, it's also important that you know how they view their own performance and their contributions to the organization. Discussions of performance should be two-way. They should be free and open communications between a supervisor and an employee, not lectures. An employee self-appraisal can help you gain information on details of the employee's performance that you may not have known.

To facilitate the process of communication, you may find it useful to have your employees complete a self-appraisal before you prepare the formal appraisal document. This self-appraisal can be a blank Form 46 or just a piece of paper on which the employee writes what he or she has done exceptionally well or highlights areas needing improvement.

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After the Appraisal is Given

Introduction

Performance management does not stop after you have given an employee a rating. There are a myriad of things that can happen. The next portion of this training describes the supervisor's role in those actions.



Grievances

Employees are expected to seek informal resolution of disagreements with their supervisors concerning their performance ratings. Disagreements not informally resolved will be handled according to the Agency grievance process or the negotiated procedure, depending on whether the employee is represented by a union or not. A grievance may only be filed after a performance rating has been completed and officially communicated to the employee by the appraising supervisor.

Only ratings of individual rating elements may be grieved; the summary adjective rating may not be grieved. If it is alleged that the summary rating has been incorrectly determined, the matter should be reviewed and corrected, if appropriate, by the appraising supervisor.

The expected norm of performance is the fully successful level. When an employee grieves one or more rating elements rated below that level, the burden of proof rests with management to show that the rating(s) given is proper.

Poor performance

Employees who are warned of serious performance deficiencies sometimes, in spite of your best efforts, fail to

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measure up to your expectations. Performance deficiencies may occur for a variety of reasons, but they always require your prompt and serious attention. Left unattended, a single instance of poor performance can result in mission failure and in deteriorating morale among your better performers who must cover for poor performers.

Reasons for poor performance

There are many reasons why employees do not perform as they should, and for each of those reasons there is a unique solution. When employee problems are at issue, there are no "stock" answers for any particular situation. Rather, there are general guidelines that can be followed. In deciding how to deal with poor performance, here are some questions you must answer before you arrive at a solution:

- Is the performance problem serious enough to warrant your intervention? Is it important to the overall performance of the job and does it justify the investment of your time, efforts, and money to try to correct it?
- What is the reason for the performance deficiency? Is the employee not able to do the work or is he/she not willing to do it?

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Potential solutions to performance problems

Once you determine that some action is necessary in dealing with a performance problem, you should try to determine the reasons and potential solutions. The following table provides possible reasons and solutions.

Reason	Solution
The employee does not know how to do the work.	Teach the skill and give regular feedback on performance.
The employee has a physical, mental, or emotional condition that prevents performance.	If this is a condition that you cannot accommodate within the demands of the current job, move the employee to another job or, if there is no job the employee can do, remove the employee from the Federal service.
The work is boring.	If possible, enrich the work so that it provides some satisfaction and the employee can observe the effect of his or her products.
There are negative consequences of performing as desired, or there is no payoff for performing as desired or performance is nonrewarding.	Restructure duties so that good performance is rewarded.

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Employee responsibility

You'll notice that many of the problems identified above are not things that an employee has much control over, if any. But don't be misled. Poor performance is ultimately the employee's responsibility. You are expected to do the things within your power and authority to make good performance possible for the employee. However, the final responsibility for performing up to expectations is the employee's. There is no way you can force good performance out of anyone.

Performance Counseling

When to counsel

Even after you've identified possible causes of your employee's poor performance and corrected those things you have control over, the employee may still not perform acceptably. Whenever a worker's performance is less than acceptable, you need to counsel the employee about his or her continued poor performance. Most problems can be resolved through effective communication between supervisors and employees. A counseling session is an opportunity to clarify expectations and discuss performance problems. It is important that you first make sure you are faced with poor performance rather than misconduct.



Misconduct

Misconduct, e.g., tardiness, absenteeism, insubordination, and falsification, is generally the failure to follow a workplace rule (whether written or unwritten). Poor performance, on the other hand, is simply the failure to do the job at the acceptable level. Although it is normal for performance and misconduct to be interrelated, it is important to recognize the difference between the two.

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Before counseling, make sure you can state clearly what would constitute acceptable performance and arrange adequate time for your comments as well as comments from the employee. Seek cooperation, not confrontation. Remember that your goal is to improve the employee's performance, not to win an argument with the employee.

Effective counseling procedures

Like the appraisal discussion, counseling sessions should be held in private with the employee in an environment where you're not likely to be interrupted. Follow these procedures for performance counseling:

Step	Action
1. Communicate your expectations.	Discuss the performance problem. Focus on exactly what must be done to bring the performance up to an acceptable level, provide specific examples of poor performance, and also suggest ways to improve performance.
2. Review the employee's performance standards.	Review the requirements of the job in the areas where performance is deficient. It is critical that you discuss the tasks the employee is expected to perform and the standards against which the performance is measured.
3. Review the critical element(s).	Compare the employee's work record to the standards, pinpointing as specifically as you can the areas of deficiency and what acceptable performance would be. Ask the employee if he or she understands precisely what must be done to bring the performance to an acceptable level.

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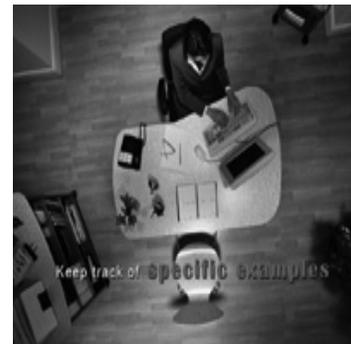
Step Action

After the Counseling Session

Documenting the session

Try to end the session on a positive note by emphasizing that your mutual goal is to improve the employee's performance. Immediately after any such discussion with an employee, you should take a few minutes and make a dated note for the file to document the matters discussed and any assistance offered. If such a note would help confirm the mutual understanding of the matters discussed, you should share it with the employee. One of the most important things to remember when taking notes is to date them so they reflect when you met with an employee or when you noted a particularly good or bad instance of performance.

Keep track of specific examples of poor performance on work assignments. Doing so will make it easier for you to explain what's wrong with the employee's performance through the use of examples. Note how you expressed your performance expectations and how the employee responded to the counseling, when assignments were given to the employee and what instructions were provided.



When counseling does not result in improvement

You may need to meet several times to discuss the performance problem and improvement actions before you begin to see significant results. However, at some point it will become clear whether the performance is going to get better or not. If counseling does not result in sufficient

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improvement, the next step depends on how bad the performance is.

EAP

Getting to know the services that EAP can offer and how to refer an employee is critical to prepare you when an employee raises personal problems that are impacting his or her work performance.

Because substance abuse, emotional illness, or other personal problems can be contributing factors in performance problems, EAP referral should be offered whenever counseling an employee regarding serious performance deficiencies. If you are not sure how to refer an employee to EAP, you may contact the J-19 EAP at 1-888-417-0013 or (703) 767-8651. Further information on the EAP is available on the EAP Web page at <http://www.hr.dla.mil/j1/j19/eap>.

Poor performance after referral and/or rehabilitation

Besides some medical conditions, alcoholism and emotional illnesses are considered to be handicapping conditions for which reasonable accommodation is required. Employees suffering from those problems must be given the opportunity to obtain counseling and/or undergo rehabilitative treatment, and must be given a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance. Management should make clear that failure to demonstrate acceptable performance after referral and rehabilitation will result in a reassignment or may result in a demotion or removal from the Federal Service. If an employee fails to participate in a rehabilitative program, or fails to bring performance up to an acceptable level after participation in such a program, performance should be evaluated accordingly and an appropriate performance-based personnel action taken.

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Drug abuse

Currently, drug abuse is not a handicapping condition under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and need not be accommodated before taking a performance-based action. Any finding of current drug abuse must be addressed in accordance with the provisions of the DLA Drug-Free Workplace Plan. More information on the Plan can be found in the supervisory module on the DLA Drug Prevention Program.



Options for Poor Performance

Determining options

If performance does not improve with counseling, more severe action may be necessary. The action taken depends on the severity of the poor performance and when in the rating cycle the poor performance occurs.

Actions for minimally acceptable performance

If an employee's performance is minimally acceptable at the end of the rating cycle and you have sufficient documentation to support it, you should rate the appropriate critical elements at the minimally acceptable level.

If an employee's performance is minimally acceptable at the time a within-grade increase (WIGI) is due, and you have sufficient documentation to support it, you should prepare an out-of-cycle appraisal reflecting the minimally acceptable performance and deny the WIGI.

In either case, you should have counseled the employee and be working closely with the employee to continue counseling, coaching, and training to bring the employee's performance up to the fully successful level. Any time you

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believe an employee's performance is at or approaching the minimally acceptable level, you should contact your J-19 Employee Relations Specialist for assistance in carrying out the necessary steps to resolve the situation.

Actions for unacceptable performance

If an employee's performance does not improve after following the steps above, and deteriorates either from fully successful or minimally acceptable to unacceptable, there are other steps that become necessary.

At this point, you should give the employee one more chance to correct deficiencies during a formal opportunity to improve period. This period starts with a written notice to the employee, commonly issued as a Letter of Warning for Unacceptable Performance. The Letter of Warning is designed to give the employee an opportunity to bring performance up to an acceptable level and allows the supervisor to clearly express the expectations and consequences of not meeting those expectations. An employee who fails to improve to an acceptable level by the end of the opportunity period (usually 30-90 days) is subject to more severe disciplinary action. The Letter of Warning is particularly important because, if performance continues to be unacceptable and you demote the employee or remove the employee from the Federal Service, the Letter of Warning will form a major part of the evidence used to support the decision. Its adequacy may be reviewed in a grievance or appeal, and it will serve as a summary of your efforts to help the employee correct his or her performance deficiencies.

During the opportunity period, as a supervisor you must meet regularly with the employee to review and evaluate his/her performance and to record the employee's performance against the requirements levied in the Letter of Warning.

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Note: These review/counseling sessions should be documented in writing, with a copy provided to the employee. Although by the time you get to the opportunity period you may be tempted to give up hope that the employee will ever improve, your efforts should still be directed at salvaging the employee's productive service. It is almost always more efficient and cost-effective to save a trained employee than to start all over again with a newcomer of unknown potential.

During the opportunity period

If, during the opportunity period, the employee's performance improves to the

- fully successful level or above, you should commend the employee on the improvement, offer your assistance if performance problems begin again, and remind the employee of your continuing interest in his or her progress.
- minimally acceptable level you should commend the employee on the improvement, remind the employee of the improvement still needed, and establish a schedule for continued counseling and coaching.

After the opportunity period

Sometimes, employees do improve their performance during the opportunity period but then allow it to deteriorate again once the period is completed. You are not obligated to offer repetitive opportunity periods and allow the employee effectively to forestall any adverse action.

If the employee's performance improves to at least the minimally acceptable level during the opportunity period and falls to unacceptable again within a year, no new warning letter or opportunity period is required before you take corrective action.

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Continued unacceptable performance

If, at the end of the opportunity period, performance has still not improved to at least the minimally acceptable level, you must take action to remove the employee from his or her position. Such action can be reassignment, demotion, or removal from Federal Service. The J-19 Employee Relations Team will work closely with supervisors to develop the appropriate disciplinary action.

- End -