

# **CONDUCTING PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE REVIEWS**

*Participant's Manual*

*Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP)*

*State of Louisiana*

# ***CONDUCTING PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE REVIEWS***

*Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP)*

*Sponsored by the Louisiana State Civil Service*

*Office of Human Resource Management  
304 Thomas Boyd  
Louisiana State University  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
Phone (225) 578-2280  
FAX (225) 578-9499  
[cptp@lsu.edu](mailto:cptp@lsu.edu)*

*Revised: 09.19.14*

# CONDUCTING PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class will teach participants how to conduct performance reviews in a way that is productive and helpful to work group performance. Participants will learn how to use performance feedback to reinforce or improve job performance, use the PES process to develop employee performance expectations, conduct a performance feedback interview, and apply tools and procedures to negotiate an employee performance improvement plan.

*Note: This course is designed to complement, not substitute for, the Performance Planning and Review course from Civil Service.*

## JOB OUTCOMES

- ❑ Sets performance expectations for employees and gives them timely feedback about their progress.
- ❑ Assesses employee performance and conducts positive performance reviews.
- ❑ Provides positive feedback in a way that reinforces or encourages desirable employee behavior.
- ❑ Provides negative feedback constructively.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ❑ Use a planning agenda to prepare for a performance review session.
- ❑ Practice providing feedback, based on appropriate documentation, to ensure employee is aware of his/her current level of performance.
- ❑ Conduct a performance review session using an agenda.
- ❑ Use performance feedback that reinforces or improves job performance.
- ❑ Clarify performance expectations in order to increase employee motivation and commitment.
- ❑ Create an employee development plan linked to improving a specific area of employee performance.

## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

① Performance planning	② Observing performance	③ Performance review and rating
Establish, clarify and communicate individual performance expectations with an employee	Continual performance observation, coaching, documenting and feedback. Measuring performance on the established expectations for the rating period.	Provide <b>performance feedback</b> in the PES rating session to reinforce or change behavior  (This course focuses on this part of the process)

### PES performance appraisal cycle

### Performance Feedback

Definition: Performance feedback is the information provided to an employee concerning how well he/she is performing on the job.

### There are two types of performance feedback:

- Informal: Along-the-way progress reports provided for specific performance; occurs after expectations have been set and before the formal review. This is the most common type of performance feedback and it covers the longest period of time within the performance appraisal process – from the setting of expectations for the coming period through the end of the review period, normally between nine and twelve months.
- Formal: An established period of time dedicated to discussing all aspects of the employee’s performance, concluding with the employee receiving his or her formal performance appraisal rating in the Performance Planning and Review (PES) rating session.

This course covers part three of the process outlined above (*#3 - performance review and rating*). This part of the process is formal performance feedback. Supervisors who provide frequent informal feedback in the time period between formal performance reviews can expect fewer surprises during the PES rating session. Further, employees who are provided with thorough, ongoing informal feedback will not be surprised in the formal PES rating.

## Providing Performance Feedback during the PES Session

A four-step model to accomplish this is shown below. The details of these four steps are explained and practiced in this course:

- Step 1. **Prepare for the PES rating session.**
- Step 2. **Conduct the rating session.**
- Step 3. **Collaborate with the employee on future performance expectations.**
- Step 4. **Conclude the rating session and finalize the PES form.**

### During the formal performance feedback of a PES rating session:

- ❑ Let the employee talk; otherwise, why have him/her there?
- ❑ The PES rating should be a confirmation of the informal, along-the-way feedback that has already occurred in the time between the last rating session and this one.
- ❑ There should be no unpleasant surprises for an employee concerning his/her job performance during a PES rating.
- ❑ Stay in “flexible control” of the session so that the conversation can be returned to the topic at hand if it strays off the topic.
- ❑ Have realistic expectations about how much can be accomplished in one session. It is possible that some employees will leave the rating session unhappy or defensive, regardless of what their ratings are.

### Group Discussion

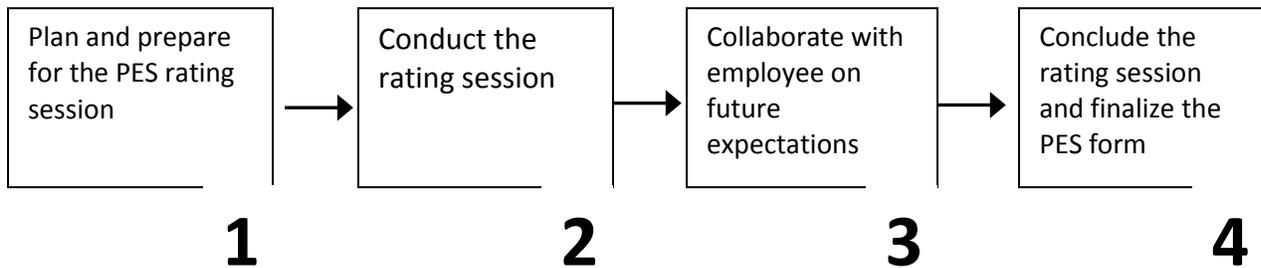
- |  |
|--|
| <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why are formal performance review rating sessions important?</li><li>• Why should we be concerned about whether performance review sessions are accomplishing their purpose?</li></ul> |
|--|

Notes:

## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

To provide feedback appropriately, supervisors should follow a structured plan prepared in advance. We recommend the following four-step model:

### Four-step PES Rating Session Process



### STEP 1 – PLANNING THE REVIEW SESSION

Thorough planning for the PES rating session is the **most important thing** you can do to ensure that the PES process supports improved individual and organizational performance.

#### Successful Performance Review Session Planning

1. Inform the employee of the PES rating session appointment:
  - Give the employee ample notice. Where appropriate, negotiate the date and time of the review session.
  - Plan to use a location that is quiet and will provide privacy.
  - Ask the employee to be prepared to discuss:
    - Accomplishments
    - Performance expectations
    - Problems
    - Professional growth
2. Collect and review the relevant documentation of the employee’s performance for the period being rated.
3. Prepare a written agenda for the rating session. Your agenda should include:
  - A list of performance-related topics including general *and* specific questions about performance for each topic.
  - Behavior patterns that you want the employee to continue.

- Behavior patterns that you want the employee to change, if any.
  - Potential conflicts that you believe are likely to come up (if any), and plan some responses to them in order to manage potential conflict proactively.
- 

*The next section provides more detail on the third step described above (“Prepare a written agenda”), and includes a skill practice activity that the table groups in this class will use later on in the course.*

### **Constructing a Rating Session Agenda**

Constructing an agenda for the PES rating session requires you to think about four things and write some notes for each one, before you conduct the rating session with the employee:

- ❑ A list of **performance-related topics, with questions** for each topic.
  - Includes how to get the employee to expand and elaborate on his/her answers to your questions.
- ❑ Notes on this employee’s **behavior patterns to encourage**, so he/she keeps on doing them.
  - Includes listing possible actions to take in order to encourage these behaviors to continue.
- ❑ Notes on this employee’s **behavior patterns to change**, so he/she stops doing those things and starts doing something else.
  - Includes listing possible actions to take in order to stop these behaviors and begin doing something else.
- ❑ Notes on **possible conflicts or problems** that might arise between you and the employee about his/her performance (if any).
  - Include some notes on how to deal with the conflicts if they do arise. The following chart lists examples of potential conflicts or rough spots an employee may raise when discussing performance expectations. Also included are guidelines on resources, strategies, and tools that you can use to help an employee achieve his/her expectations.

## Guidelines on Handling Potential Conflicts

Potential Conflicts	Guidelines
1. Foresees difficulty handling all high-priority responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide spreadsheet or electronic tool to assist with management of responsibilities.</li> <li>• Examine tasks and activities to see if they can be streamlined.</li> </ul>
2. Is unwilling to let go of low-priority items.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagram how high-priority responsibilities fit into the goals of the work unit.</li> <li>• Show how the time spent on low-priority items has a downstream effect on deadlines for the whole work unit.</li> </ul>
3. Complains that priorities seem to change overnight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain why the new or changing priorities are important to the agency.</li> <li>• Identify skills that will allow the employee to manage changing priorities and coach toward the skills.</li> </ul>
4. Points to another individual or group that may get in the way of achieving the goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach the employee on how to work with the individual or group to resolve issues.</li> <li>• Discuss strategies for overcoming team conflict.</li> </ul>
5. Asks for special consideration (compensation) for a heavy workload.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify other non-monetary rewards that are valuable to the individual, e.g., schedule preference (if appropriate), autonomy in certain tasks/duties/projects.</li> </ul>
6. Maintains that a specific goal cannot be met with current resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a planning tool to assist in meeting the goal with the current resources.</li> <li>• Offer to help the employee with planning the steps/tasks for one specific goal. (The idea is to show him/her a way to do this, not take over the role of planning all of the employee's work for him/her.)</li> </ul>
7. Requests training you have not budgeted for.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow employee to shadow another employee with these skills.</li> </ul>
8. Says that performance targets for this year are higher than last year's targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidelines and best-practice documents to assist in streamlining procedures.</li> <li>• Ask for input on the work process itself; sometimes work <i>product</i> issues grow out of work <i>process</i> problems.</li> <li>• Identify additional employees to focus on achieving the target.</li> </ul>

- Topic:** Discuss positive or negative experiences with handling conflict in a PES session:
- What happened, what did you do?
  - What worked and why did it work?
  - What did not work and why?

Notes:

### Skill Practice Exercise

#### Constructing A PES Rating Session Agenda

**What:** Create an agenda for a PES session:

- Analyze a case containing (1) performance expectations for an employee, (2) some background information about the employee's behavior, and (3) some date-specific documentation of the supervisor's informal observation/feedback with the employee for the time period. Assume this is for an upcoming PES.
- The instructor will assign one of the cases to your group. Note that there are different performance levels in the cases, and the agendas will be different depending on which case your group uses.
- As we debrief this exercise, pay close attention to the other cases not assigned to your group – you will need to be familiar with the agendas for all 3 cases for a later activity.

**How:** Small group exercise --

Look for topics for discussion *first*, and write those down. Next, create open-ended questions to address the performance topic. Then look for behaviors to encourage and/or behaviors to change (if any), and include some options for action to take in both cases. Finally, list potential areas of conflict (if any) and some methods to address them.

- Remember, you are planning for a two-way conversation.

**Focus:** Focus on structuring the agenda to discuss your view of the employee's performance and provide him/her with an opportunity to present his/her perspective.

***(The cases are in the back of the book under "Exercises")***

## STEP 2 - CONDUCTING THE RATING SESSION

During the PES rating session, it is easier for the supervisor and employee to have a productive discussion when there is a supportive climate in the session itself. Part of the climate is content, or *what* performance information will be delivered to the employee. Another part of the climate is process, or *how* that performance information is delivered.

### 1. Establish a supportive climate.

- The climate of the session meeting often depends on the existing relationship between the supervisor and the employee.
  - Each review session will be different because the supervisor's relationship with each employee is different.
  
- To conduct the session in a way that helps create a supportive climate:
  - Greet the employee and initiate a brief social conversation.
  - State the purpose of the rating session.
  - Clarify the roles each of you has during the session.
  - Indicate how the information will be used.
  
- Foster good communication between you and the employee by being relaxed and comfortable, being professional in your behavior, and being respectful of the employee.
  
- Craft an opening statement. An opening statement should include the following criteria:
  - State the purpose of the discussion.
    - State why it is a good idea to discuss the performance expectations with the employee right now.
    - Review the scope of the discussion — determine what you need to cover and be ready to explain the agenda to the employee.
  
  - Describe how the work supports the agency/work group.
    - Describe how the employee's work supports the larger goal for the agency, division or department, and the work group or team.
    - Describe the impact if the employee's expectations are not met.

## Guidelines on Preparing for Selected Situations

Situation:	Guidelines:
The agency has announced a change in direction, or needs to align efforts to meet important goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss responsibilities that have changed, discuss any shift in priorities, as well as any additional responsibilities.</li> <li>• Explain that you understand how new responsibilities that involve new skills follow a learning curve and you have confidence in his/her ability to do this.</li> </ul>
A new performance cycle has begun.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss all of the employee’s responsibilities with a focus on those that are high priority.</li> <li>• While some employees can plan and prioritize activities without much assistance, be ready to provide more guidance for those who need it.</li> </ul>
The employee is new to the agency, work group, role, or assignment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss all of the employee’s responsibilities with a focus on those that are high priority and how they fit into the agency’s goals.</li> </ul>
The employee has asked you to clarify priorities and/or expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on high-priority responsibilities and measurable expectations.</li> <li>• Make sure the employee understands the expectations <i>and</i> how they will be measured.</li> </ul>
The employee is exceeding expectations and needs new challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review new responsibilities and discuss any shift in priorities.</li> <li>• Ask for input from the employee regarding new challenges and/or additional responsibilities.</li> </ul>

### 2. Deliver performance information to the employee (the “what”).

- This is a “content” issue, and the content of the performance information *depends on* how well the supervisor has done the first two parts of the performance appraisal process (see the diagram of the PES cycle, pg. 5):
  - Part 1, **performance planning**, where individual performance expectations were established and communicated at the beginning of the rating period. If the supervisor has done a good job in the planning session, then the employee’s performance expectations are clear enough for him/her to see and understand what is expected for the coming year.

- Part 2, **performance observation**, where the supervisor observed, documented, praised, coached, and informally discussed the employee's performance during the period being rated. If the supervisor has done a good job of observing performance, then it will be easier for the supervisor to prepare for the PES and easier for the employee to receive the performance feedback because there will be no surprises since the information has been provided informally during the rating period.

### 3. **Deliver performance information to the employee (the "how").**

- This is a "process" issue, and *depends on* how well the supervisor:
  - Provides appropriate feedback (positive and/or corrective).
  - Appropriately uses open-ended and closed-ended questions as part of the PES discussion.
  - Actively listens to the employee during the two-way conversation.
  - Is aware of nonverbal communication signals he/she is sending during the review session.

## **Feedback Definitions**

### Definition of positive feedback (+)

Telling an employee that he/she has done something well or correctly in relation to the performance expectation – and being specific about it. This type of feedback should be used frequently, yet truthfully, and is not given for performance that does not earn it.

### Definition of corrective feedback (-)

Telling an employee that he/she has done something incorrectly or inadequately in relation to the performance expectation – and being specific about it. Corrective feedback must be given properly, and it can be over-done. This type of feedback should also be specific, like positive feedback.

Note: During the PES session, if most of the feedback the employee receives is negative, the employee is likely to "tune it out." Of course, if the employee's performance is consistently poor and negative feedback is appropriate, be sure that this negative feedback took place appropriately as informal feedback during the rating period as well. When an employee's behavior is consistently poor but that employee only hears about it during the PES, that negative feedback is unlikely to change his/her behavior.

## Feedback Guidelines

- ❑ Feedback is about behavior, not personality.
  - Feedback should communicate what the employee has done, has not done, or needs to do in the future.
  - Feedback *is not* the supervisor's attitude about the employee, and it is not guesswork about the employee's performance.
- ❑ Feedback is about observations (factual data), not assumptions.
  - Feedback offers a description rather than a judgment.
- ❑ Feedback is a clear message about the performance topics discussed.
  - Balance the amount of information that the employee can use against the amount of information you might like to give.
  - Recognize that feedback is most valuable when it is valid performance information for the employee. An employee given such information can be accountable for his/her future performance: what to continue doing, what to stop doing, and what to modify.
- ❑ Feedback is given at an appropriate time and in an appropriate place for confidential information to be shared.
  - Corrective feedback should be delivered privately.

## Open-ended Questions and Closed-ended Questions

Active listening (covered next) is concerned with prompting the speaker for more information in order to improve understanding of the message being communicated.

### Open-ended questions

A question that requests background information, interpretation, clarifying circumstances, etc. is an open-ended question. Put another way, these questions cannot be answered with yes or no. An open-ended question prompts the speaker to give his or her point of view, opinions, and inferences. Most answers to open-ended questions contain "free information" – that is, information the questioner did not know was going to be provided.

Examples:

- How did you get it done?
- What does this particular job duty involve?
- What are the characteristics of the best co-workers you've ever worked with?

Open-ended questions are useful when searching for information, validating (or countering) an assumption you have about the employee, and in general getting more feedback (more information) from that employee. Note that open-ended questions invite more than just one or

two words in an employee's response, so occasionally such questioning can have longer answers than the next type of question ... and will therefore take more time.

### Closed-ended questions

A question that can be answered with a simple word is a closed-ended question. For example, any question with a yes or no answer is closed-ended. Also, questions that ask for specific detail (in or out, up or down, right or left, hot or cold, etc.) are closed-ended. One problem with relying on these questions is that *every* closed-ended question has an assumption of the facts built into it; answering such a question means you agree with those presumed facts. For example: "Your performance is terrible – are you lazy or just incompetent?" The presumption built into the question is that someone is either lazy or incompetent, that there can be no other possible explanation for the performance.

Examples:

- Did you get that project finished by the due date?
- What is your scheduled arrival time at work?
- Who is the contact person in our Region for the XYZ project?

Closed-ended questions are necessary to:

- clarify a point;
- find out specifics about an issue;
- zoom in on other such information that is "yes/no" in its precision.

However, closed-ended may inhibit open two-way conversation, since they reduce one side of the conversation -- usually the employee's side -- to one-word answers. This type of question needs to be used, but probably not the majority of time during a PES discussion.

## Active Listening Skills

- ❑ Stop talking! You cannot listen actively while talking at the same time.
- ❑ Listen for people's impressions and feelings, as well as the facts.
- ❑ Make an effort to understand the other person's point of view. Remember, *understanding* someone does not necessarily mean you *agree* with the person – you have to understand someone first before you can truly agree or disagree.
- ❑ Listen with the intent to understand rather than just to reply. (Those are two different ways to listen, and you cannot do both at the same time.)
- ❑ Nod frequently and make appropriate eye contact to let the employee know you are listening.
- ❑ Let the employee finish speaking. Before responding to the employee, consider what he/she is really trying to say. It demonstrates patience and respect to let the employee finish talking, and doing so will help the supervisor avoid jumping to conclusions about the employee's spoken message.
- ❑ Make sure you understand the employee. Ask him/her to clarify what he/she said, rather than guess at the meaning of statements that seem to be unclear to you.

## Skill Practice Exercise

### Conducting Part of a PES Rating Session

- What:*
- Temporarily form groups of three – each person will have the chance to be the Supervisor, the Employee, and the Process Observer.
  - Your new group will be using all 3 of the cases used earlier (A, B, and C) in this skill practice exercise.
  - Using the agendas already created for the appropriate cases, one person takes the role of the supervisor, another takes the role of the employee, and the last person is the process observer.

*How:* Small group exercise (See specific instructions immediately following the case information and the process observer's Feedback Sheet that follows). Decide who of your group will go first. This exercise will be run three times, so each person will have the opportunity to be the supervisor, the employee, and the process observer.

- Review the cases and the agenda notes you have for each case. Be ready for your turn as the supervisor by having two agenda items to discuss—(1) one for performance you want the employee to continue and (2) the other for performance you want the employee to change or improve.
- When it is your turn to be the supervisor, use these two agenda items as the basis for a conversation with the employee.
- When it is your turn to be the employee, respond to the supervisor's conversation as the employee in that particular case might respond.
- The process observer will follow the conversation using the Feedback Sheet as an aid.

*Focus:* Using two PES agenda topics to engage in some of the conversation you would have in an actual full-length PES rating session.

Notes:

## STEP 3 – COLLABORATE WITH THE EMPLOYEE ON FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

### Definition of Performance Expectations:

Performance expectations are specific, individual plans for an employee to accomplish during the future rating period.

- Writing expectations for the PES requires the supervisor to review all pertinent information connected to an employee’s job, such as the position description (form SF3), agency policies, standards, accreditation guidelines, etc.
- Expectations include the written and unwritten requirements of the job. Some of these expectations will be found in a position description (SF3), while others may not be, but are valid just the same. Some examples of “common sense” expectations that are not usually found in an SF3 are:
  - Come to work on time and call the supervisor if you cannot arrive on time.
  - Help co-workers staffing the service counter when long lines of people form.
  - Use legible handwriting in documentation on patients’ charts.
  - Dress appropriately for the work environment.
- Employees with the same job title *may* or *may not* have the same performance expectations.
  - Two Lieutenants working at the same corrections facility can have the same job title but different jobs, so their performance expectations will be very different from each other if one is on the chase team and the other teaches in the training unit.
  - A supervisor with five employees having the same job title and doing the same job may have different *individualized* expectations for each employee based on their individual strengths and weaknesses.
- Supervisors do not have to write down every single thing an employee is supposed to do. (It is impossible to do that.)
  - An employee is responsible for performing the job according to the position description, departmental policies, written instructions and/or verbal instructions—not just the items written as performance expectations on the PES form

- Mutually discuss expectations and measures. Have an interactive discussion with your employee about responsibilities, priorities, and expectations. Also discuss resources, strategies, and tools to help the employee overcome rough spots and meet his or her expectations.
  - Discuss responsibilities and priorities. The task is to determine the extent to which each responsibility contributes to the agency’s goals, and to mutually draw up a list of priorities that balances the organizational impact with competing demands and personal preference.
    - It is important to make the discussion of work responsibilities and priorities an interactive process. This increases employee buy-in and may result in new information that will influence priorities.
    - When reviewing work responsibilities with an employee, use open-ended questions to draw out his/her ideas.
    - Prioritize responsibilities based on agency/work group impact. The contribution to the agency’s goals should be the primary focus when prioritizing responsibilities. When discussing responsibilities with an employee, consider the following criteria to arrive at a mutual list of priorities:
      - Difficulty relative to the results you get in return.
      - Available time and deadlines.
      - Contribution to the employee’s career or professional development.
  - Discuss measurable expectations. When discussing measurable expectations, use terms that will enable an objective evaluation of each high-priority responsibility and measurable goal.
    - Ask open-ended questions that encourage the individual to share ideas for measurable expectations. Employees are more motivated to accomplish the expectations they helped define.
  - Determine the resources, strategies, and tools needed for success.
    - The employee might feel stressed about meeting the specified expectations, and may bring up issues or rough spots. Communicate resources, strategies, and tools to help the employee overcome rough spots and be successful.
    - Examples of resources include:
      - Resources—training another team member to reduce some of the responsibilities, or providing guidelines to clarify ambiguous procedures.
      - Strategies—deferring some tasks, finding time-saving shortcuts, or providing coaching to expand the employee’s abilities.
      - Tools—spreadsheets, software programs

- Discuss the performance-tracking plan. An interactive discussion for tracking performance encourages the individuals to take ownership of the final plan. A performance-tracking plan identifies the data sources for each high-priority responsibility and goal.
  - Explain data sources currently in place and any additional data sources that will be put in place for each measurable goal.
  - Summarize the performance-tracking plan by listing each high-priority responsibility, the measurable goal, and the data source for tracking performance.
  - Be sure that the employee understands exactly what is being measured, the procedures for performance tracking, and how the information is being used.
  - Directly ask if the employee understands the performance-tracking plan and if he or she has any questions.

## Writing Performance Expectations for PES

Individual expectations should be written at the “meets requirements” level of performance for the job. Otherwise a high-performer with very challenging, high expectations could only earn a “meets requirements” when he/she performs outstanding work during the rating period.

In the planning section of the PES form, supervisors are *required* to have at least one performance expectation for each performance factor for the employee. You may write your own or use the Bank of Expectations link found on the Performance Evaluation System – Planning & Evaluation Form.

### Examples of expectations:

#### *Work Product*

- Use the spell-check function in word-processing software before sending documents out.
- Develop an organized filing system that enables others to access necessary files in case of your absence.

#### *Dependability*

- Attend scheduled meetings and arrive for them on time.
- Complete projects by their deadlines except when factors beyond your control prevent you from doing so. Notify me when you anticipate that you will not meet a deadline.
- Make sure that the confidential client files are secure when you leave for the day.

#### *Cooperativeness*

- Cooperate with your coworkers by sharing your knowledge of the auditing software when they are in need of assistance.
- Assist other staff in the office when your assigned work has been completed

#### *Adaptability*

- Look for ways to streamline the office procedures of your employees without jeopardizing the accuracy and quality of the work processes.
- As circumstances, accept adjustments in the productivity targets detailed in your PES performance expectations.

### Communication

- Clearly explain to clients how to properly and completely fill out their disability claim forms.
- Make sure clients understand the steps involved in the claims process before they leave their meeting with you.

### Daily Decision-Making/Problem Solving

- When bringing a problem to your supervisor’s attention, be prepared to recommend a possible solution.
- Act promptly to resolve or report rule violations or threats to workplace safety and security.

### Service to Clients/Public

- Demonstrate sensitivity to clients’ needs for confidentiality, e.g., not asking clients for personal information unless it is necessary to complete their application forms.

### Use of Equipment and Materials

- Learn to use MS Excel at an intermediate skill level.
- Learn to send and receive Email with MS Outlook. This includes being able to open and save files sent to you as attachments and being able to attach files to outgoing Email.

## Skill Practice Exercise

<b>Creating PES Performance Expectations</b>	
<b>What:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individually create performance expectations appropriate for an employee on at least two (2) of the required factors for that employee. Use the examples we just covered as guidelines. Use the space below to write the expectations.</li><li>• When finished, discuss your work with your group and be willing to offer/receive feedback on improving each other’s work.</li></ul>
<b>How:</b>	Individual exercise <i>first</i> , then group discussion. Be ready to share a few examples of your group’s work on performance expectations with the class.
<b>Focus:</b>	Aligning expectations with necessary tasks and responsibilities assigned to an employee.

Notes:

## **CREATING A SKILL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **Intent of a Skill Development Plan:**

A skill development plan complements the PES system by turning performance expectations into action.

The focus of a skill development plan is continuous improvement in personal, interpersonal, and organizational performance. Therefore, the skill development plan should be action-oriented. The skill development plan enables employees to meet the expectations set in the PES system for performance improvement.

### **Development Plan Options**

- ❑ Improve current job performance
- ❑ Prepare for advancement or growth
- ❑ Enrich the employee's experience in the current job

#### **Improve current job performance**

- Key issue for the supervisor: is the performance problem related to **ability** or **motivation**?
  - Ability is a function of *aptitude, training, and resources*; the supervisor has influence over the last two (training and resources) and an employee development plan is one good solution to ability-related performance problems.
  - Motivation is a function of *desire* and *commitment*; if the performance problem is related to either of those, a developmental plan involving training or skill-building will not work, as a demotivated employee has the knowledge, skills, and ability necessary for the job—just not the “want-to”.

**Note:** The CPTP course, *Developing a Motivated Work Group*, addresses motivation-related performance problems in detail.

#### **Prepare for advancement or growth**

- Obtain expectations for the next job level above the employee's current position and furnish them to him/her.
- Consider personal growth expectations of the employee.

### **Enrich the employee's experience in the current job**

This option should be used:

- When advancement is not currently possible.
- When the employee displays acceptable and often superior performance in present tasks.
- To help keep the employee's motivation and enthusiasm alive.

### **Steps in Preparing the Skill Development Plan**

1. Obtain the employee's agreement that there is a need for development.
  - Make sure the performance problem that the development plan addresses is related to *ability* (aptitude, training or resources) and not to *motivation* (desire or commitment).
2. Negotiate developmental expectations with the employee (a limited number).
3. Write down the plan.
4. Identify methods for meeting each developmental expectation.
5. Review the action plan prior to the end of the session.

### *Group Discussion*

- Topic:* Discuss positive or negative experiences with skill development plans:
- What worked, and why?
  - What did not work, and why?

Notes:

## STEP 4 – CONCLUDE THE RATING SESSION AND FINALIZE THE PES FORM

- Summarize the information and rating that you have discussed with the employee.
  - Clarify any details that need clarification.
    - Review the agreed upon high-priority items, measurable expectations, and performance-tracking plan. Discuss to-do items agreed upon during the conversation as well as resources, strategies, and tools the individual can use to achieve his or her expectations.
  - Strengthen the relationship by expressing appreciation.
  - Review what will happen as a result of the review session.
  - Ask questions that will allow you to judge whether the employee sees the action plan as you do.
    - Sometimes, asking how the employee plans to get started reveals the level of understanding as well as the level of commitment.
      - Asking the employee to summarize the action plan is a good way to check for understanding of the details as well as the bigger picture.
  - Ask for a commitment. If the employee seems hesitant, you may need to continue your discussion.
- Provide an opportunity for the employee to make comments on the PES form (SF15).
- Signal that the rating session is about to end.
  - Complete the PES form with the employee. Ask the employee to sign the form.
- Confirm the date and time of any follow-up meeting, if necessary, for setting future expectations for creating an employee development plan. Setting a date for a progress review will give you a set time to discuss items that may have been overlooked as well as discuss the results that have been achieved.
  - Choose an early milestone and schedule a time to talk as soon as that milestone is reached.
    - It is easy to put the date on your calendar. The hard part is viewing the follow-up conversation as a high priority when the date for follow-up rolls around. Schedule a time to talk as soon as the milestone is reached.
  - Specify the issues you'll review.

## REFERENCES

AchieveGlobal (2004). *Clarifying Performance Expectations*. Tampa, FL: AchieveGlobal Headquarters, Inc.

Bittle, Lester R. and Newstrom, John W. *What Every Supervisor Should Know (6th Edition)*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1990.

Certo, Samuel C. *Supervision: Concepts and Skill Building*. Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2000.

Department of State Civil Service, State of Louisiana. *Performance Planning and Review Basics*. Published by La. Dept. of State Civil Service, 2001.

King, Patricia. *Performance Planning and Appraisal*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1984.

Shani, A. B. and Lau, James B. *Behavior in Organizations: An Experiential APESoach (6th Edition)*: Chicago, IL: Irwin, 1996.

Swan, William S. *How to Do a Superior Performance Appraisal*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons, 1991.

Whetton, David A. and Cameron, Kim S. *Developing Management Skills (4th Edition)*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1998.

# **EXERCISES**

### ***Skill Practice: Constructing a Performance Review Session Agenda***

*Instruction*

1. Read the case assigned to your group by the instructor (Case A, B, **or** C). Each case contains background information, existing performance expectations, and an employee performance log.
2. Using the appropriate PES Session Agenda Worksheet that follows each case, create an agenda for the PES rating session for the employee in the case your group is assigned. (*Note: there are three cases and three worksheets, one worksheet for each case.*)
  - a) List the performance topics for an upcoming PES rating session with the employee in your assigned case. Create at least one *open-ended* question for each performance topic on your list.
  - b) List behavior patterns to encourage, so the employee clearly understands that these are things you want him/her to continue.
  - c) List behavior patterns to change (if any), including some alternative behaviors that you want the employee to begin doing instead.
  - d) List possible conflicts that might come up in a PES session (if any), including some notes on how to handle those potential conflicts.
3. Be prepared to discuss your agenda with the class.

**Note:** Your group is creating an agenda for one of the cases; however, please pay close attention to the other cases and agendas when we debrief the skill practice. Later on in the course, you will be doing a separate activity with the information on the other cases that will require you to be familiar with all of them (not just yours).

## **Case A**

In Region ML-8, Tracy is one of the Inspection Supervisors. She was transferred here from another Region on February 28, 201x. Over the first two weeks in March, she met with each employee and established new performance expectations for all the employees in her work unit. These new expectations are not higher in quantity than before, yet compared to the prior list of expectations, they are more appropriately written and more specific to the different tasks her employees do. Tracy holds a weekly meeting with employees on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month to discuss inspection procedures, common problems with inspections and inspection reports, and other issues that have turned up during the work week. The last Friday of the month is a Region-wide meeting of all the Inspectors and Inspection Supervisors to do the same type of problem-solving/discussion, but this is for all the Inspection work units in Region ML-8, including Tracy's unit.

All employees have been given an inspection manual which specifies the steps that must be taken to properly perform and document an inspection. The manual includes sample inspection forms which have been properly completed, reference material common to routine inspections, and common timeframes and deadlines by which the inspectors must submit their inspection reports—all of these being based on the date of the initial inspection at a facility. Tracy has reviewed the contents of the inspection manual with her employees in order to ensure their understanding of its contents. During the weekly meetings, inspection laws are discussed and clarified. Also, solutions are developed for the most common problems.

Chris is one of the inspectors. He has just over 2 years of service. Chris has the knowledge and experience necessary to develop solutions to the routine problems that are encountered during a typical inspection. However, Chris does not yet have the ability to independently develop the solutions to the more complex, difficult problems that occur in some of the inspections.

Usually Chris will phone Tracy at least twice per week from the field for assistance with routine inspection problems. Tracy believes that Chris should have the knowledge and experience to deal with these problems on his own since the questions are usually about interpretation problems that are discussed in the weekly staff meetings. Chris does produce inspection reports that are accurate, neat and thorough. However, the reports are frequently submitted a day or two past deadline, though that is a great improvement over 5 months ago when Chris' reports were a week late and not as thorough. Tracy has noticed Chris offering to readily help other Inspectors with their routine cases when asked for assistance.

**Performance expectations established six months ago on March 12, 201x shortly after Tracy became Chris’ supervisor**

**Work product**

- Produce inspection reports that are neat, thorough and accurate
- Complete and submit inspection reports on the due date

**Cooperativeness**

- When your work is completed, offer to help co-workers when needed

**Adaptability**

- Learn how to develop solutions to more complex inspection cases.

**Daily decision-making and problem solving**

- Independently develop solutions to routine problems.

**Employee Performance Log for Chris**

Date	What Happened	Intervention
April 02 201x	Chris turned in most of his inspection reports one week late. These reports were incomplete and had several typographical errors	Counseled Chris to find why he is submitting inspection reports that are one week late and are incomplete. He has been spending a lot of time helping co-workers. I mentioned that he also appears to be socializing a lot. I stressed the importance of accurate and timely reports. We developed a plan for him to achieve this expectation, including that he should help co-workers, but <i>only</i> after his own work is finished.
April 09 201x	Chris called me from the field to solve a routine inspection issue.	Counseled Chris to check the Inspection manual and handouts from the recent staff meeting before calling me next time.
April 21 201x	Chris called today for help in solving a routine problem. This is the 4 <sup>th</sup> call from him in two weeks	I met with Chris to talk about similar problems he has had in the past. We developed alternative solutions. I requested that in the future he have alternative solutions in mind before calling me.

(Case A performance log continued on next page)

Date	What Happened	Intervention
May 01 201x	Chris submitted inspection reports that were thorough and accurate but were 3 to 5 days late and had a few typos. He continues to call me approx. once per week to get his questions answered.	I met with Chris to discuss how thorough and accurate his inspection reports were. We discussed a plan to eliminate the typos and how to meet deadlines. He has reduced his calls to me (to ask routine questions) to a bit more than once per week. He is reluctant to offer alternative actions, though. He continues to assist others when his work is not completed.
June 02 2000x	For two weeks Chris has been submitting thorough, accurate inspection reports with no typos. His reports are now only 1-2 days late but he continues to ask questions about areas that have been covered in our weekly meetings.	Complimented Chris on the quality of his reports and worked with him to develop a plan for him to turn his reports in a more timely fashion. We discussed how important it was to take notes in our weekly meetings. We also discussed some options for him to learn how to handle more challenging inspections. I told him to think about some more alternatives and that we would meet in one month to develop a plan.
July 01 201x	The vast majority of the reports now submitted by Chris are thorough and accurate, with almost no typos. Approx. 75% of them are on time or before the deadline; the other 25% are 1 or 2 days late.	Complimented Chris on his improvement. He offered the idea that he could travel with a more experienced inspector in order to learn how to do more complex inspections. He thinks he learns more by doing than by reading a manual. I acknowledged that his idea was a good one, but with staff shortages, it may be logistically difficult. I agreed to try to work on the logistics and get back to him in one week.

**PES Session Agenda Worksheet**

**Case—A**

Topic (minimum of two )	Question(s) (minimum one per topic, could be more if you like)
1.	1.a
	1.b
	1.c
2.	2.a
	2.b
	2.c
3.	3.a
	3.b
	3.c
4.	4.a
	4.b
	4.c

Behavior patterns to encourage	Behavior patterns to change and possible actions to take

**PES Session Agenda Worksheet**

**Case—A**

(behavior to encourage, *cont'd*)

(behavior to change, *cont'd*)

**Potential Conflicts (if any)**

**Methods to address potential conflicts**

**Case B**

Marcus supervises a crew of maintenance/repair technicians (MRTs) in District EB-16. Marcus has been the supervisor for 2 years. Before that, he was one of the MR employees for 11 years. Every MRT in Marcus' unit has been on the job for between 5 and 10 years.

District EB-16 covers a 7-parish area with both rural and urban areas. The MRTs are on call to maintain, repair, and service the agency-owned equipment used by work crews throughout the District. MRTs do their work in the field and as well back at the District Service Facility. When doing maintenance/repair work in the field, they work out of agency-provided trucks containing tools, equipment, and commonly-needed parts and materials. If the equipment cannot be serviced in the field due to a lack of parts, tools, or time, that equipment is then transported to the District Service Facility for the work to be done and then transported back to the employees who were using it.

MRTs are responsible for keeping their trucks stocked with parts, supplies, tools, and materials so they can do as much of the maintenance and repair work as possible out in the field. They carry radios so that they can be contacted when equipment needs servicing. Equipment that can be serviced in the field saves the agency time and money since service work done in the field does not require time-consuming transportation either to-and-from the job site or to the District Service Facility.

Tony is one of the MRTs who report to Marcus. Tony has been on the job for 6 years. Tony's performance has been minimally acceptable in the past, but in the last 18 months or so, his work quantity and quality have been slipping. For his last PES rating, 10 or 11 months ago, Tony was rated "Meets Expectations," which he barely made based on his performance. His anniversary date is coming up, so Marcus will be scheduling another PES with Tony in about 6 weeks.

In the time since Tony's last PES, Marcus has had many conversations with Tony about job performance. Tony's performance is now at such a low level that Marcus has had to closely monitor Tony's work tasks, work flow, and use of the agency equipment. Tony tells Marcus that he is being "micro-managed" and that he doesn't work well like that.

Tony has lost his agency-issued radio twice in the last year. Both times it was eventually found by others and returned to Tony, but during the time the radio was misplaced he was unable to respond quickly to service calls from the field. The result of this is that recently, Tony has done less on-call work in the field, something that impacts the overall performance targets that Marcus's unit is expected to meet. It also affects the rest of the MRTs who have to go into the field more often than normal to do work that Tony should be doing.

Tony does a lower overall number of maintenance/repair jobs than the other MRTs, and he also has the lowest call-out percentage (percent of time his service work is done in the field). Tony also turns in incomplete or inaccurate Equipment Service Reports following the completion of a service job. On average his reports are turned in 4 or 5 days late.

**Work product**

- Ensure that routine on-call procedures are followed on a daily basis (e.g., having the radio on your employee and having it fully charged)
- Complete and submit Equipment Service Reports in a timely manner whether the service was completed either in the field or at the District Service Facility
- Notify your supervisor (or field crew supervisor when in the field) of any safety issues or concerns regarding the equipment being serviced at either the Service Facility or out in the field

**Cooperativeness**

- Notify your supervisor if your on-call radio is not working properly or is missing
- When working at the Service Facility, offer help to co-workers with their MR tasks when your own work is completed

**Adaptability**

- Learn to adapt your work habits to new or unexpected circumstances (e.g., if a large number of field service calls come in all at once, be willing to stop your own work and handle the service calls in the field)

**Daily decision-making and problem solving**

- Keep your work truck stocked with the most commonly needed tools, equipment, spare parts, and materials used on field service calls.

**Employee Performance Log for Tony**

<b>Date</b>	<b>What Happened</b>	<b>Intervention</b>
Jan 03 201x	Tony failed to respond to a field service call today. After learning of this from the field crew, I found out that another MRT got called out to the work site.	I asked him to tell me why he had failed to respond to the call. He said that he was working on equipment already in the Service Facility and had taken his radio off because it interfered with his freedom of motion while working on this particular machine. Then I talked to him about the importance of following standard procedures regarding on-call service work.
Feb 04 201x	Tony informed me that he had lost his two-way radio during a service call in the field.	I asked him to explain to me what had caused him to lose his radio. He mentioned again that it was getting in the way while he was working. I also talked to him about the proper procedures for using and caring for equipment assigned to him.
Feb 06 201x	Tony told me that someone had returned his radio and that it would not have to be replaced.	I thanked him for letting me know and stated that I was glad it wouldn't have to be replaced. I asked that he take good care of his radio.
Mar 15 201x	Tony informed me that his radio seemed to be 'dead' (out of power). Eventually he said that he didn't attach it to the charger overnight because he had forgotten to take it off when he left for the day.	I told him to help other MRTs around the Service Facility with their repair work for the day, and reminded him that he is responsible for properly recharging his radio so he can be on-call as required by his job responsibilities.
April 02 201x	Tony complained about having to stop working on equipment already at the Service Facility in order to handle an emergency service call in the field.	I discussed with him the job expectations of adapting his work to the workplace demands of the moment. It is expected that depending on the field crew's use of agency equipment, he will have to stop a scheduled maintenance job and go on service calls in the field so the field crew can get their equipment back in service quickly.
May 07 201x	Tony notified me of a safety concern on the throttle control of a machine he was working on. He repaired the throttle in addition to the scheduled maintenance that he was doing on that piece of equipment.	I thanked him and complimented him on noticing an equipment safety problem that was outside of the maintenance job being done on that machine. I told him that I'd tell the field crew supervisor of the crew that was using it as well.

<b>Date</b>	<b>What Happened</b>	<b>Intervention</b>
June 2 201x	Tony took twice as long as normal to check and service a hydraulic system. He said a few of the pressure couplings were “stuck” and he needed the extra time to loosen them up.	We discussed difficulties with servicing some of the older equipment. I mentioned that this particular piece of equipment hasn’t had this problem before or since when worked on by other MRTs. I also pointed out that the “stuck couplings” problem was not mentioned in his Equipment Service Report. I told him to document in his reports issues like this that would increase the amount of time normally spent on a maintenance/repair task.
June 19 201x	Tony failed to respond to a field service call today. Again, another MRT got called out to the work site. When I talked to Tony about it he told me that his radio was out of power (again).	I talked to him about the importance of caring for the equipment he uses, and instructed him to follow proper procedures for using his equipment. I told him that I would be writing him up (Written Warning) for missing another service call from the field.

**PES Session Agenda Worksheet**

**Case—B**

<b>Topic (minimum of two )</b>	<b>Question(s) (minimum one per topic, could be more if you like)</b>
1.	1.a  1.b  1.c
2.	2.a  2.b  2.c
3.	3.a  3.b  3.c
4.	4.a  4.b  4.c

**PES Session Agenda Worksheet**

**Case—B**

**Behavior patterns to encourage**

**Behavior patterns to change and possible actions to take**

Behavior patterns to encourage	Behavior patterns to change and possible actions to take

*(Potential conflicts table on the next page)*

**Potential Conflicts (if any)**

**Methods to address conflicts**

Potential Conflicts (if any)	Methods to address conflicts

### **Case C**

Mike works for a large state agency in the information technology field (IT). He has seven years of experience overall as a programmer-analyst. His current job title is Lead Computer Applications Programmer-Analyst 2 (PA-2). He has been a PA-2 for five years; prior to that he was a PA-1 junior analyst for two years. As a PA-2, one of his responsibilities is to supervise an IT work group, develop IT project plans and implement these project plans. These projects meet the IT needs of a wide variety of computer users within the Agency. The fundamental activities involved in a typical IT project is to design, code, compile, test, debug, modify and document new or existing highly complex applications programs within accepted standards, procedure and guidelines. A typical IT project of the size that Mike and his employees work on is large and complex enough that, as a work group, they work on one IT project at a time. As a PA-2, Mike gets these things done with and through his employees—he is a “player/coach.” Mike and his work group have been performing extremely well with the IT projects he has been assigned over the last year.

Mike has the knowledge and experience necessary to lead small IT work groups and he is very task-oriented. He trains his people well, delegates appropriately for his job level, and his work is very orderly and effective. As a supervisor he needs to teach these skills to his employees on a regular basis. Mike has the necessary training and ability to perform the tasks as outlined in his PES expectations. Mike is interested in performing tasks at a level that will prepare him for the position of Project Leader, which is the next position up from a PA-2 and is two GS levels above the PA-2 position. The fundamental difference between the PA-2 position and the Project Leader position is that as a project leader, Mike would have to oversee *multiple* IT projects at the same time. To do that, Mike has to continue to train and develop his work group to perform at a higher level. The reasoning behind this is that as Project Leader, Mike would have to delegate more tasks to the work group than he does as PA-2 given the increase in his responsibilities from one IT project at a time to multiple projects, with the expectation of maintaining quality, performance, etc.

### **Work product (PA-2 level)**

- Produce programming logic that is orderly, thorough, concise, accurate, efficient and effective based upon applications requirements as defined by the user community.
- Design, code, compile, test, debug, modify and document new or existing highly complex applications programs within accepted standards, procedure and guidelines.
- As a supervisor, you will need to ensure that the work product of your employees also meets the same programming standards as laid out above.
- Produce detailed and comprehensive test plans that can be used to facilitate the application and user acceptance testing process. This information should be structured in a manner that facilitates training IT staff.

**Dependability**

- Make every effort to be at your work station at the scheduled time. Maintain schedule flexibility for emergency work situations. Minimize the number of days away from work. If at all possible, group personal activities and/or appointments on the same day.

**Daily decision-making and problem solving**

- Use good judgment when making decisions that affect the system by obtaining all of the facts about an issue or problem, weighing all factors and if necessary obtaining the opinion of your supervisor and/or user where appropriate.
- Maintain all documentation supporting your decision and be prepared to explain your decision and any actions that result from this decision.
- Be able to think on your feet and provide decisions to peers, management, employees and users in a timely manner so that they can also continue their work.

**Project Planning and Implementation**

- Meet extensively with users to discuss requirements and assess these requirements.
- Create IT project plans where necessary, draft technical design documents of the requested changes to determine specific tasks and what impact a particular project has on existing programs, systems and resources.
- Establish timelines and expectations for employees and the IT projects worked on; enforce these expectations and make adjustment where necessary.

**Work Group Management and Leadership**

- Review and oversee the work of programmers and system analysts that you supervise to ensure that the quality of their work (1) meets standards and (2) is implemented in a timely and efficient way.
- This concept (meets standards & timely/efficient) must also be used when working with other team members that do not directly report to you in conjunction with the knowledge of their supervisor. You will provide technical advice, assistance, or guidance to all employees where appropriate that are less experienced or familiar with the specific programming language or system function/process.
- Make use of weekly status reports from employees in order to properly manage the work flow for which you are responsible.

Date	What Happened	Intervention
Nov 01 201x	Late notification of concerns that project may not meet the implementation deadline.	Mike's concerns were legitimate. His assessment of factors that could postpone the project were accurate, however, had he informed his supervisor when he first became concerned, he could have been less anxious about completing the project on time. I reminded him that part of my job as a project leader is to be a sounding board and he should not have hesitated to come to me earlier. I did ask Mike if he had any concerns about discussing potential problems with me and he stated that he had no problem at all.
Jan 06 201x	Mike submitted project ABC one week ahead of schedule even after the holiday season.	I spoke with Mike today to congratulate him on a job well done. I asked him to do a post-implementation assessment of Project I-812 and he was able to provide a list of the strengths and weaknesses.
Mar 07 201x	Received compliments from field staff about the work done on Project I-812. It has made their lives easier and has freed up time to accomplish other routine tasks.	Present Mark with a Certificate of Appreciation for the work he has done. Told him that a happy user is one that is confident in our abilities. Keep up the good work.
May 22 201x	Mike submitted a leave request for a short vacation with his family in two months.	Mike said that his vacation plans are scheduled to minimize the impact of his absence because the vacation should fall between two major IT projects his staff is working on. I told him I was approving the request, and asked if I could help out while he was gone. He mentioned that the vacation time occurs right after the scheduled end of one project, and right before Project YD-038 begins, so probably things will be OK while he is gone, but he would appreciate it if I could keep my eyes and ears open for anything unusual that comes up at that time. I told him I would.

(Case C performance log continued on next page)

<p>May 30 201x</p>	<p>Mike approached me about the most recent month's workload for an employee of his.</p>	<p>Mike and I went over the workload and planning that this employee had done. I note that it is the employee's responsibility to do his individual task planning, while it's Mike's responsibility to oversee it, but Mike won't be here to oversee some of this work when he is on vacation. Mike said he would make sure to clarify the assignment with this employee before the vacation (i.e., do a walk-through of that part of the work) so things go smoothly when he leaves for vacation.</p>
<p>June 2 201x</p>	<p>Mike returned from previously-scheduled vacation.</p>	<p>I thanked him for taking his vacation during the brief pause between major IT projects. I also complimented him for properly giving more structure and direction to an employee of his before taking vacation. Mike's handling his schedule this way reduced the negative impact of his absence during vacation time.</p>
<p>June 17 201x</p>	<p>Mike and his workgroup completed Project YD-038, turned it in along with the background reports and spreadsheets nearly two weeks early.</p>	<p>I congratulated Mike and his staff on the early completion of a difficult job, and on the level of quality they were able to produce.</p>

*(Tables for topics, questions, behaviors, etc. start on the next page)*

Topic (minimum of two )	Question(s) (minimum one per topic, could be more if you like)
1.	1.a  1.b  1.c
2.	2.a  2.b  2.c
3.	3.a  3.b  3.c
4.	4.a  4.b  4.c

Behavior patterns to encourage	Behavior patterns to change and possible actions to take

**PES Session Agenda Worksheet**

**Case—C**

(behavior to encourage, *cont'd*)

(behavior to improve, *cont'd*)

**Potential Conflicts (if any)**

**Methods to address conflicts**

## ***Skill Practice: Conducting part of a PES rating session***

### **Instructions:**

1. For this exercise the instructor will temporarily organize the class into groups of three. In your new group, one employee will be the supervisor conducting the rating session, one will be the employee being rated, and one employee will be a process observer. We will run three rounds of this same exercise—so each employee gets to practice all three roles.
  - a) When it is your turn as the supervisor, you will have a conversation with the employee about one positive agenda topic (behavior to maintain) and one corrective agenda topic (behavior to change) – if any.
2. Your group will use all 3 cases in different rounds—a different case for each round. *For time management purposes, the instructor may arrange this exercise so that each group runs the 3 cases in a certain order.* After each round, the process observer will give his/her feedback to the group and then the group will give highlights of that feedback to the whole class.
3. Tasks and timing for your group:
  - a) First decide which person in your group will take which role first—supervisor, employee, or process observer. (1 minute)
  - b) Quickly review the cases and the PES agendas connected to them. Make sure everyone is clear on the selection of topics to use when each has his/her turn as the supervisor—behavior to maintain and behavior to improve. (4 - 5 minutes)
  - c) Run the first skill practice: Have a 2-way conversation between supervisor and employee for a given case. (7 – 10 minutes)
    - The observer should follow the conversation using the Feedback Sheet that follows Case C.
  - d) Debrief the skill practice (with your group) by listening to the feedback from the process observer on what worked/what could have been done better. (3 – 5 minutes)
  - e) When asked by the instructor, discuss your group’s skill practice and debrief with the whole class. (5 – 10 minutes)
  - f) Repeat the skill practice, feedback and debrief with a different case and taking on a different role—until all group members have performed all three roles.

## FEEDBACK SHEET

**Did the supervisor...**

	Appear relaxed and comfortable, in an attempt to put the employee at ease.
	Used nonverbal communication appropriately.
	Good eye contact
	Good voice qualities (volume & tone)
	Act in an appropriate manner.
	Engage in a two-way conversation.
	Let the employee finish speaking.
	Used questions to guide the conversation.
	Open-ended questions
	Closed-ended questions
	Managed time well, making sure both topics were appropriately covered.
	Commented positively on at least one area of the employee's performance.
	What was it?
	Appropriately covered one area of the employee's performance that needed to be changed/improved.
	What was it?
	Handled conflict appropriately, if it occurred.

<b>In general, what went well?</b>	<b>In general, what could be done better next time?</b>

## JOB AIDS

### Performance Appraisal Process

1. Establish and communicate individual expectations with an employee.
2. Continually practice observation, coaching, documentation and feedback; measuring performance against established expectations.
3. Provide performance feedback in the PES rating session to reinforce or change behavior.



### PES Rating Session Process (from #3 above)

1. Prepare for the PES rating session.
2. Conduct the rating session.
3. Collaborate with the employee on future performance expectations.
4. Conclude the rating session and finalize the PES form.

### During the rating session

- Establish a supportive climate.
- Deliver performance information to the employee – the “what” – which is a *content* issue.
- Deliver performance information to the employee – the “how” – which is a *process* issue.

### Writing Performance Expectations

- There are written *and* unwritten performance expectations (according to Civil Service).
- Employees with the same job title may, or may not, have the same expectations.
- Supervisors do not have to write down every single thing an employee is expected to do (it is impossible to do so).

### Key Actions for Clarifying Performance Expectations

1. State the purpose of the discussion.
2. Explain how the work supports the agency.
3. Mutually discuss expectations and measures.
4. Recap and check for commitment.
5. Set a date for follow-up

## **Steps in Preparing the Skill Development Plan**

1. Obtain the employee's agreement that there is a need for development.
  - Make sure the performance problem is related to *ability* and not to *motivation*
2. Negotiate developmental expectations with the employee (a *limited* number).
3. Write down the plan.
4. Identify methods for meeting each developmental expectation.
5. Review the action plan prior to the end of the session.

## **Supervisor PES Rating Session Checklist**

*(Checklist begins on next page...)*

<b>Supervisor PES Rating Session Checklist</b>	
<b>Step 1: PREPARE FOR THE PES RATING SESSION</b>	
<b>1. Notify the employee of upcoming PES session</b>	<b><u>Done</u></b>
a. Give the employee ample notice of the PES review.	
b. Negotiate (settle on) the time and place; indicate approximate timeframe of session.	
c. Plan for a location that is quiet and private.	
d. Ask the employee to be prepared to discuss:	
- Accomplishments.	
- Performance expectations.	
- Problems.	
- Professional growth.	
<b>2. Collect and review relevant performance documentation</b>	<b><u>Done</u></b>
a. Collect and review the relevant performance observation and measurement documentation.	
- Review last year’s PES factors and the performance expectations linked to them.	
- Review documentation of behavior, events, and conversations with employee about performance over the last year? (e.g., record of informal feedback)	
<b>3. Prepare a written agenda for the rating session. The agenda should include:</b>	<b><u>Done</u></b>
a. A list of performance-related topics including general and specific questions about performance for each topic.	
- How to get the employee to expand and elaborate on his/her answers to the questions.	
- Use open-ended questions to gather information, closed-ended questions to focus in on specific details.	
b. Behavior patterns of this employee to encourage, so he/she continues doing them.	
- A list of possible actions to take in order to encourage these behaviors to continue.	
- <i>After discussion in the rating session, noting what the best action to take would be.</i>	
c. Behavior patterns of this employee to change (to improve), so he/she stops doing something and start doing something else.	
- A list of possible actions to take in order to stop these behaviors and get the employee to begin doing something else	
- <i>After discussion in the rating session, noting what the best action to take would be.</i>	
d. Potential conflicts and problems; plan some responses to these potential problems in order to manage potential conflict proactively.	

<b>4. Prepare suitable physical arrangements.</b>	<b><u>Done</u></b>
a. Supervisor's office?	
- Arrange to prevent interruptions (e.g., phone calls, being paged).	
b. Other location?	<b><u>Done</u></b>
- Reserve location, if necessary.	
- Arrange to prevent interruptions.	
<b>Step 2: CONDUCT THE PES RATING SESSION</b>	
<b>5. Establish a supportive climate.</b>	
a. Greet the employee and initiate brief social conversation (opening the session).	
b. State the purpose of the rating session.	
c. Clarify the roles each of you have during the session	
- It is a supervisor-led session, yet is still a two-way conversation where both participate in the discussion	
d. Indicate how the information will be used.	
- Required PES for purposes of giving an overall performance rating.	
- Used to highlight the strengths of the employee's performance and remind both of the performance of the last year that was done well.	
- Used as a communication tool to help plan for improving any performance areas that need it.	
- <i>Not</i> used as a disciplinary procedure	
e. Foster a positive climate for communication.	
- Be relaxed and comfortable, in order to help put the employee at ease.	
- Behave in an appropriate manner.	
- Show trust and respect. (You don't have to <i>feel</i> respect just to demonstrate respect, though it is easier when you feel it as well.)	
<b>6. What performance information will be delivered to the employee? (content issue)</b>	
a. The specifics of consistently documented positive and negative performance data.	
- This data is dependent on the quality of the prior PES's planning expectations and how well the supervisor has observed, discussed and documented the employee's performance (good and bad) over the period being rated.	

<b>7. How will the performance information be delivered to the employee?</b> (process issue)	
a. Use positive feedback (+) most often if performance warrants it.	
- Let the employee talk—this rating session is designed to be two-way.	
b. Use corrective feedback (–) appropriately; the idea is to communicate what needs to improve, to change, or to stop vs. just catching the employee doing something wrong.	
- Let the employee respond—this rating session is designed to be two-way.	
c. Feedback:	
- Focuses on behavior rather than on personality.	
- Communicates behaviors that the employee has done, not done, or needs to do.	
- Focuses on descriptions rather than judgments.	
- Focuses on observations rather than inferences (assumptions).	
- Is a clear message.	
- Balance the amount information that the employee can use against the amount of information you might like to give.	
- Recognize that feedback is most valuable as valid information for the employee, not as an emotional release for you.	
<b>Step 3: COLLABORATE WITH THE EMPLOYEE ON FUTURE EXPECTATIONS</b>	
<b>8. Performance expectations are specific, individual expectations for an employee to accomplish during the rating period.</b>	
a. To write individual performance expectations for a specific rating period for each employee, be aware that:	
- All pertinent information connected to an employee’s job; e.g., the position description (SF3), departmental policies, standards, accreditation guidelines, etc. should be considered when writing expectations.	
- Expectations may include job requirements (whether officially <i>written</i> or <i>unwritten</i> ) that are not found in the position description.	
- An employee with the same job title as another <i>may</i> or <i>may not</i> have the same expectations.	
- You will not and cannot write down every single thing an employee is expected to do.	
- An employee is responsible for performing the job according to the position description, departmental policies, written instructions and/or verbal instructions—not just the parts of the job listed as performance expectations.	
- Expectations should be written at the “meets requirements” level of performance for the specific job.	
b. Supervisors are required to have at least one written expectation for each of the 6 required factors (and any other job-specific ones) that apply to the employee.	

<b>9. Creating a skill development plan.</b>	
a. Development plan options:	
- Improve current job performance; the <b>key issue</b> is whether the performance problem that needs improving is related to <u>ability</u> or to <u>motivation</u> .	
- Prepare for advancement or growth.	
- Enrich the employee’s experience in the current job.	
b. The actual face-to-face discussion and planning for skill development may have to take place at a separate (future) meeting, if the time spent on rating performance for the prior period plus the time necessary to craft a good development plan result in a PES rating/development session that is too long for one sitting.	
<b>10. Steps in preparing a skill development plan:</b>	
a. Obtain the employee’s agreement that there is a need for development.	
b. Negotiate developmental expectations with the employee (a <i>limited</i> number).	
c. Write down the plan.	
d. Identify methods for meeting each developmental expectation.	
e. Review the action plan prior to the end of the session.	
<b>Step 4: CONCLUDE SESSION AND FINALIZE PES FORM SF15</b>	
<b>11. Final actions.</b>	
a. Summarize the information you have collected, decisions made, and plans developed during the rating session.	
- Clarify details or technical information	
- Express appreciation	
- Review what will happen as a result of the review session	
b. Provide an opportunity for the employee to provide comments on the PES form.	
c. Signal that the rating session is about to end.	
d. Complete the PES form with the employee.	
- Ask the employee to sign the form.	
e. Ensure that there is an understanding about the date and time of the follow-up meeting, if it was necessary to schedule one for the purpose of setting future expectations and/or detailing an employee development plan	