
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – AN OVERVIEW FOR EMPLOYEES

One of the cornerstones of DoW Human Resources is the performance management system - a system that recognizes and rewards you based on your performance and contributions to the mission of your activity. Understanding how your performance and contributions link to achieving organizational goals and DoW's critical mission is important. When your performance expectations are aligned with organizational goals and DoW's mission, your value to the organization and mission is enhanced. As your organization is converted into the new DoW Performance Management System, you will have an opportunity to learn more about the new system. This fact sheet provides an overview to prepare you for the transition.

Terms You Need to Know

Performance Elements – The duties, responsibilities, and competencies required by, or level of performance associated with your position; and the contributions and demonstrated competencies that management expects of you.

Performance Standard – An expression of performance elements in the performance plan that are linked to the organization's goal(s) and mission(s). Performance standards are used to communicate major individual, team, or organizational responsibilities, contributions, and the related outcomes and accomplishments expected of you during the appraisal period. They express how well an employee must perform their job to achieve accomplishment at the fully successful level.

Rating of Record – This is the overall performance rating for the most recent performance year. This rating is established by combining the individual ratings on each element to arrive at an overall evaluation of an employee's performance for an appraisal cycle.

Elements:

- Define the work expectations related to the work being performed. Elements also describe expectations or responsibilities of such importance that unacceptable performance on that element would result in a determination that the overall performance is unacceptable.
- Are used to measure individual outcomes that the employee directly controls.
- Should outline responsibilities that are essential to the goals of the organization.

Working with Your Supervisor

You will want to establish and maintain an effective way to receive feedback from your supervisor. We all work differently, so when you work with your supervisor to establish your performance plan, discuss how you and your supervisor will communicate.

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You want to know:

- What is working?
- What training or development opportunities are available to improve my skills?
- Is there something I need to focus on to improve my performance?
- Do I need to add, eliminate, or adjust some of my performance elements and standards because the organization's priorities have shifted?
- Is there something beyond my control that makes it difficult or impossible to do my work successfully?
- Am I being challenged enough?

Planning Performance

During the planning step, you and your supervisor develop your performance plan. Typically the appraisal cycle is one year, ending March 31. However if you are new to the organization, your performance plan will be written for the work you complete from the time your performance plan is established through the end of the cycle. You and your supervisor will:

- Discuss performance expectations for the appraisal cycle. You and your supervisor should have a shared understanding of what is expected of you.
- Develop your performance elements and standards. Your performance elements focus on the work that you perform that is aligned with organizational goals and focused on results. Performance elements identify "what" you do; the performance standards identify how the elements will be measured. Typically, most of us have three to five elements and standards. Ultimately it is your supervisor's responsibility to document your performance elements and standards; however, your involvement is crucial.
- Establish a process for ongoing communication. Communication is critical to the success of the performance management system. You and your supervisor must have a shared understanding of what is expected and ensure ongoing communication throughout the appraisal cycle.

Monitoring Performance

Throughout the appraisal cycle, you and your supervisor will monitor your performance. This is important for you and your supervisor to know what is working, address what is not working, and ensure that your performance plan accurately reflects what you are doing. It is a good idea for you to keep a record of your accomplishments so that you are able to discuss them throughout the appraisal cycle. Along with ongoing monitoring of performance, there are required performance discussions. A performance discussion occurs midway through the appraisal cycle. During these discussions, you and your supervisor will review your performance plan and make adjustments to your work or your organizational goals when appropriate.

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Individual Development Plan

Developing the individual development plan is integrated with the performance management process. Along with meaningful performance-related discussions that help reinforce your strengths and correct weaknesses, discussing training and developmental opportunities is important. Discuss any professional or technical development opportunities with your supervisor to further enhance your contribution to the organization's mission. The individual development plan is important to identify and document any formal training, on-the-job training, counseling, mentoring, coaching and other assistance that will maximize performance and enable you to achieve and contribute to mission success as well as enhance your individual development. Individual development plans are built from your performance plan and reflect career aspirations and goals as well as the needs of your organization to accomplish the mission. Individual Development Plans should be included in all performance discussions and modified to meet the needs of any new technology, training, or assignments that may contribute to your development.

Rating Performance

At the end of the appraisal cycle, your performance is rated by your supervisor. You play an important role in the rating process. You document what you accomplished and discuss those accomplishments with your supervisor. Your performance is rated on what you accomplished. This is done by evaluating each performance element in your performance plan. You will receive a rating of "Outstanding," "Fully Successful," or "Unacceptable" for each element.

Recognizing and Rewarding Performance

When you and your supervisor work together throughout the entire appraisal cycle, recognizing and rewarding good performance is the natural next step. Recognition and reward programs are valuable tools to increase employee performance, morale, and commitment to support the organization's mission. It is important to recognize good performance and exceptional achievements throughout the appraisal cycle as they occur, preferably as close to the act(s) being recognized as possible. Awards policy and procedures are developed at the component level but there are some general guidelines:

- The granting of awards is discretionary, not an entitlement, subject to approval at the appropriate level above the rating official.
- Management will determine the nature of the recognition.
- Employees will not be advised that they are under consideration for, or have been nominated for, performance-based recognition.
- Nonmonetary awards should be used to the maximum extent possible in lieu of monetary awards.