Guidance Manual for Managers and Employees



PERFORMANCE ALIGNED

FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RESULTS





*Insert Organization Name*

*Insert Organization Logo*

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

Leaders of *(INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME)* are to encourage best efforts from its employees. The process for managing performance must fit the highly competitive, dynamic organizational environment in which we operate today. The organization cannot execute strategy without employees, and employees cannot execute strategy without clearly knowing expectations. Managers need a tool that helps them focus on and communicate objectives, in order to achieve results through their employees. Employees need to know the organization’s goals, understand individual objectives and how they are measured, receive feedback, be involved in the process, and see rewards and recognition linked to performance.

Therefore, we are implementing an improved process designed to satisfy the needs of our organization, its managers and its employees. In fact, this new process is intended to transform our culture into a performance-driven one. Much of the process revolves around communication, since communication is vital to drive performance toward organizational goals. Clear, direct communication is a joint responsibility, shared by managers and employees.

The first step in implementing a new process is training, and this guidance manual is designed to communicate key information and procedures to all involved, both managers and employees. Learning will be primarily on the job, with managers and employees discussing and using the new process together. Please note that the term "manager" as used throughout this manual is to be interpreted as all leaders with formal supervisory responsibility, i.e., executives, managers, and supervisors.

The process itself has three steps: 1) PLANNING, 2) COACHING and 3) ASSESSING performance. It involves a worksheet that guides everyone through the process where performance plans are documented and the subsequent assessment is recorded and summarized. This process drives effective communication between managers and employees.

1. INTRODUCTION

**2. OBJECTIVES OF THE NEW PROCESS**

The process is intended to bring about a new culture in *(INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME)*, a performance-driven culture that achieves organizational results. An effective performance process will:

1. Develop employee performance and drive performance toward organization goals and strategies (the primary objective)
2. Assign accountabilities
3. Document objectives and results
4. Assess performance that occurs during each cycle relative to objectives and targets, independent of previous performance history
5. Accurately measure, assess, and differentiate performance, based on facts and observations
6. Plan, measure, and document employee development
7. Offer a consistent format, while providing options for flexibility
8. Serve as a tool to get work done and accomplish objectives
9. Link to rewards, recognition, or other consequences
10. Provide guidance to all involved in the process

 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE NEW PROCESS

**3. KEY FEATURES OF THE NEW PROCESS**

The new process has several key features:

* + - 1. **Three continuous phases**

The phases of the ongoing process are: 1) Planning; 2) Coaching; and 3) Assessment. Many systems focus only on the assessment (evaluation), however, this method is reactionary, because it only includes the end of the process.

1. **New Roles**

Employees will be involved in all phases of the process, providing valuable input during planning, asking for feedback, and discussing assessment. Managers are to act as performance coaches by giving guidance, providing resources and information, breaking down barriers to success, and recognizing achievement.

1. **Performance Worksheet**

The worksheet is a tool to guide managers and employees through the process. It is to be dynamic, meaning that it can be modified as appropriate during the coaching phase. Achievements, developmental needs, and any changes to objectives should be noted. The employee and the manager should each maintain a copy.

1. **Parts of the Worksheet**

On page 1, performance is measured by the results employees achieve relative to expectations. On page 2, performance is measured by the behaviors employees exhibit that impact results. The combination of results and behaviors tells the complete performance story, both what is done and how it is done. On page 3, a competency development action plan is formed in order to build on strengths and acquire skills.

1. **Universal Performance Drivers**

Performance drivers are used in planning objectives on page 1 of the worksheet. These drivers are: 1) Financial; 2) Customer Satisfaction; 3) Development of Self and Others; and 4) Innovation and Improvement. They focus our attention on *(INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME)*’s primary goals by guiding everyone to have performance objectives in each of these four categories.

 3. KEY FEATURES OF THE NEW PROCESS

1. **Documentation**

 The manager and the employee should summarize their discussions in writing, so that objectives, measures, and assessments are fully understood by both individuals. Documentation also provides a clear record of performance for use in managerial decisions regarding pay increases, promotions, and other employee actions.

1. **Three Performance Levels**

 Consistent with *(INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME)*’s merit assessment criteria, performance will be assessed according to three major levels:

 Does Not Meet Expectations **(DNM)**

 Meets Expectations **(MEE)**

 Exceeds Expectations **(EXE)**

 Most employees are solid performers and, given clear goals, guidance, and feedback, will successfully meet expectations. The strength of their performance will be determined by actual results and observed behaviors, as documented in the assessment sections of the worksheet.

1. **Communication**

 Employees and managers are responsible for continually communicating to each other regarding performance issues. These two-way discussions should be direct, specific, and focused on the job and facts. Guidance on effective communication is contained in Section 6 of this manual.

 3. KEY FEATURES OF THE NEW PROCESS

**4. THE WORKSHEET**

**Page 1**

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 4. THE WORKSHEET

**Page 2**

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**Page 3**

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 4. THE WORKSHEET

**5. THE PERFORMANCE CYCLE: WHEN TO MEET, WHAT TO DO**

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Listed below are the three phases of the performance cycle, including when they occur, their purposes, and steps for managers and employees to follow. For detailed guidance, see the sections of the manual that follow.

Phase I: Planning

When – Always plan performance objectives and expectations when the employee enters a new job or organization. After that, always plan when beginning a new performance cycle, just after completing assessment in the prior cycle.

Purpose – To establish performance expectations for results and behaviors, documenting them on the left sides of pages 1 and 2 of the worksheet.

Steps –

Manager schedules the date and time of the planning meeting and informs the employee.

1. Manager and employee each prepare for the planning meeting by thinking about and noting objectives and behaviors that are important to measure during the upcoming cycle. Organization goals and customer requirements should be considered.

 5. THE PERFORMANCE CYCLE: WHEN TO MEET, WHAT TO DO

Phase I: Planning, cont.

1. Manager and employee meet in person to discuss organization goals and how the job fits into organization strategy, then establish the performance plan, utilizing the planning sections of the worksheet.
2. Manager or employee documents the performance plan on the worksheet.
3. A brief follow-up meeting may be required for the manager and employee to review the completed sections of the worksheet to confirm their discussions and clarify that expectations are clearly understood. Manager and employee should each maintain an up-to-date copy of the worksheet throughout the cycle.

Option – Managers could meet with groups of employees to accomplish parts of the planning phase—discussing goals, assigning responsibilities, and completing objectives on page 1 of the worksheet. Individual meetings should still occur to clarify plans, establish specific expectations on page 1, and complete page 2.

**Phase II: Coaching**

When – Throughout the performance cycle.

Purpose – To review progress; improve performance.

Steps –

1. Employee performs responsibilities, referring to the worksheet to verify objectives and priorities.
2. Manager and employee observe performance, noting important results and comments on the worksheet.
3. They give and receive feedback on progress, results, and informal assessment.
4. They discuss objectives, clarify them, and adjust as necessary.
5. Manager coaches employee on how to improve and achieve results.

Meet – Informally on a day-to-day basis. Should also meet formally during the cycle, on a monthly or quarterly basis, or at least mid-cycle.

Option – Certain feedback on group measures may be given to groups of employees.

**Phase III: Assessment**

When – At the end of the performance cycle, prior to any change in pay (merit, promotion, etc.); also if employee is changing jobs, organizations, or is terminating.

Purpose – To summarize and discuss achievements relative to expectations, documenting them formally and setting expectations for the future.

 5. THE PERFORMANCE CYCLE: WHEN TO MEET, WHAT TO DO

**Phase III: Assessment, cont.**

Steps –

1. Manager schedules the date and time of the meeting, informing the employee.
2. Manager prepares by noting results and assessment on the worksheet.
3. Employee prepares by completing a self-assessment, using a copy of the worksheet, a self-assessment short form, or by writing a summary.
4. Manager and employee meet in person to review results, discuss assessment, and form action plans for improvement.
5. Manager finalizes documentation of assessment on the worksheet.
6. Manager and employee sign the worksheet, and each retains a copy.
7. Manager submits worksheet to reviewing manager for signature.
8. HR reviews for organizational consistency, and files it.

 5. THE PERFORMANCE CYCLE: WHEN TO MEET, WHAT TO DO

**6. GUIDANCE ON MEETING, COMMUNICATING**

PERFORMANCE MEETINGS

Whenever a manager and an employee meet to discuss performance, they should treat the topic as top priority. The following suggestions should help ensure that employee performance is given the importance that it deserves. The manager and employee should:

• Both know about the meeting in advance.

• Each prepare adequately for the meeting, considering what they want to learn and achieve, and gather and bring any data, documents, or notes that would help the discussion.

• Set aside sufficient time for the meeting.

• Meet in a quiet, private room, such as a conference room, in order to concentrate on the subject and allow for candid, open conversation.

* Eliminate distractions, turn off cell phones, and send calls to voicemail.

• Avoid interruptions.

• Stay on the topic of performance.

**COMMUNICATING**

Effective two-way communication is essential for improving performance. Listed below are some tips for managers and employees to review and use during their performance meetings. These are critical and core behaviors for everyone.

• Be candid, open, direct, sincere, and honest; show respect; enhance self-esteem.

• Be specific, not general or vague.

• Use facts and examples; beware of making biased judgments and singular observations.

• Focus on the job, required results, and associated behaviors.

• Review the whole range of objectives and results, not just one or two items.

• Be helpful and constructive; learn from each other.

• Discuss positives, but don't avoid areas needing improvement; conversely, discuss areas needing improvement but don't overlook the positives.

• Avoid being defensive and focus on the main goal of improving performance.

• Respond to feelings and perceptions in addition to content; put yourself in the other person's shoes, and show empathy and understand his/her point of view.

• Listen effectively, with the intent to understand, not judge; do not interrupt, make assumptions, jump to conclusions, or change the subject.

• Ask open-ended questions (why, when, how, etc.).

• Ask questions to be sure that you understand the other person.

• Restate the other's ideas, views, and feelings accurately, to their satisfaction.

• Express confidence that you can work together for improvement—you are a two-person team with a common goal: achieving success!

 6. GUIDANCE ON MEETING, COMMUNICATING

**GROUP MEETINGS**

As noted earlier, certain performance meetings could be conducted with groups of employees. Together, the manager and the employees in a department could discuss organization strategies, plan objectives for the coming year, and perhaps assign individual responsibilities. Group coaching and feedback on group measures could also occur. However, discussions about individual behaviors, specific observations and coaching, and assessment of performance should always be conducted in private sessions.

**OTHER MEETINGS ON COMPENSATION OR CAREER PLANNING**

This section has focused on meetings to discuss performance. Meetings to review compensation or career planning are just as important, but they should be separate from performance meetings. Such topics tend to distract people from the main objective of developing employee performance in the current job.

Certainly, when performance-based pay actions are reviewed, previous discussions on performance should be cited and clearly connected to pay.

 6. GUIDANCE ON MEETING, COMMUNICATING

**7. PHASE I: PLANNING**

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**WHY PLAN?**

First, planning individual objectives can link everyone's projects and responsibilities to organizational goals. There should be a direct tie to these goals, and all employees should see how their jobs fit within the big picture.

Second, employees can understand their manager's expectations of performance at the beginning of each performance cycle. Employees and managers should never experience surprise during an assessment meeting, discovering that performance was not up to par due to subtle or insufficient communication of expectations and unclear priorities. A good performance process does not attempt to catch employees doing their work poorly, but rather encourages everyone to successfully reach their goals.

Third, when employees are part of the planning phase, they can give valuable input and help shape objectives to meet customer expectations. Together, the manager and employee can discuss and understand what really goes on in a job, and perhaps eliminate non-value adding work and refocus on primary goals.

**STEPS**

Refer back to Section 5 of this manual to review steps to follow during the planning phase. The manager and the employee share the responsibility for preparing for the planning meeting, meeting to establish the performance plan, documenting the plan, and following up to assure clear understanding.

**WORKSHEET PAGE 1: Results Linked to Organization Goals and Strategies**

The manager and the employee both prepare for the planning meeting by considering important job goals and ways to achieve these goals. The information that follows applies to these preparations as well as to the planning meeting where plans are discussed and finalized.

**Organization Goals and Strategies**

The manager is responsible to ensure that the employee understands the organization’s strategies and the goals linked to them. Together they should review the main charter of the employee's job and how it fits into the broader goals. The manager might consider showing the employee a copy of the manager’s own performance plan, in order to link objectives. General discussions could take place before the formal planning meeting, perhaps in group sessions. However, at the beginning of the individual planning session, the manager should reaffirm that the employee understands his or her unique role and its connection to broader goals**.**

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**Universal Performance Drivers**

Objectives and responsibilities should be identified as being primarily aligned with one of four categories, known as Universal Performance Drivers. These drivers are meant to drive organization strategy and communicate to all employees that they should be working on at least one item in each category. If an objective applies to more than one driver, establish which driver is the objective’s primary purpose, or split the objective. Shown below are examples of objectives that might be included in each of the four drivers.

 1. Financial: Includes increasing profits, generating revenue, reducing expenses, avoiding costs, managing assets, staying within budget, increasing market share, implementing cost savings, etc.

 2. Customer Satisfaction: Includes on-time shipping performance; Quality/Value/Service/Delivery goals; scrap, reject, or customer complaint elimination; visiting customers; surveying customers to respond to needs; etc.

 3. Development of Self and Others: “Self” includes following through on developmental action plan from the prior cycle and demonstrating improvement through activities such as courses, cross training, on-the-job learning and practicing, task force involvement, new responsibilities, stretch projects, coaching sessions with manager, mentors or experts, involvement in professional organizations, reading, and workshops. Also includes the development of your Team if you are in a leadership position.

 4. Innovation & Continuous Improvement: Includes work process improvement; eliminating non-value-adding work; submitting suggestions; implementing suggestions; eliminating processes that interfere with timely response; creating and developing new ideas, procedures, concepts, and/or designs; developing improved ways to solve problems, etc.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**Establishing Objectives**

The following guidance should assist managers and employees in formulating effective performance objectives and responsibilities. As you record each item on page 1 of the worksheet, test it against this list. The objectives should be:

* Important, significant, meaningful. List major groupings of responsibilities rather than finite duties. Keeping the list short will help you focus on WHAT REALLY COUNTS, and your list will be easier to review and maintain.
* Linked to organizational goals. If they are not, they may not be adding value to the organization.
* Current, timely, and relevant during this performance cycle. Objectives should change over time as goals are reached, new opportunities arise, and priorities change. Job descriptions may be used as a basis for planning, but performance goals are more focused, timely, and results-oriented.
* Directly linked to the manager's objectives. Starting with the manager's goals makes employee goals easier to establish and more effective.
* Output and results focused, rather than merely a list of activities.
* Specific; not vague or open to interpretation.
* Controllable; directly influenced by the employee. Perhaps describe the controllable portion of a larger goal.
* As brief as possible, direct, and to the point. Discuss verbally to reach fullunderstanding.
* Measurable. If you cannot measure it somehow, you will have difficulty assessing it.

**Expectations, Standards, Target Ranges**

Once objectives are determined, specific measurements of success should be identified. While the manager and employee are to consider this in preparation for the planning meeting, they should decide together on specific, fair methods to determine whether goals have been reached. Measurement information should be readily available and accurate.

Expectations are to be challenging, yet realistic. Performance hurdles should be set high enough that they challenge an employee's abilities, and that meeting them indicates true success. Although challenging, expectations should be attainable with reasonable effort and be appropriate for the job level. Employees should also understand the minimum levels of acceptable performance; minimum requirements might be specified as the low end of target ranges.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**Expectations, Standards, Target Ranges, cont.**

Assign responsibilities that are appropriate for the job level and the person, and use the appropriate yardstick or standard to measure performance; tailor expectations to both the job level and the individual. In a job family, for example, an entry-level engineer might have less complex projects, less aggressive due dates, lower percent improvement targets, and receive more assistance than a senior engineer.

Some examples are shown below. Target ranges or +/- figures are often appropriate.

 • Financial: $ goals, $ or % increase in sales or profits, decrease in costs

 • Quality: Meeting specifications, % error rates, # of complaints, % improvement

 • Quantity: # of items to produce, # of steps to eliminate

 • Timeliness: Meeting target dates, % on time, # of units to produce on time

**Optional Planning Methods**

 **1. Team Planning:** Organizations, departments, or work teams might benefit from team planning sessions, where organization goals are discussed, customer needs are considered, and ideas are generated. Specific goals can then be clearly identified, individual accountabilities established, and standards set. As with individual planning sessions, managers and employees should prepare in advance. Note: While this may be an efficient and effective way to plan and complete objectives on page 1 of the worksheet, individual planning sessions should still be held to: establish individualized expectations as on page 1, complete page 2 of the worksheet, and ensure that each employee clearly understands his/her role.

 **2. Team Objectives/Targets:** Several (but not all) of the objectives listed on page 1 of the worksheet could be set as team goals with group targets. For these items, employees would be assessed according to the team’s results. Therefore, individuals included in team measures should only be employees who clearly impact the team’s results.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**WORKSHEET PAGE 2: Effective Behaviors that Impact Results**

Both the manager and the employee are responsible to prepare to discuss behaviors during the planning meeting. At the planning meeting, they should discuss their ideas and finalize the performance plan.

Behaviors are: observable ways of conducting oneself in order to achieve job results. Results are what one achieves, and behaviors are how one achieves them. Behaviors should be easily observed and frequently exhibited, in order to assess accurately. They are not to be interpreted as personality traits, inner qualities, mannerisms, or cultural practices, and employees are not to be assessed on assumptions.

Specifically, the manager and the employee should identify behaviors that are directly related to the employee's job and its objectives. They should be the ones that are most essential for this employee to emphasize during this cycle in order to achieve desired results.

**Identifying Core Behaviors**

The organization will identify the four core behaviors required of all employees as listed on page 22 of this manual, and list them in the planning section of page 2 of the worksheet.

**Selecting Supplemental Behaviors**

All employees should be assessed on at least one additional behavior. Carefully choose behaviors that are most essential to emphasize during this cycle to achieve the objectives listed on page 1 of the worksheet. These behaviors should be the ones that are most important for the specific job. They should also be important for the individual employee, things they should work to improve during the year for maximum job effectiveness.

**Describing Behaviors**

Once all core behaviors are listed, and supplemental behaviors are selected and listed, each should be described on page 2 of the worksheet. The purpose is to obtain full understanding of behavioral expectations, improve performance, and avoid surprises during the assessment phase. "Communication" for example, can mean many things to many people. Together, the manager and the employee should arrive at a specific, yet brief description of each behavior, indicating the best way it should be exhibited by the employee in their particular job.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**DOCUMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

The employee should be responsible for documenting the results of the planning meeting, under the "Describe Results" section of pages 1 and 2 of the worksheet. (Why document? Because what gets put in writing is more clearly understood.)

After documenting the performance plan, the manager and the employee should review the worksheet, confirming that it adequately describes the plan, and that objectives and expectations are clearly understood by both individuals.

The manager and the employee should each maintain an up-to-date copy of the worksheet throughout the performance cycle.

Note: The fact that the manager and the employee reach agreement regarding the documented performance objectives and expectations does not mean that employee responsibilities are limited by this performance plan. Management may require the employee to perform other duties as assigned.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**The following core behaviors are required of all employees**

**General Communication** –Clearly conveying information and ideas through a variety of media to individuals or groups in a manner that engages the audience and helps them understand and retain the message.

**Listens** – Listens effectively, understands and responds to ideas, requests, advice, and directions.

**Teamwork** – Collaborates, works well in a team, strives for team results. Keeps colleagues informed and shares ideas toward common goals.

**Active Part in Performance Management Process** – Takes an active part in all phases of one’s own performance management, helping to plan and maintain objectives, discuss progress, and review results. Keeps POR and personnel data up to date.

All worksheets will include an additional two to three behaviors from the supplement list below. Managers and employees should agree on the behaviors to be included.

**BEHAVIORS**

**Administrative**

**Quality** – Always strives to deliver the value customers expect in every interaction

**Profitability** – We have a responsibility to earn consistent and satisfactory profits for the continued viability of our organization so that we can invest in our people, products and processes.

**Work Standards** – Sets high standards of performance for self and others; assumes responsibility and accountability for successfully completing assignments or tasks; self-imposes standards of excellence rather than having standards imposed.

**Meeting Leadership** – Ensures that a meeting serves its organizational objectives while using appropriate interpersonal styles and methods and considering the needs and potential contributions of others.

**Managing Work** –effectively manages one’s time and a resource to ensure that work is completed efficiently.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**Active in Performance** – Takes an active part in all phases of one’s own performance management, helping to plan and maintain objectives, discuss progress, and review results. Keeps POR and personnel data up to date.

**Meeting Participation** – Uses appropriate interpersonal styles and methods to help reach a meeting’s goals, while considering the needs and potential contributions of others.

**Planning and Organizing** – Establishes courses of action for self and others to ensure that work is completed efficiently.

**Initiating Action** – Takes prompt action to accomplish objectives; takes action to achieve goals beyond what is required; being proactive.

**Building Customer Loyalty** – Effectively meets customer needs; builds productive customer relationships; takes responsibility for customer satisfaction and loyalty.

**Risk Taking** – Initiates action that tries to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage when potential negative consequences are understood.

**Innovation** – Generates innovative solutions in work situations; tries different, novel ways to deal with work problems and opportunities.

**Continuous Improvement**– Originates action to improve existing conditions and processes; uses appropriate methods to identify opportunities, implement solutions, and measure impact.

**Communication**

**Honesty -** Operate and adheres to sound ethics and principles.

**Negotiation** – Effectively explores alternatives and positions to reach outcomes that gain the support and acceptance of all parties.

**Formal Presentations**– Presents ideas effectively to individuals or groups when given time to prepare; delivers presentations suited to the characteristics and needs of the audience.

**Building Strategic Working Relationships** – Develops and uses collaborative relationships to facilitate the accomplishments of work goals.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**Adaptability** – Maintains effectiveness when experiencing major changes in work tasks or the work environment; adjusts effectively to work within new work structures, processes, requirements, and/or cultures.

**Customer Focus** – Makes customers and their needs a primary focus of one’s actions; develops and sustains productive customer relationships.

**\*Integrity -** We operate and adhere to sound ethics and principles.

**Sales Ability/Persuasiveness** – Uses appropriate interpersonal styles and communication methods to gain acceptance of a product, service, or idea from prospects and clients.

**Tenacity** – Stays with a position of plan of action until the desired objective is obtained or is no longer reasonably attainable.

**Energy**– Consistently maintains high levels of activity or productivity; operates with vigor, effectiveness, and determination over extended periods of time.

**Vision** – Sets and articulates strategic direction and goals. Looks to the future and visualizes what the organization must become. Communicates this vision and sets plans in place to realize it.

**Persuasive** – Demonstrates an understanding of how to influence. Sells ideas and gains support and commitment through influence and reason.

**Candid** – Gives honest and frequent feedback. Provides staff with feedback on the effectiveness of their ideas and actions and how they are being assessed.

**Flexible** – Adapts to new ideas and organization initiatives. Supports the change(s) necessary to meet organizational objectives.

**Stress** – Manages stress, conflict, or pressure without overreacting. Knows when to show emotion.

**Supervision and/or Teamwork**

**Accountability -** Embrace being accountable to our customers; holds oneself accountable internally.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**Values People** – *(INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME)* recognizes the importance and value of our employees and their families, our customers, and vendors, and how each of their contributions comprise an integral part of the organization’s overall success.

**Communicates** – Expresses oneself clearly, verbally, and /or in writing, sharing relevant information in a timely manner. Explains rationale. Writes monthly reports. Holds a minimum of one staff meeting per month. Conducts periodic informal Q&A with all salaried staff.

**Follow-up –** Monitors the results of delegations, assignments, or projects, considering the skills, knowledge, and experience of the assigned individual and the characteristics of the assignment or project.

**Develops Others**– Plans and supports the development of individuals’ skills and abilities so that they can fulfill current or future job/role responsibilities more effectively.

**Facilitates Change**–Encourages others to seek opportunities for different and innovative approaches to addressing problems and opportunities. Facilitates the implementation and acceptance of change within the workplace.

**Builds Partnerships** – Identifies opportunities and takes action to build strategic relationships between one’s area and other areas, teams, departments, units, or organizations to help achieve organization goals.

**Contributes to Team Success** – Actively participates as a member of a team to move the team toward the completion of its goals.

**Safety Awareness –** Identifies and corrects conditions that affect employee safety; upholding safety standards**.**

**Manages Conflict**–Deals effectively with others in an antagonistic situation; uses appropriate interpersonal styles and methods to reduce tension or conflict between two or more people.

**Aligns Performance for Success** – Focuses and guides others in accomplishing work objectives.

**Coaches** – Provides timely guidance and feedback to help others strengthen specific knowledge/skill areas needed to accomplish a task or solve a problem.

**Collaborates** – Works effectively and cooperatively with others; establishes and maintains good working relationships.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**Builds a Successful Team** – Uses appropriate methods and a flexible interpersonal style to help build a cohesive team; facilitates the completion of team goals. Builds teams with a common sense of purpose to work together to achieve goals and objectives.

**Involves Employees** – Involves employees in addressing challenges; encourages participation; calls them to action in order to realize the division's vision.

**Expectations** – Sets expectations. Ensures that each function/individual understands their role in helping meet divisional goals and objectives.

**Gains Commitment**– Uses appropriate interpersonal styles and techniques to gain acceptance of ideas or plans; modifies one’s own behavior to accommodate tasks, situations, and individuals involved.

**Leads through Vision and Values**–Keeps the organization’s vision and values at the forefront of employee decision-making and action.

**Recognition** – Recognizes achievement; rewards both effort and success. Uses recognition to support achieving common goals and objectives.

**Delegates Responsibility** – Allocates decision-making authority and/or task responsibility to the appropriate others to maximize the organization and individual’s effectiveness.

**Impact** – Creates a good first impression; commands attention and respect; displays an air of confidence.

**Compassion -** We are compassionate with others, while being focused on mutually rewarding results.

**Cognitive**

**Applied Learning**– Assimilates and applies new job-related information in a timely manner.

**Strategic Decision Making** – Obtains information and identifies key issues and relationships relevant to achieving a long-range goal or vision; commits to a course of action to accomplish a long-range goal or vision after developing alternatives based on logical assumptions, facts, available resources, constraints, and organization values.

**Continuous Learning** – Actively identifies new areas for learning; regularly creates and takes advantage of learning opportunities; uses newly gained knowledge and skills on the job and learns through their application.

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**Technical/Professional Knowledge and Skills**– Achieves a satisfactory level of technical and professional skill or knowledge in position-related areas; keeps up with current developments and trends in areas of expertise.

**Decision Making**–Identifies and understands issues, problems, and opportunities; compares data from different sources to draw conclusions; uses effective approaches to choose a course of action or develop appropriate solutions; takes action consistent with available facts, constraints, and probable consequences.

**Information Monitoring** – Sets up ongoing procedures to collect and review information needed to manage an organization or ongoing activities within it.

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\* denotes a core value *(Place an asterisk next to those values you created in your Mission, Vision, and Values Statements)*

 7. PHASE I: PLANNING

**8. PHASE II: COACHING**

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The coaching phase begins once the planning phase is completed, continues during the performance cycle, and concludes at the assessment phase. While planning determines what counts, coaching emphasizes action—doing what counts. During this phase, the employee performs the job, and the manager and employee observe performance relative to objectives, give and receive feedback on progress, and review, clarify, and perhaps adjust objectives. Throughout this phase, the manager coaches the employee on how to continually improve performance and successfully meet and possibly exceed expectations.

Both the employee and the manager have the responsibility to communicate during this phase. While the employee is accountable for performing the job, the manager is accountable for coaching and developing the performance of the employee. Much of the coaching occurs on a daily basis. However, the manager and the employee should meet to discuss progress on a quarterly basis or, at a minimum, at mid-cycle. The end-of-cycle assessment meetings are important, but these periodic meetings are just as important in that they can assure that performance stays on track.

**OBSERVING AND RECORDING PERFORMANCE**

Both the employee and the manager should consciously monitor and make notes on the employee’s job performance. These notations should be specific, and include both positives and any areas needing improvement. Periodically, or upon completion of goals, important results, achievements, and significant observations of job-related behaviors should be recorded. Always record things that will be important to remember when assessing performance at the end of the cycle. These records aid recall, improve assessment reliability, and save time in the assessment phase by providing readily available documentation. They are also valuable when changes in management occur.

**FEEDBACK**

Employees have an obligation to ask for performance feedback, and managers have an obligation to provide it. In order to energize the improvement process, feedback should be frequent, specific, accurate, and candid. This can be viewed as an informal performance assessment, where results and behaviors are measured.

**REVIEWING/ADJUSTING OBJECTIVES**

Periodically, the manager and the employee may need to adjust objectives and expectations. They should ensure that these revised objectives are still meaningful, realistic, and controllable by the employee. However, do not alter or eliminate objectives every time a small obstacle occurs. Employees should overcome obstacles as much as possible, and managers should assist in the process. In addition, priorities should be reviewed and adjusted, if needed, to redirect efforts. (Events can alter the relative importance of goals.)

 8. PHASE II: COACHING

**COACHING**

Management styles have evolved from control and discipline toward leadership by vision, example, involvement, openness, and team building. Performance coaching may be the most important thing that managers do, since it is the way they operationalize strategies. Managers should coach employees in order to get work done, rather than treating people and work management as separate activities. Coaching is proactive and efficient, whereas the people management approach is reactive and time consuming.

Managers should match their coaching style to the needs and development levels of individual employees, as employees will vary in their levels of effort, competency, and confidence.

Coaching begins after planning and setting direction. Once objectives and expectations are developed and thoroughly understood, managers begin to give guidance, provide resources and information, and break down barriers to success. Immediate recognition and positive feedback is vital to effective coaching, as is immediate, constructive corrective action when necessary. Listed below are recommended ways for managers to coach employees throughout this phase:

• Provide guidance on how to improve and succeed. Give support without removing responsibility. Act as a role model for behaviors. Help employees identify strengths and build on them, uncover developmental needs, and plan to acquire competencies. If employees are meeting expectations, coach them on how to exceed expectations and the positive impact of such efforts. If high- or low-stretch goals are assigned for developmental purposes, make sure the employee understands the level of stretch, the reasons for such assignments, and how they will be considered in assessment. Above all, spend adequate time with employees discussing performance, assessing progress, and making full use of effective two-way communication skills.

• Provide employees with the resources (tools, equipment, information) necessary to succeed. Consider potential positive returns when reviewing any related costs. Information is power; do not hesitate to share the power of knowledge. Likewise, delegate authority and responsibility to employees, giving full ownership of processes and projects.

• Break down barriers preventing employees or teams from reaching success. Determine whether problems and roadblocks are beyond an employee's control or abilities. Intervene on behalf of employees when appropriate.

• Recognize and reinforce achievement and effective behavior. Give praise immediately and be sincere. Always be specific, so employees understand what results and behaviors are being encouraged, and how they impact the organization in a positive way. Show genuine interest in the success of each employee. Recognize improved performance, and counsel employees on how to continue to improve until they reach or exceed goals. Always tailor recognition (public or private) to individual preferences and level of achievement.

 8. PHASE II: COACHING

**COACHING, cont.**

• Give constructive—never destructive—feedback when employees do not meet expectations regarding any goals, and take corrective action when necessary. Deliver feedback with respect. Be aware of an employee's feelings, yet, concentrate on facts and solid examples of performance. Listen to an employee's point of view and try to determine whether problems result from lack of skill, direction, information, or ability to control outcomes, etc.

* Always begin corrective action discussions by reviewing results against objectives. Explain how below-standard performance impacts the ability of the team/organization/corporation from reaching its goals.

Employees also play an important role in the coaching phase. They should actively solicit advice and assistance without avoiding responsibility. They should be open to suggestions for improvement, and learn from reinforcement and constructive feedback. Finally, they should use coaching techniques when training and assisting others, in order to help others improve and achieve team success.

 8. PHASE II: COACHING

**9. PHASE III: ASSESSING**

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**WHY HAVE FORMAL ASSESSMENTS?**

Even though the manager and employee discuss performance throughout the cycle and have periodic in-cycle assessment meetings, the final end-of-cycle summary is still critical to an effective performance management process. First, managers have the responsibility to determine the strength of the final assessment in order to develop employees and make solid decisions regarding pay, promotions, or other employee actions. Second, employees need to participate in assessments and have a clear picture as to how they stand relative to expectations. This is important in order for them to plan and follow through on self-development, and understand rewards and other performance-based actions. Third, the formal assessment is documented on the performance worksheet and made part of the employee's human resources file, so that a clear record of objectives and achievements is maintained.

**WHEN TO ASSESS PERFORMANCE**

Salaried employees should be assessed during the annual assessment period.

In addition, the performance of an employee in any payroll should be assessed if they are receiving any change in pay, leaving a job to begin a new one, transferring to a new unit with new supervision, or are terminating employment. If these actions occur within four months of a recently completed formal assessment, the most recent assessment may be used in place of a new one.

**STEPS**

(Refer back to Section 5 to review the recommended steps.) The manager and the employee prepare and then meet. The manager finalizes the documentation, they both sign the worksheet, and each retains a copy. The manager submits the worksheet to the reviewing manager for signature (the assessing manager's immediate manager). The reviewing manager checks the assessment for validity, equity, and consistency with those assessments made by other managers and assesses the manager on his/her role as a performance coach (setting challenging but realistic expectations, giving candid feedback, encouraging development, etc.). Any changes should be reviewed with the employee. The reviewing manager may even attend assessment meetings to ensure equity and directly observe the manager's performance as a coach.

 9. PHASE III: ASSESSING

WORKSHEET PAGE 1: Results Linked to Organization Goals and Strategies

Describe results and achievements for each objective in the assessment section on the right side. Comments should include specific data on performance relative to expectations, and standards or target ranges, citing numbers, percentages, dollar amounts, dates, etc. Assess each result as Does Not Meet Expectations **(DNM)**,Meets Expectations **(MEE)**, or Exceeds Expectations **(EXE)**.

**WORKSHEET PAGE 2: Effective Behaviors that Impact Results**

Describe observations as to how the employee has exhibited each of the core and supplemental desired behaviors listed and defined during the planning phase. Be specific in comments, citing and summarizing multiple examples that reflect performance throughout the cycle rather than single incidents. Always rely on fact rather than assumptions, and do not interpret behaviors as personality traits or mannerisms. Assess each behavior observed as: Does Not Meet Expectations **(DNM)**,Meets Expectations **(MEE)**, or Exceeds Expectations **(EXE)**.

**WORKSHEET PAGE 3: Development Action Plan and Assessments**

**Employee Self-Assessment**

Employee input provides valuable information and enhances involvement. The employee should prepare for the meeting by completing a self-assessment. They can do this in a variety of ways: 1) by completing the assessment portion of page 1 and 2 of the worksheet and 2) by writing a summary of performance, that includes achievements and developmental needs. They should use facts and specific examples, referring to the notes they made throughout the cycle and any other documentation available.

The employee should bring his/her form or other input to the assessment meeting, and be prepared to review it with the manager. A summary of the employee's comments is to be entered on page 3 of the final worksheet, which will be placed in the employee's personnel file. The employee may write their summary directly on the final worksheet or provide the manager via e-mail a written or verbal summary to insert in the worksheet.

**Competency Development**

The best way to determine areas for competency development is after an employee has been participating in the Performance Program for one year, as this is when gaps in competencies tend to appear most evident. Both the employee and the manager acknowledge that these gaps must be closed.

The most effective way to close the gaps does not necessarily involve sending employees away for expensive training at a university or seminar attendance. Sometimes the most effective gap closure involves meaningful assignments where employees can learn hands on what needs to be done and how. One example would be when an employee is slotted to become a manager, and assigning them the opportunity to lead four or five people over a period of time, which helps set the stage for development.

 9. PHASE III: ASSESSING

However in addition to having employees close their gaps through hands-on assignments, customized organizational training is another effective way to let employees know you care about their futures and also close development gaps across the entire organization.

One method to determine what training should be offered is to have an HR representative compile a list of similar competency development areas drawn from an analysis of all the Performance for Organizational Results forms completed at the end of the previous year. Certain themes should be identified as training targets. For example, below is a sampling of potential competencies that can benefit from training, should you have many employees possessing these as development areas.

Management Competencies

Appraising People & Performance

Accountability – Disciplining & Counseling

Time Management & Prioritizing

Expectations – Setting Goals & Standards

Daily Functioning – Planning & Scheduling Work

Rapport – Listening & Organizing

Clarity – Providing Clear Information

Leading without Personal Bias

Identifying & Solving Problems

Making Decisions & Weighing Risk

Leading Analytically & with Clarity

Training, Coaching, & Delegating

Employee Competencies

Planning and Organizing

Working in a Team Environment

Communicating with Others

Quality

Innovation

Adaptability

Building Trust

Collaboration

Communication

Cultural Adaptability

Customer/Client Focus

Decision Making/Problem Solving

Stress Tolerance/Adaptability

Technical/Professional Knowledge and Skill

 9. PHASE III: ASSESSING

Another dimension to consider when compiling competency gaps organizationally is to conduct psychological and skill assessments on all employees. After the assessments are complete, you could group the findings and develop appropriate training and development programs to close any gaps. (Contact our support team to learn more about how this could be accomplished for your organization.)

**Input from Peers, Customers, and/or Subordinates**

Managers are encouraged to check their facts and get broader input for assessment by obtaining verbal or written information from the employee's peers, customers, and/or subordinates, if applicable. These are valuable sources of information, and promote team building, customer focus, and leadership. However, before proceeding, consider these cautions seriously: 1) It is appropriate to solicit input regarding results of specific projects or responsibilities, observations of behaviors, skill achievements or needs, but not actual performance assessment. 2) Be sure that the input is reliable, objective, and accurate. 3) Get input from more than one individual in any category, and consider involving the employee in your selection. 4) Collect and review comments in aggregate, and respect confidentiality by not disclosing the source of any specific comments. 5) Use this information to verify your own observations or facts, rather than relying solely on these other sources.

**Manager's Overall Assessment**

The manager should prepare for the assessment meeting by completing the assessment portion of pages 1 and 2 of the worksheet and the overall assessment section on a draft worksheet, considering both results and behaviors. Overall assessment comments should describe the strength of the performance within the broad assessment level.

The manager should finalize the overall assessment and determine the assessment level after discussing performance results with the employee and considering the employee’s self-assessment, which can be done during or after the assessment meeting. The manager is responsible to insert the final overall assessment on page 3 of the worksheet and indicate the appropriate assessment level. The manager discusses the overall assessment with the employee and processes the worksheet as described earlier.

 9. PHASE III: ASSESSING

**EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT**

**Listed below are guidelines for effective assessment:**

•Base assessment on facts, observations, and employee input, not on assumptions, general feelings, or unfounded judgments.

• Check the facts: walk around, observe directly, get more involved, ask for data, and consult other sources (employee's peers, customers, and/or subordinates).

• Refer to notes made during the cycle to aid recall, and gather additional facts.

• Assess the entire performance cycle, not just things you can recall from recent events.

• Evaluate performance that occurred during the current cycle relative to objectives, expectations, and standards, independent of previous performance history.

• Review guidelines for establishing objectives to ensure that objectives were realistic, controllable by the employee, etc. This should also have been done throughout the cycle; but if changes occurred recently, consider these in this assessment.

• Consider the priorities that were identified.

• Consider any high- or low-stretch goals that might have been established, assessing performance against job standards.

• Keep ratings independent, and avoid letting the assessment of one objective affect or "set" the others.

• Be aware of and avoid prejudging, i.e., knowing what you want to see and rating it before looking at the facts and the situation.

• Do not assess everyone as the same—although most people will be assessed as having met expectations, it is helpful to document specific results and comments that will be useful in differentiating such performance for rewards and other personnel actions.

• If the performance process has been used as outlined, there should be no surprises at the final assessment meeting.

 9. PHASE III: ASSESSING

**THE THREE PERFORMANCE LEVELS**

Managers are to assess performance according to three rating levels:

1. Does Not Meet Expectations **(DNM)**
2. Meets Expectations **(MEE)**
3. Exceeds Expectations **(EXE)**

These levels describe the general types of performers. Most employees are solid performers who will successfully meet expectations, given clear goals, guidance, feedback, and training.

Managers should be reasonable and use good judgment when assessing performance. As indicated in the planning section, expectations are often set as target ranges rather than precise goals.

Note that the descriptions shown below are general, and that final assessment depends primarily on the expectations established during the planning phase and maintained during the coaching phase. Managers are encouraged to discuss objectives, expectations, and assessment levels with other managers to develop consistency.

1. Does Not Meet Expectations **(DNM)**: consistently falls below expectations, requiring immediate and sustained improvement.
2. Meets Expectations **(MEE)**: consistently meets standards and established performance expectations.
3. Exceeds Expectations **(EXE)**: surpasses standards and established performance expectations.

Note: Employees who are new to their jobs, or who are trainees, should be assessed according to developmental expectations and whether they are progressing at acceptable rates.

 9. PHASE III: ASSESSING

**PERFORMANCE LEVEL DEFINITION EXAMPLES**

**Performance Level 1, Does Not Meet Expectations (DNM)**

This is the level of unacceptable performance, where work products do not meet the minimum expectations of the position. Most of the following deficiencies are typically, but not always, characteristic of the employee’s work:

* Little or no contribution to organizational goals
* Failure to meet work objectives
* Inattention to organizational priorities and administrative requirements
* Poor work habits, resulting in missed deadlines
* Incomplete work products
* Strained work relationships
* Failure to respond to client needs
* Lack of response to supervisor’s corrective efforts

The employee is not meeting the expected standards or goals set for the position, and requires excessive supervision, direction, and follow-up. The employee must show significant improvement toward satisfactory achievement of performance standards in order to continue employment.

The supervisor must contact Human Resources prior to assigning an employee this rating. Immediate improvement is essential, and the employee may be placed on a documented performance improvement plan.

**Performance Level 2, Meets Expectations (MEE)**

Most employees fall within this area of performance. This is the level of good, sound performance. The employee has contributed positively to organizational goals. All critical element activities have been completed. The employee effectively applies technical skills and organization knowledge to get the job done.

The employee successfully carries out regular duties while also handling any difficult special assignments. The employee plans and performs work according to organizational priorities and schedules. The employee also works well as a team member, supporting the group's efforts and showing an ability to handle a variety of interpersonal situations. The employee communicates clearly and effectively. Employees at this level have followed a management system by which work is planned, tasks are assigned, and deadlines are met.

 9. PHASE III: ASSESSINGThe employee meets job performance standards in all or most areas.

The employee is reliable in attaining expected results, and is timely and efficient.

Initiative and outputs are generally adequate, and the employee is capable and knowledgeable in most aspects of his/her work.

The employee requires a reasonable amount of supervision.

**Performance Level 3, Exceeds Expectations (EXE)**

The employee clearly and consistently surpasses performance expectations and goals and demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of work well beyond the job requirements. Work is done independently and completed on schedule with a high degree of accuracy and independence.

Performance is what can be expected of a fully qualified and experienced person in this position. Errors in judgment are rare and seldom repeated. Performance is characterized by high achievement; the employee displays initiative. The employee requires minimal supervision or follow-up, demonstrates exceptional depth and breadth of knowledge, and is highly recognized by others within *(INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME)* by demonstrating role model behavior for other supervisors/staff to emulate.

The employee considerably and consistently surpasses performance expectations and goals, and achieves beyond the regular assignment in all areas throughout the performance cycle.

Performance is well above expectations in terms of completion, timeliness, and independence, and demonstrates a mastery of the skills and tasks involved.

The employee regularly makes significant contributions to *(INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME)*’s success well beyond work assignments through unique and exceptional application of knowledge. Other *(INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME)* employees commonly seek out the employee for assistance. The employee is a model for excellence, with a strong potential for advancement.

The employee performs independently in planning, anticipating problems, and taking appropriate action.

Employee grasps the big picture and thinks beyond the details of the job or project at hand. The employee requires no supervision or follow-up.

 9. PHASE III: ASSESSING

**10. THE LINK TO REWARDS AND OTHER CONSEQUENCES**

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Performance should be clearly linked to consequences, and employees need to understand that link. Therefore, managers should carefully consider performance outcomes and explain such actions to employees. They should be specific so that employees know what results and behaviors are being encouraged and how these impact the organization. Various types of consequences include:

Recognize and Reward: Managers should consider the strength of performance within the assessment levels in order to determine appropriate recognition and reward. For example, when reviewing the performance strength of an employee assessed as being in the broad "successfully meets" expectations level, consider whether performance results were on the high or low end of target ranges, how many achievements exceeded expectations, and the relative priorities of objectives.

Employees receive wage increases primarily through merit increases. These increases are not guaranteed, but must be earned according to performance, by making positive contributions. Larger increases are typically awarded to those employees who demonstrate higher performance and whose salaries fall within the low end of their pay ranges.

 10. THE LINK TO REWARDS AND OTHER CONSEQUENCES

Realign: The decision to realign an employee (transfer them to another position) could also be linked to performance. When managers and employees meet to discuss performance or career planning, realignment and proper job match might be a logical part of the conversation. Employees should consider their job satisfaction, skills and career interests and, when appropriate, seek advice from their manager and others regarding alternative job options.

 10. THE LINK TO REWARDS AND OTHER CONSEQUENCE