State of Washington Performance and Development Plan Guide

Updated December 2023

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Employee Performance Management Overview

Performance management aligns the organization's mission, vision and values with individual performance. In an effective performance management system, the overall strategic plan is cascaded down so that, ultimately, there is a clear path connecting each employee's job to that plan. Performance management is an ongoing process of creating and sustaining a workplace environment where both an organization and its staff succeed in fulfilling business objectives.

At the **organizational level**, performance management takes the form of planning and tracking of results. It involves the development and communication of:

- Agency mission, vision and values.
- Development of goals and objectives focused on results or outcomes.
- Performance measures and targets.
- Strategies to achieve targets.

At the **employee level,** performance management is a comprehensive approach to:

- Assigning work.
- Establishing expectations.
- Supporting employee efforts.
- Providing assessment and feedback.
- Following through with appropriate recognition or correction.

Some common characteristics of organizations where performance management is being done well are:

- High percentage of completed performance appraisals.
- Clear linkage between employees' jobs and the organization's mission.
- Open sharing of performance measures.
- Communication and feedback are ongoing.
- Employees know what is expected of them.
- Investment of dollars and time in training and development activities.
- Reward differentiation between high and low performers.
- Good performance is consistently recognized.
- Poor performance is quickly addressed.

This guide is intended for use by supervisors and employees in conducting all parts of the **Performance and Development Plan (PDP)**. The material presented in this guide provides concepts, suggestions and techniques that can be very beneficial when applied to the PDP process. None of the material in this guide is considered official instruction, nor is it required in the completion of the PDP. A Q&A section is included in Appendix O.

Roles

Supervisor's Role

Supervisors provide the link between agency goals and individual employees. Through their actions and attitudes, they help to create a culture that supports performance management. Supervisors are the front-line implementers of the process for individual performance management. An effective performance management system cannot be realized in an organization without active involvement and support of the organization's supervisors.

Supervisors have the following responsibilities within performance management:

- To effectively use the individual performance management process:
    - Establish clear expectations for employees.
    - Provide honest and timely feedback – both formal and informal.
    - Support employees' growth and development.
    - Recognize and reward desired performance.
    - Correct undesirable performance.
    - Remain focused on helping employees to succeed.
- To provide leadership to employees and to help create a supportive performance management culture.
- To be fair, reasonable, accountable, consistent, and timely.
- To communicate honestly and directly.
- To follow the organization's policies, procedures and guidelines for performance management.
- To ask for assistance when they need it – from their manager, or human resources, or peers.

Employee's Role

To be done well, performance management must be a shared responsibility of employees and managers.

Employees are responsible for seeking clarification when needed so they understand what's expected of them and for performing the work in a way that meets expectations.

Employees are also responsible for participating in the performance evaluation process and for communicating successes and problems to supervisors so the supervisor can better measure progress and provide assistance where needed.

Employees responsibilities for performance management are outlined in WAC 357-37-025.

Beginning the Process

The Performance and Development Plan is a tool that you can use to initiate conversations with your employees that will support effective employee performance management. It is formatted to facilitate both performance planning and feedback at the end of the performance period.

It is essential to start a PDP as soon as a new employee comes on board to begin the process for the probationary or trial review appraisal. What better way to ensure the employee understands their role and your expectations?

The PDP is organized as follows:

Performance Planning

1. Performance Expectations (Results and Competencies)
2. Training and Development Needs/Opportunities
3. Organizational Support

Performance Assessment

4. Interim Reviews (Optional)
5. Performance Feedback (Results and Competencies)

Before the supervisor and employee begin work on the PDP, the following basic steps should be considered:

- The supervisor and employee review the PDP form and instructions.
- The position description is updated, if needed.
- The supervisor completes the data section at the top of the PDP form.
- The supervisor determines the timing and process that will be followed in completed parts 1-3 of the PDP.

Position Linkage with Organizational Mission and Strategic Plan

Overview

One of the first steps in completion of the PDP form is describing the position's link to the organization's mission and goals.

Answer the question: "What is the organization's mission, and how do the duties and responsibilities of this position link or contribute to the achievement of the mission, goals, and objectives of the organization?"

It's here that you want to describe the true value of the position in the organization. Why is this important?

- A supervisor's attitude about the value of a position will impact the employee's attitude, and ultimately the employee's performance.
- People take pride in work they believe is important and making a real contribution.

Tips to describe the linkage

- Don't invent
- Don't overstate or be flowery
- Be honest and clear

Examples of Position Linkage statements are included in Appendix B

Part 1: Performance Expectations

Performance expectations are determined by the manager. However, the employee should participate and have input.. Expectations should be limited to those most important to successful job performance. The PDP calls for two categories of performance expectations: Key Results Expected and Key Competencies Expected.

Results refer to the "what" of the job. Based on the primary areas of responsibility, what are the most important outputs or outcomes expected during the performance period?

These expected results are to be stated in measurable or observable terms.

Competencies refer to the "how" of the job, the behavior that the employee engages in when carrying out the "what" of the job. Competencies are those measurable or observable knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors critical to success in a key role or function. Key competencies that are specific to the job should be included. Competencies that are core to the organization might also be included.

Key Results Expected

Overview

It's here on the PDP form that the *most important outcomes* for the job expected during the period are documented.

- For some positions, this may mean documenting some **special assignments** or goals to be achieved.
- For other positions with generally the same job duties and expectations from year to year, this may mean documenting the performance standards for the position's **key responsibilities.**
- And for others, the key results expected might reflect a **combination** of performance standards for key responsibilities and special assignments or goals.

Whatever approach is most appropriate for a position, supervisors should focus on the most critical expectations – generally between three and seven total is sufficient for most jobs. If too many "critical" expectations are laid out, then *none* of them seem critical.

The Key Results Expected section is focused on the requirements of the *particular job*. Key Results Expected should be the same for a job regardless of *who* is in the position.

Writing Key Results Expected

How do you describe Key Results Expected? There are two important questions to ask yourself about Key Results Expected:

1. What's important to get done in this job?
2. How will we know when the employee gets there?

In answering these two questions, consider the following.

Focus on outcomes. What is the desired end result of the key job responsibility or special assignment? What is the goal? Strive to state Key Results Expected as an *outcome* expectation – rather than an *output* or task. While outputs (number of meetings, number of responses, etc.) or completion of specific steps may be easier to measure than outcomes, they often don't speak to the true purpose of the work, although there are some situations where measurement of outputs *is* meaningful.

Explain how you will know if the Key Result has been achieved. Make the Key Result Expected measurable or observable. Think ahead to the assessment process. What information will need to be gathered and used in writing the assessment? How might the conversation between the supervisor and employee go? This will help the supervisor think about the information to be gathered and how that information might be gathered.

Often, measurement of outcomes seems more subjective than measurement of outputs. It's appropriate to rely on information and opinions from sources that matter – customers, subordinates, or subject matter experts, for example. Ongoing collection of feedback from clients (qualitative or quantitative), use of surveys, or less structured feedback solicitation at the end of a performance period are all methods that can be used to gather information from appropriate parties.

Keep the list short. To make the Performance and Development Plan meaningful and manageable, it's important to focus in on the top priority key responsibilities and/or special assignments. Keep this list to just a handful, if possible – typically three to seven will cover the critical parts of most jobs. Ask:

- Which responsibilities weigh most heavily when deciding how well the employee is doing the job?
- What responsibilities matter most?
- Which responsibilities must an employee excel at to be considered a top performer?
- What special assignments are most significant and have the most impact?

State them simply. Use clear, plain language when describing Key Results Expected. The goal is that both supervisor and employee will have the same understanding of the expectation. The simpler the language, the better.

Beware of subjective terms such as: "Thorough," "Excellent," "Effective" and "Frequently." Ask yourself: What does "Effective" look like in this job and state that instead.

Be SMART! Check the Key Results you write against the following SMART criteria:

Specific

Measurable or observable

Action-oriented

Realistic (Within the employee's authority and resources)

Time-oriented (Is a goal date included where appropriate?)

Consider the following format for writing Key Results Expected:

What action? Reduce; complete; increase; eliminate; maintain…

…will achieve what result?	Strategic plan; response time; software installation…
…by when?	End of 2nd quarter; June '03; Tuesday by 5 p.m.; immediately…
…to what end?	Priorities will be clear; permits will be approved on time …lost time will be reduced…

Examples of Key Results Expected are included in Appendix C.

Key Competencies Expected

It's here on the PDP form that the *most important* competencies expected during the period are documented.

What are Competencies?

These are the other parts of the Performance Expectations. The first, Key Results Expected, was the "what." Competencies are the "how."

Competencies are those measurable or observable knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors critical to success in a key job role or function

In the Performance and Development Plan (PDP) process, there are two primary steps for the Key Competencies Expected section:

1. Pick the most important competencies to include in the plan, and
2. Describe the competencies in behaviorally specific terms.

Different Types of Competencies

Two types of competencies should be considered for inclusion in the Key Competencies Expected section for performance planning.

Job-specific competencies are those that are most critical for a particular position. Positions in the same occupational category (job classification) will generally have very similar competency needs, but they may also have unique needs depending on the work being performed.

Job-specific competencies are typically identified through a job analysis process. An organization's Human Resources staff can help supervisors with information about identified competencies and the job analysis process.

Core competencies are those competencies that an organization's leaders expect *all* employees to model. This might be decided at the very top level of an organization and applied to every employee, perhaps for a division or department, or maybe not at all.

If core competencies are identified, it is important to consider them in the PDP process.

How does a supervisor choose which competencies to use?

The supervisor should focus on some basic questions to determine which competencies to include in the Key Competencies Expected section. What are the competencies critical to *this* job? What core competencies do I need to include? What are the few competencies critical for *this position* to focus on during this period?

While both the Key Results Expected and Key Competencies Expected are built based on the requirements of the job, the Key Competencies Expected should also be influenced by the abilities of the employee and areas of skill, knowledge, and behavior that you need them to focus on during the performance period.

Keep the number small. Choose only those competencies most critical for the person in the job for the performance period. Between three and seven is a good target. Use enough to identify what really matters. Keeping the number small keeps the focus on those most important competencies and keeps the process more manageable.

Check in with Human Resources. The organization's Human Resources office will likely be able to provide information about the following competency considerations:

- Have Core Competencies been identified for the organization? If they have, are there instructions or expectations regarding their use in the PDP process?
- Has a set of competencies been identified for the position through a job analysis process?
- Are there other competency sets that need to be considered or included, such as a standard set for all supervisors?

Review competency lists. Sometimes it's helpful to use established lists of competencies to generate some ideas around competency identification, what to call them, and how to describe them. Lists might be found in a number of places, including management publications and on the web. State Human Resources has a list of more general competencies on its website. This list is not all inclusive, and generally does not include technical or job specific competency sets.

Writing Competency Descriptions

A one- or two-word competency "title" isn't enough for the Key Competencies Expected section of the PDP. What one person thinks of when they see "Teamwork", for example, might be very different from what the next person thinks of. Neither will a dictionary or generic definition typically be sufficient. The description needs to be more specific and tailored to the job.

What's important is to describe in behaviorally specific ways what competency would look like when demonstrated by someone who has mastered it in that job. One way for a supervisor to get clear about what they are looking for is to think of an employee who **has** mastered that particular competency. What behaviors does that employee demonstrate around that competency that result in them being considered a "master"? Describe these behaviors in the Key Competencies Expected section.

The description needs to be thorough enough and provide enough detail so that the supervisor and employee have a shared understanding of what success in that competency looks like in the employee's job. But just as with choosing the number of competencies or key results to include in the PDP, it's important to limit the number of behaviors chosen to describe the competency – to determine which are the most important indicators of success. Including every possible way that that competency might be demonstrated will result in information overload, and loss of focus on the most important behaviors.

The State Human Resources general competency list includes sets of performance statements that describe behaviors that might demonstrate that particular competency.

Some of these might be useful "as is," others might be modified for use with a particular job and some may not be relevant. It's important to write the competency description to fit the job being planned for and to ensure that the supervisor and employee have a shared understanding of the behaviors expected to demonstrate success in that competency.

Part 2: Training and Development Needs/Opportunities

Overview

Improvements the employee should make to achieve or sustain fully successful performance should be outlined in this section. Training and development opportunities for the present job and for career advancement should also be identified. Organizations that have individual development plans may use that format as a replacement for this section.

Approach

Begin by reviewing Part 1, Performance Expectations, both key job responsibilities and competencies. Identify and list the knowledge, skills and behaviors *most critical* to helping the employee:

- Effectively carry out day-to-day duties and responsibilities
- Prepare to assume further responsibilities and perform new tasks
- Develop career enhancement potential

Next, assess the employee's present level of competence in all these areas. Identify knowledge or skill areas that need further enhancement for employee success, t en describe outcomes and formulate strategies including, but not limited to, training to meet these needs. Identify the person with the single point accountability for each step, and include expected completion dates for each step in the plan.

A form to aid you in identifying skill gaps and strategies is provided in Appendix D. Examples of Development Plans are included in Appendix E.

Part 3: Organizational Support (Optional)

This is the place the employee writes suggestions about how the supervisor, co-workers, and/or agency management can support the position more fully in his/her present job and with future career goals.

Employees should be encouraged to describe what he or she would observe if the supervisor, or other person, was behaving as asked. Employees should:

- Be realistic.
- Be specific.
- Describe desired outcomes.
- Explain how you will both know the outcomes have been achieved.
- Identify behaviors that will be seen if the suggestions are followed.
- Be willing to discuss his/her responses with the supervisor.

Whether or not it is discussed, and whether or not the supervisor is in agreement, the employee's comments in Part 3 should appear **unchanged** in the final, signed PDP.

If the employee's feedback is intended for someone other than the supervisor, the supervisor should consider asking what the employee would like done with the information, then act as seems proper.

Suggestions to employees for providing supervisor feedback are included in Appendix F.

Part 4: Interim Reviews (Optional)

Interim reviews provide an opportunity to do a "check in" with your employee. Ideally, you will give your employees feedback more than once a year. You can use this section to document those discussions and adjust any performance expectations.

Change in plans?

It's vital that the Performance Plan remains current and accurate if it is to serve as a blueprint for the employee. It should guide the employee's most significant tasks and responsibilities, define where most of his or her energy should be devoted, and focus how the majority of his or her work time should be spent.

If the plan is outdated shortly after it's created, then the effort invested by the supervisor and the employee has been wasted. To effectively use the PDP as the source for the year-end performance appraisal, it's critical to keep it alive in the face of changing priorities, initiatives and resources.

How can this be done simply?

The supervisor could clearly assign responsibility to the *employee* to ensure the Performance Plan remains current and accurate. The supervisor could include the employee's responsibility for keeping his or her PDP current as one of the Plan's performance expectations. While the employee may have primary responsibility, the supervisor's regular monitoring of the employee's work will help to keep the supervisor aware of the need to update the plan.

In some positions, projects and special assignments begin and end during a performance period. When a significant new project or assignment is given, the supervisor can modify the PDP to reflect this change. Changes are simple. Supervisors can consider doing a project debrief and assessment when it ends, rather than waiting for the end of the performance period.

When an employee notices that significant work time and effort is spent on responsibilities NOT described in the PDP, he/she should bring it to the supervisor's attention so either the plan can be modified or the responsibilities re-assigned.

All changes to the PDP made during a performance period must be discussed, and signed, by both the supervisor and the employee.

Documenting Interim Reviews

Supervisors might choose to use Part 4 of the PDP to document more formal feedback sessions during the performance period.

Part 5: Performance Feedback

Overview

It's here on the PDP that the supervisor provides a narrative assessment of the employee's performance in relation to the Key Results and Competencies outlined in the Plan. Assessments should answer the following questions:

- To what degree did the employee accomplish the expected results and how well were they done?
- How well (or how frequently) did the employee demonstrate the expected knowledge, skills and behaviors?

The performance evaluation should be based on observed or verified performance. The aim of the feedback session is to have an open and constructive discussion that leads to an understanding of how well the employee did in meeting expectations during the course of the performance period.

Process

Instructions on the PDP form require the supervisor to schedule a performance feedback session with the employee, at which the employee and supervisor discuss the performance evaluation.

Ideally, the supervisor should meet with the employee at least two weeks before the assessment is due. You should ensure you both have a copy of the current plan and then have a brief conversation with the employee that will set the tone for the assessment. Consider discussing the following:

1. **Current Plan**

   If you have updated the plan during the year, ensure you have the most current version.

2. **Share Process Expectations**

   For example:

   - It will be collaborative, not one person reacting to the comments of the other.
   - You'll share the draft before you meet.
   - The focus of the entire process will be on learning, and on the employee's success. This doesn't mean that missed expectations and areas for growth and change won't be included and discussed. But keep in mind that accomplishments, not failures, make the best building blocks for future successes.
   - The assessment is intended as a summary of conversations about accomplishments and issues held between the supervisor and employee throughout the performance period. There should be no surprises.

3. **Draft Assessment**

   You will share a draft assessment of expectations and competencies in Part 2, and the employee will have an opportunity to provide comment and feedback. You may wish to share your draft with your reviewer prior to meeting with your employee. The reviewer will still need to review and sign the final assessment once you and the employee have met, but sharing the draft before the meeting may avoid the need to meet with the employee again, especially if the reviewer has significant concerns with the draft assessment.

4. **The Assessment Meeting**

   Within two weeks, meet to discuss the draft. Commit to sharing a draft at least one day before the meeting.

Writing the Assessment

Supervisors often feel overwhelmed when it's time to start writing a performance evaluation. The following steps can help you think about the information you need to gather and the questions you need to ask yourself to prepare.

Review all performance information for the employee, including:

- The most recent Plan, including Key Results Expected, Key Competencies Expected, and the Training & Development Plan.

- Feedback from customers, team members, and others.
- Any data gathered related to the key results or key competencies expected.
- Your notes – accomplishments, meetings with the employee, coaching, feedback.

Decide what went well, what didn't go as well as expected and what are the most important development needs. Consider:

- What were the most significant accomplishments?
- What were the employee's greatest strengths?
- What were the employee's most serious challenges?
- What are the employee's greatest needs for improvement?
- Where does the employee need to strengthen competencies?
- Where can the employee take well-done competencies to the next level of mastery?

Once you have considered all of the above, determine the one message or 'core theme' you want to communicate to the employee with this appraisal. This will help you keep your conversation with the employee focused on the most critical matters.

It is also often advisable to review your draft evaluation with your manager prior to giving a draft to your employee. Often he or she will have additional insight and provide you with valuable coaching.

The following appendixes contain additional information to assist you with writing the evaluation:

- Appendix G – Potential Influences on What Supervisors Write
- Appendix H – An Assessment Writing Checklist
- Appendix I – Tips for Writing Effective Performance Feedback
- Appendix J – Examples of Written Assessments

Planning and holding the feedback session

The purpose of the feedback session is to wrap up the performance period, summarizing all that's been discussed during the period about the employee's success and provide an overall assessment of performance. Your goal is to create:

- Shared understanding about the core issues: expectations, competencies, performance assessment, steps to correct performance.
- Commitment to follow through with the steps to correct performance.
- Demonstrated willingness to learn together and work collaboratively.

In preparation for the feedback session, consider the following:

- **Be very clear about the core message you want to communicate**, the single most important idea about the employee's performance you want to be sure he/she understands at the end of the meeting.
- **Be prepared to discuss three specific topics:**
    - The employee's most valuable strengths;
    - The most critical areas where performance improvement is needed;

- Competencies most in need of development.

- **Make an effective session by being interactive**, with both people open to the other's ideas, listening and looking for their own part in what has and hasn't worked as well as they would have liked.
- **No surprises!** Remember that this session should be just one moment in an ongoing process of guidance and feedback. So if it's historical and you haven't discussed it to this point, it doesn't belong in this conversation.
- **Focus on successes.** Accomplishments make better building blocks than do problems. Get the tough stuff out of the way first and then spend a lot of time on the successes. After all, they're what you want to encourage.
- **Practice what may be difficult to say.**
- **Envision a successful meeting.**

The following appendixes contain additional information to assist you with the feedback session:

- Appendix K – Clarifying the Core Message
- Appendix L – When Performance Needs to Change
- Appendix M – Ways to Encourage Employee Participation
- Appendix N – Sample Feedback Session Agenda

Appendix A – PDP Requirements in the Rules

WAC 357-37-030 When and how often must performance feedback be provided to an employee through the formal evaluation process?

Employers must provide feedback and formally evaluate the performance of:

(1) A probationary employee or a permanent employee serving a trial service period or transition review period before the employee attains permanent status in the position; and

(2) A permanent employee on an annual basis.

WAC 357-37-040 What forms and procedures must employers use to plan for and evaluate employee performance?

Employers must use standardized employee performance planning and evaluation procedures and forms developed by the director or alternate procedures and forms approved by the director.

WAC 357-37-034 Can an employer supplement the standardized employee performance evaluation procedures and forms?

Employers may supplement the standardized planning and evaluation forms and procedures with special performance factors and assessment approaches that are specific to organizational needs. Employers do not need approval to supplement the standardized forms or procedures.

Appendix B – Position Linkage Examples

Job Classification: Engineering Aide 4
Agency/Institution: Washington State Parks
Mission: The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission acquires, operates, enhances and protects a diverse system of recreational, cultural, historical and natural sites. The Commission fosters outdoor recreation and education statewide to provide enjoyment and enrichment for all, and a valued legacy to future generations.
Division/Unit: Puget Sound Resource and Development
Position Linkage: The role of the Engineering Aide 4 is to provide professional, technical support critical to designing and constructing the recreational and historic facilities built and maintained within the state park system. The EA-4 combines technology and creativity in providing design-level drawings and specifications to more senior engineers with all efforts geared towards providing those facilities required by the public to more fully enjoy our state park system.

Job Classification: Custodian 2
Agency/Institution: General Administration
Mission: General Administration's mission is to help its customers succeed.
Division/Unit: Campus Facilities Operations
Position Linkage: General Administration exists to provide a variety of centralized administrative services to state agencies, including the maintenance of state office buildings and grounds. This position contributes to the mission of GA by maintaining proper cleanliness of client agency office space – helping them to create a professional environment, one where people are happy to work.

Job Classification: Office Assistant Senior
Agency/Institution: State Auditor's Office
Mission: To independently serve the citizens of Washington by promoting accountability, fiscal integrity and openness in state and local government.
Division/Unit: Local Audit Services
Position Linkage: This position supports that mission by providing the sole secretarial, clerical and general office support to a local audit manager, 3 assistant audit managers, and 11 other audit staff. This support assists the staff to conduct efficient and effective audits of all local governments in a four-county area.

Job Classification: Environmental Education/Outreach Specialist 4 (EEOS4)
Agency/Institution: Department of Health
Mission: The Department of Health works to protect and improve the health of people in Washington State.
Division/Unit: Office of Drinking Water
Position Linkage: The role of the Environmental Education/Outreach Specialist 4 is to provide clear and concise information to targeted audiences on an ongoing basis, as well as during a drinking water emergency. This position helps educate external and internal audiences on drinking water issues and associated potential health risks to help ensure safe and reliable drinking water in Washington State.

The EEOS4 delivers key health messages through a variety of methods, including displays, publications, promotional items, health advisory packets, and training opportunities. Often these products are translated into multiple languages.

Job Classification: Mental Health Technician 2
Agency/Institution: DSHS
Mission: The mission of DSHS is to improve the quality of life for individuals and families in need. We will help people achieve safe, self-sufficient, healthy and secure lives.
Division/Unit: Western State Hospital
Position Linkage: This position directly impacts the DSHS mission by providing personal care services and general therapeutic procedures for mentally ill patients at Western State Hospital. This position is responsible to help patients achieve safe, self-sufficient, healthy and secure lives.

Job Classification: Research Analyst
Agency/Institution: Washington Traffic Safety Commission
Division/Unit: Research
Mission: To reduce the deaths, injuries, and economic losses from motor vehicle collisions. **Position Linkage**: This position provides analysis of traffic collision data used by the agency to measure performance, to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, and to analyze the potential impacts of policy proposals.

Appendix C – Key Results Expected Examples

Format:

What action?	Reduce; complete; increase; eliminate; maintain…
…will achieve what result?	Strategic plan; response time; software installation…
…by when?	End of 2nd quarter; June ’03; Tuesday by 5 p.m.; immediately…
…to what end?	Priorities will be clear; permits will be approved on time … lost time will be reduced…

Examples:

What action?	"Maintain
…will achieve what result?	an average "talk" time of three minutes per call
…by when?	beginning immediately
…to what end?	So problems can be focused upon, conversations can be controlled, questions answered, and more clients served."

What action?	"Complete
…will achieve what result?	the new process design, testing and implementation
…by when?	by the end of the second quarter
…to what end?	so lost time will be reduced by 5 percent by the end of the fiscal year."

What action?	Reduce; complete; increase; eliminate; maintain…
…will achieve what result?	Strategic plan; response time; software installation…
…by when?	End of 2nd quarter; June ’03; Tuesday by 5 p.m.; immediately…
…to what end?	Priorities will be clear; permits will be approved on time; lost time will be reduced…

"Complete review and entry of all 2003 fatal accident reports into the system database by May 31, 2004, so that the system will be current to within one quarter, and the 2003 end-of-year reports can be published by June 30, 2004."

Appendix D – Training and Development Needs/Opportunities

Skills & knowledge most critical to success	Opportunity for Growth & Learning									Fully Competent & Skilled
______________________________	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
______________________________	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
______________________________	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
______________________________	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
______________________________	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes to be enhanced	**Outcomes**	**Strategy** Training, coaching, mentoring, rotational assignments, shadowing, reading, consulting, special assignments, conferences, video/audio tapes, internet	**Single Point Accountability**	**By when?**

Appendix E - Individual Development Plan Examples

Position: Custodian

- Participate in the short-term workgroup being formed to revise the cleaning and maintenance rotation schedule. This group will start meeting in August and should be done no later than the end of September. Supervisor will make sure the group is established within the next month, and will attend the first meeting to make sure outcomes are clear. Participate as a member of the group in the presentation of the revised rotation schedule.
- Attend the following DOP training classes: Interpersonal Conflict Management and Basic Principles for a Collaborative Workplace. Meet with supervisor within one week following each course to discuss what you learned and how you intend to apply what you learned to your work.

Position: Office Assistant

- Attend Beginning and Intermediate Access training before July 15, and be able to demonstrate electronic audit file inventory skills on your next assignment.
- Meet with the IT development manager to be assigned short Access database development tasks. Before the end of this planning period obtain a written assessment of your database development performance from that manager.
- Shadow an auditor 75% of time from beginning to completion of an 80-hour audit. Participate in the planning, entrance conference, on-site audit work, exit conference, etc. Prior to the end of this planning period be prepared to demonstrate your comprehensive understanding of the entire audit process by making a brief presentation to both your mentor and supervisor.
- Become the team leave rules expert through in-depth review of the rules, tools, and forms, and meetings with agency HR staff. Provide a presentation to the team at our fall retreat.

Position: Mental Health Technician

- Learn more about alternative approaches to encouraging and developing patient self-sufficiency by attending the two Series 3 Mental Health Technician classes available through the division's training program. Supervisor will arrange for your enrollment before Aug.15. Be prepared to describe the key concepts you learned in the training, and share your ideas regarding alternative approaches for patients in your charge within a month of completing the second class.
- To develop your personal knowledge of patient recreation possibilities, use the Internet to research, develop and present four new patient recreation ideas at our monthly staff meetings.
- Participate in the Ward Security task force for the next performance period to develop your personal safety knowledge and skills. Report results to your supervisor and present summaries to co-workers at the monthly staff meetings.

Appendix F - Suggestions for Supervisor Feedback

To achieve the greatest value from your comments:

- Make your success, and the success of the organization, the goal.
- Be honest and constructive … the way you'd like to be treated.
- Focus on feedback for the supervisor.
- Address the commitments written in Part 3 at the start of the performance period.
- Describe behaviors rather than making judgments or inferences.

Questions that may be helpful when writing your feedback to your supervisor:

- Does he/she work with me to identify clear and realistic goals?
- Does he/she provide me with challenging opportunities that make good use of my knowledge and skills?
- Does he/she make sure I have the authority to carry out my responsibilities?
- Am I able to influence the decisions he/she makes that affect my work and assignments?
- Does he/she share information with me in a timely way about issues that affect my work?
- Is he/she an available and effective listener? Am I truly heard?
- Does he/she make sure I have the resources I need to succeed?
- Does he/she initiate coaching conversations?
- Does he/she model the behaviors he/she expects of me?
- Does he/she give clear, honest, constructive and timely feedback?
- Does he/she help me find healthy ways to balance work and personal life?
- What behaviors from my supervisor would most help me succeed?
- Behaviors I would like more of…
- Behaviors I would like less of…
- Behaviors I would like that are new…

Appendix G – Potential Influences on What Supervisors Write

Influence #1: Fear of Conflict

Supervisors who fear conflict in the performance feedback process may:

- Think conflict is bad, with little likelihood of a positive outcome.
- Not be direct, and/or not entirely honest.
- Avoid mentioning contentious issues for fear of the outcome.
- Not disclose what's not working well in the hope the issue(s) will just go away.
- Fail to confront issue in their day-to-day interactions as well.

This behavior results in:

- Issues remaining unresolved.
- Inappropriate behavior being acknowledged as okay.
- Confusing messages being sent.
- Increasing conflict.

To remedy this influence:

The way we think about conflict, and then deal with it when it arises, will have a greater impact on the outcome than whatever the actual issue happens to be. Individual reflection on how you view conflict, and your patterns for dealing with it, may be valuable for you as a supervisor – or anyone. You can ask yourself, "Is this issue impeding the work? Is it affecting the employee's performance and/or my relationship with the employee?" If the answer is, "no" then perhaps letting it go is the best choice. If the answer is, "yes," then coaching and some training may help you create more effective personal patterns for the way you think about and deal with conflict.

Influence #2: Your Memory…or Lack Thereof

Supervisors who struggle with trying to remember the performance period's events may:

- Tend to write about most recent occurrences rather than thematically about the entire performance period.
- Describe recent events as if they were reflective of the entire period.
- Use a few highs or lows they recall to inaccurately reflect the entire period.
- Be unable to give specific examples to support their assessment.
- Be stuck with repeating the same general phrases they've used in the past.

This lack of adequate records results in:

- Diminished value of the assessment.
- Incomplete performance records.
- Frustration with writing a thorough assessment.

To remedy this influence:

You should create a simple, easy-to-use system for keeping track of events and interactions throughout the year. You should choose a system that fits your personal style, for example:

- A journal with tabs for each employee.
- Brief, dated note stored in a box, file or bag to remind you of significant events.
- Email acknowledgements of events and achievements to the employee when they occur. Retain a copy of the email for yourself.

Influence #3: The Recurring Thought…If Only This Employee Was Like the Star Employee

Supervisors who compare one employee to another may:

- Compare all employees' performance to one person's rather than having objective standards.
- Not have expectations based upon what it takes to succeed at the position regardless of who's in it.

This comparison of individuals results in:

- Unclear and/or unshared expectations at the beginning of a performance period.
- Resentment by employees of favorites who can do no wrong.
- Employees feeling "set up" by supervisors' judgments.
- Tense relationships among employees.

To remedy this influence:

You should set performance expectations based upon what it takes to be successful in the position (competencies) and make sure expectations are behaviorally specific…observable or measurable. You can consult with peers or your supervisor to make sure the expectations are clear, realistic and significant. You should make sure the expectations are shared with the employee at the beginning of the performance period. Lastly, remember that if you can't describe expectations clearly, you can't expect employees to achieve them.

Influence #4: First impressions that Last

If first impressions influence a supervisor, it might mean:

- Opinions formed at the start tend to stick with you regardless of the employee's performance.
- Anything that deviates from your first impression is seen as unusual, atypical or temporary.

This influence can result in:

- Difficulty for an employee to change your perception of his/her performance and/or potential … and ultimately resentment or resignation on the part of the employee.
- Ultimately, the behavior you expect is what you'll get.

To remedy this influence:

- Acknowledge your first impressions.
- Ask yourself what the employee has specifically done during the performance period that would change, or substantiate, your first impression.
- Consider how you would assess this same performance achieved by an employee you consider a better performer.

Influence #5: Blame

If blame influences a supervisor, it might mean:

- Not acknowledging that performance, and interactions, are co-created. Tending to look for someone to blame when things don't go well rather than looking for learning.
- Confusing blame with taking responsibility.
- Not examining the supervisor's part in what hasn't worked well.
- Not acknowledging the supervisor's role in the employee's unsuccessful performance.

Blaming can result in:

- Defensiveness, reactivity, resistance, denial and perhaps conflict, rather than curiosity and an openness to learn.
- Employees modeling this same behavior. When something goes wrong they immediately look for someone else to blame.

To remedy this influence:

- Acknowledge that, in some way, all relationships and interactions are co-created, and you, as the supervisor, always have a part.
- Look for, and acknowledge, your role in what may not have gone well.
- Encourage the employee to do the same by modeling non-blaming behavior.
- Consider the difference between blaming and taking responsibility.
- Watch for "blaming" language.

Appendix H – An Assessment Writing Checklist

Before providing your draft assessment to the employee, review it against this checklist.

- My central message is clearly stated. If the assessment were given to me I would understand clearly where my performance met, exceeded or fell short of expectations.
- Each of my statements regarding Expected Results or Competencies has been supported with specific facts, behaviors and actual examples.
- The assessment is consistent with other feedback I've provided throughout the performance period.
- The assessment reflects performance throughout the period, not just what occurred near the end.
- The assessment is honest, factual, direct and clear. I've told my truth in a straightforward way, not in vague terms.
- It reflects an analysis of performance versus expectations rather than a comparison to other employees.
- The assessment reflects the key themes of the entire performance period, not just the one huge momentary success or the one-time disaster.
- It's well balanced. I've praised accomplishments, solid performance and personal development with the same specificity and detail as missed goals and learning opportunities. I've avoided nitpicking insignificant events and topics.
- I've focused on demonstration of Competencies rather than on completion of individual steps in the development plan.
- I've considered - and removed - everything that might, unwittingly, have unfairly influenced my assessment.
- I have a plan for conducting the meeting so it's dialogue rather than a monologue.

Appendix I - Tips for Writing Effective Performance Feedback

TIP 1 – LANGUAGE IS POWERFUL

It's critical to **be specific** when writing the assessment.

- State the assessment
- Support the assessment with facts and examples
- Focus on behaviors, NOT on your judgements

Judgmental and inferential statement examples:

- "Your record for employee performance reviews is dreadful."
- "You're probably incapable of doing a thorough employee performance review."
- "You don't seem to grasp the importance of getting these completed thoroughly."
- "You're great at monthly reports."

Notice that, without examples, POSITIVE judgmental or inferential statements are as useless as the negative ones. While they may be less hurtful, they still don't describe specific behaviors.

Example of a behaviorally specific statement:

"Each of your employees' performance reviews was at least one month late. One hasn't been submitted at all. We talked about your written assessments not being supported with facts a number of times over the past four months."

TIP 2 – WRITING ABOUT PERFORMANCE GAPS

There's a gap between what was desired (and agreed upon) and what has occurred. What's a direct and constructive way to say this in writing?

Describe the gap between what's desired and what's occurred

- This is the issue:
- This is what has occurred:
- This is what's desired:

This is the issue: Completing and distributing the monthly team meeting notes.

This is what has occurred: The notes are routinely emailed about 7-10 work days after the meetings. Action items are not complete – not all assignments are included; sometimes the person responsible for the action is not named; due dates are not always stated. This is important because without this record assignments are lost or not completed.

This is what's desired: Before the end of each meeting, make sure you have accurate notes of all the action items, the outcomes intended, the person responsible and the due date. This information should be emailed to all attendees within three work days of the meeting.

Appendix J - Examples of Written Assessments

Key Results

Mental Health Technician – Key Results

Patient Safety and Health	During the evaluation period, Mr. Johnson met all expectations as they relate to patient health. He regularly demonstrated genuine concern for patients through his attention to their cleanliness, rest, activities and meals. He participated in the development of treatment plans for six patients during the period, surpassing my expectations. Mr. Johnson accurately followed the treatment plans for all patients assigned to him. Patients receiving special treatments often requested his assistance, as he has gained a reputation for his caring and gentle approach. While this has generally served the ward well during his shifts, Mr. Johnson's lapsed attention to security detail and the defined procedures for behavior management incidents caused three difficult situations to escalate when they could have been easily contained had the correct procedures been followed.
Patient Self-Sufficiency	Mr. Johnson had several impressive results related to this area during the evaluation period. In four separate incidents, a patient refused to eat an appropriate mix of foods, or refused to eat at all. Mr. Johnson provided persistent and gentle guidance and reassurance to these patients and we saw the eating habits of three of the four return to acceptable norms. Also during the period, Mr. Johnson was involved in implementing patient treatment plans, including self-sufficiency goals, for fifteen patients. Of those, seven did not meet their self-sufficiency goals. My observation is that Mr. Johnson did not apply some of the techniques for teaching self-sufficiency, but often chose to just do the task himself.
Patient Activities	Patients frequently request Mr. Johnson to escort them to appointments and activities when he is available. There were no reports of appointment tardiness or problems associated with his escort of patients during the period. He enthusiastically encouraged residents to participate in activities, but shows good judgement in determining when and with whom to tone that encouragement down.

Record Keeping	Mr. Johnson failed to accurately complete his end-of-shift report on ten occasions in the first half of this evaluation period, leading to a letter of reprimand. Since the reprimand, there have been two more occasions, but none in the last three months.

Office Assistant Senior – Key Results

Information and Resources	Beth has developed and maintains filing systems that are easy for all staff to understand and use. Many team members have expressed to Beth, and to me, their great appreciation for Beth’s approach to information storage and retrieval. I have not received any complaints from staff who were unable to get the information they needed in a timely manner. Beth developed and presented to me an electronic inventory of audit files. She developed this system in Access (as I requested) and delivered it to me two weeks before the deadline I had established. This new system has been a hit with the audit staff. Most estimates are that they have been able to save two to four hours per audit because they can zone in on the correct areas of an audit right away. During the evaluation period, Beth very effectively managed the team’s supplies inventory. Her regular review of the inventory and polling of needs of staff have helped keep all team members sufficiently supplied and satisfied. No complaints received.
Audit Support	Beth has consistently met the deadlines for TeamMate set-up and archival during this period. A recent archival report showed that our team has one of the highest compliance rates with the new "1-week rule" - thanks to Beth’s diligence. My informal survey of the team audit staff reveals that Beth regularly provides them excellent customer service in the audit support area. Staff admitted that they sometimes ask Beth for help with some pretty tight timelines. They said that she always comes through for them. They also commented on her accuracy, which I have observed as well. Whether the instructions are verbal or written, Beth generally gets the job right the first time.

Audit Monitoring	Beth has consistently provided me ABC report every Monday during the evaluation period. She suggested and implemented several format changes that have made the report easier to use. In November and December, I found a number of errors that resulted from a lack of her detailed review of the TABS report information. Beth and I talked about these problems, and I have not seen any errors of this nature since.
Staff Monitoring	Beth has consistently provided me accurate and timely reports and other information regarding staff location, their schedules, leave use and billing. She has developed two reports to convey some of this information in an easy-to-use format. Our team regularly receives recognition for having the fewest time reporting errors.

Custodian – Key Results

Facility Cleanliness	During the evaluation period, Mr. Miller met all expectations for facility cleanliness. He consistently completed all cleaning duties per the rotation schedule. I conducted several spot checks during the evaluation period and found the overall quality of his work to be good. The number of complaints from his assigned customers regarding facility cleanliness dropped by 30% during the evaluation period. I informally surveyed a number of Mr. Miller's customers and received very positive feedback. Several clients said they believed their facilities were receiving a more thorough cleaning than they had in the past.
Facility Maintenance	During the evaluation period, Mr. Miller met all expectations for facility maintenance. He completed all items per the scheduled maintenance list and completed additional maintenance tasks I assigned to him in a timely manner. In my spot checks, I found a small number of minor maintenance items that he had not dealt with in the regular conduct of his job. The number of complaints regarding facility maintenance from his assigned customers dropped by 10% during the evaluation period. In my informal survey of some of Mr. Miller's clients, I heard no major complaints regarding facility maintenance, but also did not hear that they had seen improvements.

Security and Efficiency Awareness	I was made aware of just one instance of a door left unlocked by Mr. Miller during this period. I believe that he takes extra care to ensure that the facilities he is responsible for are secure when he leaves them. Several customers commented that Mr. Miller is especially vigilant about making sure lights are turned off, and appreciated that he did a thorough check to see if anyone was still in the room before doing so.
Cleaning and Maintenance Observations	Based on my surveys and spot checks, I believe Mr. Miller is doing a good job paying attention to extra cleaning needs in his assigned facilities, and an adequate job paying attention to the extra maintenance needs. Several times during the evaluation period, he reported to me some cleaning or maintenance needs that required additional resources to address.

Key Competencies

Mental Health Technician – Key Competencies

Judgment and Problem Solving	Mr. Johnson has proven to be quite adept at applying judgement and problem-solving skills to resolve patient complaints and lower level conflicts. I observed a number of instances where he was able to find creative solutions to these problems and head off escalation. As mentioned in section 6A, there were three incidents where Mr. Johnson's application of his own judgement in lieu of following established procedures resulted in the worsening of the incidents.
Accountability	Mr. Johnson takes responsibility for his workplace performance. In my review of the security incidents mentioned above, Mr. Johnson fully admitted his part in the problem and demonstrated great concern to resolve those problems. He responded in the same manner to our discussions about his record keeping errors.
Teamwork	I've observed Mr. Johnson to be friendly with all ward staff, and have overheard him offering assistance to others ("let me know if there is anything I can do to help…") on numerous occasions. During the evaluation period, he organized a "Mariner's Game Night" for all ward staff, which was well received and well attended.

Job Knowledge	Mr. Johnson is very knowledgeable about ward procedures, patient care and interaction concepts and techniques and other areas of responsibilities. He often serves as an informal coach to new staff and even more senior staff come to him for suggestions. He demonstrates great interest in furthering his knowledge, including reading professional journals and requesting to attend available and appropriate training.
Patient Interaction	Mr. Johnson has demonstrated exemplary ability in the area of patient interaction. In my conversations with ward residents, I often hear how much they like Bill, and/or appreciate his treatment of them. He has often been able to get cooperation from a resident who has not been cooperative with other MHTs.

Office Assistant – Key Competencies

Accountability	Beth takes full responsibility for her work. Over the evaluation period, she consistently met her deadlines and performed all expected tasks. When her work contained errors, she never offered excuses, but set out to quickly resolve the problem and produce a corrected product. As noted in Section 6A, there were several examples of her initiative and innovation in regards to her position's duties. I see these as strong indicators of her ownership of her job.
Teamwork	The nature of Beth's job is to facilitate teamwork, as she provides the sole clerical and administrative support to 15 staff members. She demonstrates a positive attitude about her role as support person, consistently providing cheerful assistance whenever we need it, and even when we don't know we need it. She regularly checks in with all staff to see if there is anything she can do to help them. She is friendly to all staff, often making sure that everyone receives a "hello" in the morning. Beth appointed herself "Birthday Monitor", and makes sure everyone is recognized with a card signed by all team members on their special day.

Adaptability / Flexibility	Beth directly supports a large staff, each often working on two or more audit jobs at one time, in various stages of completion. One constant of Beth's job is that she rarely knows the amount and type of support that will be needed by each staff member on any given day. Beth manages this uncertainty very well, adjusting her priorities when necessary. She typically can do this without my review, but does turn to me for guidance when appropriate. She has also shown herself to be flexible when staff requests modifications to a standard process, document, etc. A great example of this was when the auditor conducting the City of Olympia audit decided to totally revise the confirmation letter process and timing. He gave Beth some general guidance, and she made all the necessary changes – very efficiently and with no disruption to the audit.
Interpersonal Skills	We have a wide range of personalities and outlooks on this team. I've observed Beth in positive conversations with all members of the team. Several team members have commented to me about how considerate and polite Beth is. During this evaluation period, five clients specifically mentioned their positive interactions with Beth in their written customer survey responses.
Productivity	Beth is a very productive employee. She works quickly to complete her assignments, often before deadlines. Her work is consistently accurate and high quality.
Job Knowledge	Beth demonstrates a good breadth of knowledge of clerical, office management, and computer concepts and techniques. Her grammar and writing abilities result in well-prepared, professional letters. Other team members often ask her for help with Excel spreadsheets. Office Assistants from other audit teams have contacted her for ideas for setting up various procedures.

Custodian – Key Competencies

Physical Ability	Is able to do sustained physical work, including working from a stepladder.
Accountability	Accepts personal responsibility for the quality and timeliness of his work. Believes that the results achieved directly result from his personal decisions and actions. Acknowledges and corrects mistakes. Doesn't make excuses for errors or problems.
Interpersonal Skills	Interacts with co-workers, clients and others in a positive manner. Practices active listening. Is open and honest. Treats others with respect, kindness and consideration.
Productivity	Produces quality, desired results in an efficient (input per output) manner. Manages resources efficiently.
Safety	Performs work in a safe manner at all times. Assesses the work site for hazards. Maintains an organized work area. Identifies and corrects unsafe situations. Seeks guidance from supervisor and safety coordinator if needed. Attends and actively participates in safety training events. Considers the safety of other employees on the job site.
Job Knowledge	Possesses sufficient skills and knowledge to perform all parts of the job effectively, efficiently and safely.

Appendix K – Clarifying the Core Message

Capture the big picture. Decide the overall assessment, and that will help determine the desired meeting outcomes.

Overall Assessment	Discussion Objectives
Performance has exceeded expectations Employee's performance is exemplary	• Recognize accomplishments • Clarify the employee's future goals • Discuss potential opportunities • Explore assuming additional responsibilities • Discuss what's needed to maintain present performance
Performance has met expectations Employee's performance is fully satisfactory	• Recognize accomplishments • Clarify the employee's future goals • Discuss what's needed to maintain and exceed present performance

Performance has not met expectations
Employee's performance is unsatisfactory
	• Determine if performance is or isn't correctable
	• If it's correctable:
	  ○ Recognize accomplishments
	  ○ Plan what's needed to correct present performance
	  ○ Obtain commitment to corrective plan
	• If it's not correctable:
	  ○ Determine the reason(s)
	  ○ Consider options
	  ○ Discuss potential outcomes of continued failure
	  ○ to meet expectations

Appendix L – When Performance Needs to Change

The goal is **COMMITMENT,** not **compliance.** Consider taking the following steps to prepare yourself for the discussion.

Identify the gap between what's desired and actual performance. Be prepared with specific examples.

Decide how serious this is for you.

- What are the real reasons for needing to change the current performance?
- What's the impact on the organization of the present performance?

Determine the action you'll take. What will be the consequences if performance doesn't meet expectations? What can you do? What actions will you have to take to indicate your intention that performance must change? What are you willing to do?

Focus on obtaining agreement on the present situation. This must happen before corrective action planning will be productive.

Request a commitment to the new plan … which can only occur after the employee agrees with your view of the present situation

Appendix M – Ways to Encourage Employee

Participation

Use **active listening** skills throughout the meeting. You should work to avoid the feedback session becoming a "monologue" – with you talking and the employee sitting quietly unless something is said that he/she doesn't like. You can help the session to become a dialogue by asking the employee to describe their self-assessment first – before you provide your appraisal of the employee.

Another way to encourage participation is to use **discovery questions** rather than **controlling questions.**

Discovery Questions	**Controlling Questions**
What did you learn from this experience? Why do you think this occurred? How might we resolve this? What was your part in causing this to happen?	Did you learn anything from this experience? Do you know why this occurred? Do you know how to resolve this? Did you have a part in causing this to happen?

DO: be curious, inquire, listen "to", check perceptions, reflect, and acknowledge.

DON'T: explain, blame, react, defend, listen "for", or interrupt.

Appendix N – Sample Feedback Session Agenda

Getting Started

- Begin the meeting - welcome the employee.
- Describe your experience:
    - Your thoughts and feelings (nervous, excited, delighted, hopeful, apprehensive, eager, many different ones…) as you begin the meeting.
    - How important the meeting is to you, and why (an opportunity to review the year's performance themes … what's gone well and where there are opportunities for growth and learning, perhaps for both of you; a chance to celebrate successes; an opportunity to talk honestly about some difficult issues…).
    - The outcomes you're hoping you both will achieve (agreement, a shared vision, resolution, new learning for each of you, clarity…).
    - Ask about the employee's experience. (How he/she is feeling about the conversation with you; the value of the process; the outcomes he/she is hoping to achieve)

Session Format

- Explain your desire to separate the assessment dialogue and completion of the current PDP from a second meeting (within two weeks) to complete a new plan for the upcoming period. (The time in between is an opportunity to reflect on outcomes from this meeting and incorporate learnings in a new plan)
- Describe the amount of time you've set aside for this meeting, and your flexibility for more or less. (You have planned for an hour, but will spend longer if you both believe it will be useful.)
- Explain how you'd like to structure the meeting, and why.
    - You would like the employee to take the lead, and go first because being able to accurately self-assess means the person is open to learning, and will also be more likely able to self-correct … an extremely valuable skill.
    - You'd like him/her to begin by describing his/her assessment of his/her performance during the period. You'd like the employee to begin with the most important part of the original plan – the Results Expected: the employee's Key Job Responsibilities, and any Special Assignments included in the plan. Pay special attention to accomplishments and learning opportunities.
    - You'd like to talk about the Competencies and how he/she believes they have been demonstrated.

Assessment Dialogue

- Begin the dialogue by asking the employee to talk about his/her self-assessment… what he/she wrote in his/her draft assessment.
- Focus on discussing specific accomplishments, learning opportunities, and, if they exist, performance gaps.
- Strive for agreement. (The goal is commitment rather than compliance).

Closing the Meeting

- Describe next steps (finalizing the written assessment; instructions to begin to work on the new plan; when the planning meeting will occur…suggest leaving a gap of one-two weeks between completing the assessment and creating the plan for the next period.)
- Recap the key core messages.
- Discuss the experience you've each had at the meeting.
- Adjourn.

Appendix O – Performance and Development Plan Q & A

Part 1: Performance Planning

Key Results Expected

Do I have to include Special Assignments when I draft performance expectations?

No. Not all positions lend themselves to non-routine tasks.

What if the employee doesn't agree with the performance expectations I think are important? Can I still include them?

The plan will be more effective if ownership is shared. Employees should have the opportunity to influence decisions that impact their work. Rather than reacting, ask why and then listen. Respond as best you can to the employee's concerns. Consider additional support, longer timelines, more technical assistance or training, and greater interaction with you. In the end, however, it's your decision.

How high should I set expectations? I don't want my employees to just cruise. Should expectations always be a stretch? Should I just set a minimum performance level? How should I weigh each employee's capabilities?

Suggestion: Write the expectations based upon what needs to be done…regardless of who is doing the job.

Where will I get the data to know how an employee is doing?

Suggestion: Have the employee recommend a plan for gathering performance feedback. Make developing this plan a special assignment. Consult with expert observers – customers, team members, lead workers. Discuss this with the employee.

Key Competencies Expected

I supervise a small unit. No one has identified core competencies for our organization. How do I include them in my employees' PDP?

Suggestion: Begin with your work unit:

- Are there competencies you want everyone in your unit, regardless of position or level, to model? These will be your core competencies. Make sure you are willing to model these behaviors.
- Are there competencies you want all your supervisors, regardless of their specific functions, to demonstrate?

How many competencies is enough?

Suggestion: The fewer the better. Try to limit the total competencies addressed in the PDP to no more than five.

How long should a competency description be?

Suggestion: Long enough to accurately describe excellence, mastery, complete success and top performance. The intent is to explain, in real terms, how you will know the competency is being performed well. This is very different from writing a dictionary definition of the term.

Is it possible the description of a competency would change depending upon the specific position, or level within the organization?

Absolutely. “Customer Focus” excellence for an executive director and an administrative assistant would most likely be described differently.

Part 2: Training and Development Needs/Opportunities

Who is responsible to find and/or sign up for any training identified in the PDP?

This should be made clear prior to the final sign-off on the PDP. It would be helpful to document who has the responsibility in the plan. Most often, the responsibility to find and sign up for the training is the employee’s responsibility, but there may be some situations where it makes sense for the supervisor to take this job.

What if there is no money for training?

There are many alternatives to formal training that can help an employee develop their skills, such as special assignments, reading selected materials, job-shadowing and others. More ideas are presented in the Training and Development Needs/Opportunities section of this guide.

Part 3: Interim Reviews

What are interim reviews used for?

Interim Reviews are a great way to determine during the performance period if the employee is on track, AND if the track is still appropriate. Part 4 of the PDP provides a place to document any adjustments to performance expectations and/or any interim feedback sessions.

Are interim reviews required in certain cases?

While there is no requirement for interim reviews in rule, an agency or institution, a part of an agency or institution, or even a supervisor of a small team may decide to require interim evaluations for staff. There may also be situations where a supervisor determines that an interim review is important for one employee but not another.

Part 4: Performance Feedback

The employee is reluctant to write his or her own draft assessment. The task seems too large, there’s too little time, and he/she doesn’t know how to begin. How can I help them to record their own assessment?

Suggestion 1: Have the employee:

A) Pick two or three of his or her Key Job Responsibilities that typify his/her success last year, and explain those successes specifically, with examples, and

B) Pick two or three Key Job Responsibilities where he/she most wants to improve, where performance wasn’t as successful as he/she believes it should or could be. Specifically, what does he or she want to be able to do more of, less of or new?

Suggestion 2: Have the employee look over the plan. Review whatever changes were made during the year.

A) Describe what's gone well. In their opinion, what have been their most significant accomplishments, the ones they are most proud of? What results have been right on target? Which of their responsibilities have they performed very well? Which of their competencies are they most proud of? Give some examples.

B) Have them explain what hasn't gone as well as they'd wanted. Which Key Results didn't meet expectations? In which Competencies are they less skilled than expected?

C) Have them talk about their proposal to master the Competencies and excel at those Key Responsibilities.

Do I need to write an assessment of Part 3: Training and Development Needs/Opportunities?

No. The success of the development plan is reflected in your assessment of Key Results and Competencies. Activities are different from Goals. Don't base the assessment on whether the employee attended training. Participating in training is an activity. The goal is to be able to demonstrate what was being taught in the training: apply knowledge, demonstrate skills, and reflect attitudes in behaviors.

I don't have much first-hand information to draw on. The employee works a different shift than I do, works in another facility, is assigned out to customers most of the time, or is in another part of the state. Where do I get solid information to write the assessment?

Suggestion: If you know at the start of the performance period that this will be the case, discuss it with the employee during the planning. Otherwise, discuss this as soon as you're clear it will be an issue. If any of these conditions exist:

- Ask the employee how you will know that expectations have been met and competencies demonstrated, and where you can go for the information.
- Make it an expectation that the employee recommend a plan to evaluate his or her performance.
- Consider having the employee actually collect the information and provide it to you. In fact, depending upon the employee, you might consider having him or her write an assessment based upon the information that was gathered.

Should I review the assessment with my manager before sharing it with my employee?

Suggestion: The entire PDP process mirrors the relationship principally between the supervisor and the employee. While the reviewer can make comments on the PDP about the employee's performance, the main reasons for reviewing the assessment with the manager are:

- To use the manager as a sounding board – are the comments behaviorally specific rather than just judgmental? Are they supported with facts? Are they clearly and honestly stated?
- Is the assessment thorough? Does it reflect what's most significant?
- Any differences in substance or perception between you and your manager can be

discussed and resolved before sharing the information with your employee.

- To ensure you've written the assessment in a way that meets the manager's expectations.

I'm concerned this will be a monologue…with me talking and the employee sitting quietly unless I say something he/she doesn't like. How do I make it a dialogue?

Suggestion: Don't begin by describing your assessment. Begin by asking the employee to describe the assessment he/she wrote of his/her performance during the past period. "I want YOU to start by telling me about the appraisal you wrote of your own performance this period."

There are a couple of contentious issues I really need to resolve with the employee. We both know we've struggled. So I'm concerned that talking about accomplishments with any sincerity at all will be tough. I'll be very uncomfortable knowing what's to come, and I'm sure whatever positive I say will only be met with skepticism. What should I do?

Suggestion: Conventional wisdom has been to set the tone by beginning with the positives. However, since people are most likely fretting about the tough stuff, beginning with the obviously contentious issues – and resolving them – means you get to save the best for last and end on a positive note.