

SECTION 8

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

8.02 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

AUTHORITY: CIVIL SERVICE ACT

ADMINISTRATION: PEI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT AND AGENCIES

Sub-section 8.02 Performance Management Planning	Date: 01 February 2013 Reviewed: 8 December 2022	Page: 1 of 5
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1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Public Service Commission has developed a policy for ongoing employee training and development and performance management to:
- a) Reinforce the fundamental value of regular and ongoing communication between a supervisor and employee;
 - b) Provide meaningful review and feedback on employee performance;
 - c) Align the work of employees to the strategic direction of the organization;
 - d) Provide accessible and planned continuous learning opportunities for employees;
 - e) Establish individual learning and development plans with specific goals; and
 - f) Engage in leadership development and succession planning through employee career planning and professional development.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 Government recognizes and values the significant contributions of its employees to the provision of quality programs and services. Government is committed to the continuous learning and professional development of all its employees and will implement and sustain leading human resource practices including a progressive performance management system. Effective people management practices are associated with quality service and quality outcomes for the citizens of Prince Edward Island. Commitment to ongoing, daily performance management is important for organizational outcomes as well as employee well-being.

3.0 APPLICATION

- 3.1 The broader policy statement and purpose apply to all employees of the provincial civil service and its associated agencies;
- 3.2 Departments may continue to use forms, resources and processes other than those described here with the condition that they are aligned with this policy. Consultation with human resources and/or the Public Service Commission is advised to ensure compliance with this policy when

Sub-section 8.02 Performance Management Planning	Date: 01 February 2013 Reviewed: 8 December 2022	Page 2 of 6
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alternate forms, resources and processes are being considered by a department.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 **Performance Management** and the process it entails is not an event, or a series of events. It is an ongoing cycle that needs to be used year-round. The employee development cycle consists of the following elements:

- a) Reviewing objectives and planning;
- b) Making adjustments;
- c) Aligning resources;
- d) Setting fresh objectives;
- e) Developing capabilities;
- f) Taking action.

4.2 **Reviewing Objectives and Planning** takes place when the supervisor and employee engage in a discussion on the vision of the organization and the primary responsibilities of the position.

It is important that there is a common understanding so that efforts can be focused towards the fulfillment of the organizational vision. A significant activity in the planning phase is the creation of a work/development plan for the upcoming review period. The plan is developed jointly and may relate to:

- a) Organizational goals;
- b) Primary work responsibilities;
- c) Strong competencies and/or mastery of responsibilities;
- d) Developing performance areas or performance areas requiring improvement;
- e) Personal, career or professional development goals.

Sub-section 8.02 Performance Management Planning	Date: 01 February 2013 Reviewed: 8 December 2022	Page	3 of 6
---	---	-------------	---------------

4.3 **Coaching and Performance Management** is an ongoing process where employees' achievements are acknowledged, opportunities are identified for further development and performance needs/issues are addressed in a timely fashion. Coaching and performance management opportunities may occur at any time. Coaching to improve performance should occur informally throughout the cycle and formally during interim reviews. It is most effective when an area for improvement is identified and discussed promptly.

4.4 **Performance Management Plans** provide an opportunity for supervisors and employees to formally discuss and document performance that occurred during the planning period and to jointly set goals/objectives for future development and performance.

4.4.1 The Performance Management Form for Employees (Appendix A) and the Performance Management Form for Supervisors and Management (Appendix B) are tools that may be used to:

- a) Enhance communication between the parties involved;
- b) Recognize employees' accomplishments;
- c) Increase accountability through record of performance;
- d) Identify a professional development plan; and
- e) Solve problems in areas requiring improvement.

4.4.2 The probationary/trial period refers to a predetermined period of time and is defined in the Collective Agreement and/or terms and conditions of employment. Probationary/trial employees must be provided with periodic reviews during the probationary/trial period and a final assessment prior to the conclusion of the probationary/trial period using the probationary/trial employee assessment form (Appendix C).

5.0 RESOURCES

5.1 The following documents are attached as Appendices:

- Appendix A - The Performance Management Plan for Employees

Sub-section 8.02 Performance Management Planning	Date: 01 February 2013 Reviewed: 8 December 2022	Page 4 of 6
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- Appendix B - The Performance Management Plan for Supervisors and Management
- Appendix C - Probationary/Trial Employee Assessment Report
- Appendix D - Discussion Guidelines for Employee Performance Management Plan
- Appendix E - Discussion Guidelines for Manager and Supervisor Performance Management Plan

6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Performance is a shared responsibility between the individual and the organization. Employees are responsible for their own performance and to elicit feedback on performance as well as to identify training and development requirements that may improve their performance. The organization is responsible for providing feedback to employees and providing a work environment that includes appropriate training and development opportunities and facilitates good performance.
- 6.2 The Deputy Minister of each department is responsible for ensuring that the provisions of this policy are implemented throughout the department. This responsibility includes:
- a) Ensuring that all managers, supervisors and other employees are informed of the policy and are advised of their responsibilities;
 - b) Providing leadership in the area of performance management;
 - c) Engaging in professional development and continuous learning;
 - d) Completing performance management plans with each member of the departmental leadership team; and
 - e) Monitoring compliance with the policy.
- 6.3 All employees in executive and senior leadership roles are expected to demonstrate their commitment to ongoing performance management.

Sub-section 8.02 Performance Management Planning	Date: 01 February 2013 Reviewed: 8 December 2022	Page 5 of 6
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- 6.4 Employees with management and supervisory responsibilities must ensure that the policy is adhered to in their areas of responsibility by:
- a) Becoming fully informed of the provisions of the policy;
 - b) Developing and periodically reviewing each employee's job description to ensure an accurate reflection of the primary work responsibilities and to ensure there is a clear mutual understanding of the employee's role and contribution to the organization;
 - c) Providing leadership in the area of employee performance management;
 - d) Engaging in professional development and continuous learning;
 - e) Completing performance management plans for all employees under their direct supervision;
 - f) Providing opportunities for training and development to all employees under their direct supervision; and
 - g) Ensuring that all employees under their direct supervision and who have supervisory responsibilities, are carrying out the responsibilities listed above with emphasis on leadership, fiscal management and program delivery.
- 6.5 All Employees are responsible for engaging in the performance management planning process as outlined within this policy and taking responsibility for their professional and career development. This includes the following:
- a) To continually upgrade and improve their capabilities;
 - b) To invest time and energy in learning and in integrating learning into their everyday approach to work;
 - c) To attend all scheduled and approved learning opportunities or notify direct supervisor of any unplanned absences;
 - d) To apply their learning and share it with others both informally and/or formally through briefing and presentations

Sub-section 8.02 Performance Management Planning	Date: 01 February 2013 Reviewed: 8 December 2022	Page	6 of 6
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7.0 PROCEDURES

- 7.1 Ensure that a performance management plan is completed annually with each employee.
- 7.2 The date selected for the performance management plan meeting should allow both the supervisor and employee time to prepare for the discussion. The meeting is an opportunity to consider the employee's performance during the previous year. Guidelines for both the supervisor and employee are provided in Appendices D & E.
- 7.3 Involve the employee directly in planning performance goals and strategies, including the identification of any training or development requirements.
- 7.4 When an employee's overall performance does not meet minimum expectations, the employee will work together with the supervisor to complete the "Action Plan" section of the performance management plan form. If the performance issues persist without improvement, the supervisor should consult Human Resources for advice and support.
- 7.5 The probationary/trial period is an integral part of the overall staffing selection process and should be used to determine whether the employee is to continue in their probationary period, be granted permanent status, or have employment terminated. The probationary/trial employee assessment form (Appendix C) will be completed in the same manner as the annual employee performance management plan.
- Although most employees successfully progress through their probationary/trial period, there are instances where either the role is not suitable to the employee or the employee is not suitable for the role. In this instance advice should be sought from Human Resources.
- 7.6 All performance management plan meetings, regardless of the employee position, are to include discussions about employee training and development.
- 7.7 Employees are expected to identify their personal or professional learning and development goals. This may involve personal or professional development in their current position or future role(s).

Sub-section 8.02 Performance Management Planning	Date: 01 February 2013 Reviewed: 8 December 2022	Page	7 of 6
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- 7.8 Employees are asked to identify specific learning and development opportunities and associated funding requirements. This may include tuition reimbursement, course subsidization, conferences, professional certification, leadership training, as well as special projects or temporary assignments.
- 7.9 Supervisors will outline learning needs in accordance with current and future organizational requirements and the employee's ongoing development and/or performance. These needs arise as a result of succession planning and ongoing performance management discussions.
- 7.10 Employees will access the most appropriate funding source to assist them in achieving the learning and development goals that have been outlined within their Performance Management Plan and signed by their supervisor. Access to financial support and time away from work for employee development opportunities is subject to discussions between the supervisor and employee in consideration of the Corporate and/or Departmental Learning Policies.
- 7.11 Copies of employee performance management plans will be provided to the supervisor and employee. The originals will be sent to Human Resources for the employee's personnel file.



Performance Management Plan for Employees

Employee Name:

Employee ID #:

Position Title:

Division/Section:

Supervisor Name:

Period Covered:

The success of an organization is dependent on the individual performance of its employees. Successful performance management links individual's workplan and performance to the organization's mission and strategic/business plan.

The performance management process includes both formal and ongoing feedback.

This tool will assist the following:

- a) Enhancing communication between the parties involved;
- b) Recognizing the employee's accomplishments;
- c) Increasing accountability through record of performance;
- d) Identifying a professional development plan; and
- e) Solving problems in areas requiring improvement.

This section provides an opportunity to highlight the employee's strengths and areas of improvement and to identify the employee's core competencies and primary responsibilities with the Department. Consider the following guidelines for each area of work performance.

Developing: Skills and behaviours at this level are those that are considered to be in need of enhancement. Performance is below that expected after training and experience. It is important to identify and focus on areas of development.

Succeeding: Skills and behaviours at this level indicate competent performance. This level of performance should be demonstrated by most employees on a regular basis.

Mastering: Skills and behaviours at this level demonstrate the highest level of performance and contribution to the organization's future success.

Trait	Examples	Comments
Job Knowledge / Duties	Consider how well the employee is equipped with the knowledge needed to perform the work.	
Knowledge of Department and Government Policies	Consider knowledge and use of Policy and Procedure Manuals. Maintains client/ partner relations and is client focused.	
Use of Resources and Time	Consider care with equipment and uses supplies wisely. Consider time management skills.	
Responsibility	Consider dependability and reliability. Consider completion of assigned duties and shows ability in setting priorities. Consider ability to problem solve/critical thinking.	
Communication	Consider ability to communicate respectfully and appropriately. Consider ability to listen and communicate ideas effectively. Observes confidentiality of clients and co-workers. Practices open, honest communication.	
Working Relationships	Ability to maintain effective working relationships with co-workers, supervisors, clients and public. Ability to work as a team player.	
Adaptability	Consider openness for new methods and/or techniques. Willing to teach others and displays initiative.	
Work Habits	Consider dependability, punctuality, and regularity of attendance. Consider accuracy, thoroughness, amount of supervision required, and amount of work performed.	
Leadership Ability	Consider effectiveness in providing motivation and guidance. Consider ability to work independently and delegate tasks.	

Policy Review: To ensure awareness and compliance with relevant policies, please check and initial polices as each is reviewed.

Occupational Health and Safety

Prevention of Harassment in Workplace

Confidentiality

Conflict of Interest

FOIPP

Other (please list):

Action Plan

(includes workplan objectives and goals, performance development, performance improvement and training and development opportunities). *May attach separate page describing action(s) and possible dates for follow up review.*

Workplan Goals:

Achievements Since Last Performance Review:

Education/Courses Completed Since Last Review:

Development and Training Goals:

Employee's Comments:

Reviewer's Comments:

Employee Signature: _____	Date: _____
Supervisor Signature: _____	Date: _____

12PS15-35299

Provide a copy to the employee and the supervisor. Send the original to Human Resources for the personnel file.



Performance Management Plan
for Supervisors and Managers

Employee Name:	Employee ID #:
Position Title:	Division/Section:
Supervisor Name:	Period Covered:

The success of an organization is dependant on the individual performance of its employees. The management team and supervisors play a vital role within any organization through **leadership, fiscal management and program delivery**. Successful performance management links the individual's workplan and performance to the organization's mission and strategic/business plan.

The performance management process includes both formal and ongoing feedback.

This tool will assist the following:

- a) Enhancing communication between the parties involved;
- b) Recognizing the employee's accomplishments;
- c) Increasing accountability through record of performance;
- d) Identifying a professional development plan; and
- e) Solving problems in areas requiring improvement.

This section provides an opportunity to highlight the employee's strengths and areas of improvement and to identify the employee's core competencies and primary responsibilities with the Department. How do you promote and model the following responsibilities using behavioural examples? Each responsibility has a section to discuss areas of work performance that are at the developing, succeeding and mastering levels. Consider the following guidelines for each area of work performance.

- Developing:** Skills and behaviours at this level are those that are considered to be in need of enhancement. Performance is below that expected after training and experience. It is important that we all identify and focus on areas of development.
- Succeeding:** Skills and behaviours at this level indicate competent performance. This level of performance should be demonstrated by most employees on a regular basis.
- Mastering:** Skills and behaviours at this level demonstrate the highest level of performance and contribution to the organization's future success.

Areas of Responsibility:

Leadership/Communication

Examples: Provides open, honest, and effective communication; provides respectful work environment where employees work together/teamwork; ensures employees understand their rights, obligations and job expectations; aware and compliant with policy and legislation; ensures employees are respectful, work collaboratively, are accountable, competent, valued and informed; ensures innovation and recognizes employees; provides flexibility to support work life balance for employees and leads and implements a performance management program.

Fiscal Management

Examples: Accountable; aligns policy with budget; explores partnership options; and monitors and maintains budget.

Program Delivery

Examples: Client focused; modernized; appropriate; timely; accessible; transparent; accountable; achieving results; respectful; problem solving; analytical and decision making.

Action Plan

(includes workplan objectives and goals, performance development, performance improvement and training and development opportunities). *May attach separate page describing action(s) and possible dates for follow up review.*

Workplan Goals:

Achievements Since Last Performance Review:

Education/Courses Completed Since Last Review:

Development and Training Goals:

Employee's Comments:

Reviewer's Comments:

Employee Signature: _____	Date: _____
Supervisor Signature: _____	Date: _____
Employing Authority Signature: _____	Date: _____

12PS15-35298

Provide a copy to the employee and the supervisor. Send the original to Human Resources for the personnel file.



Probationary/Trial Employee Assessment Form

Employee Name:

Employee ID #:

Position Title:

Division/Section:

Supervisor Name:

Period Covered:

Unit/Group		Probationary Hours OR Trial Hours	
	UPSE	1,000 hours	500 hours
	Excluded	1,000 hours	500 hours
	Other	hours	hours

Performance

Job Skills

- Exceptional skills in performing work
- Adequate skills in performing work
- Inadequate skills in performing work

Comments:

Amount / Quality

- Consistently maintains exceptionally high standard of work that is well thought out and of superior quality and meets or exceeds productivity requirements
- Produces good work and meets productivity requirements
- Efforts are not acceptable, fails to meet productivity requirements

Comments:

Planning / Organizing Work

- | | |
|--|--|
| | Anticipates conditions; plans ahead; establishes priorities; and completes work on time even in the face of heavy workloads or short deadlines |
| | Completes on-going assignments within acceptable time limits |
| | Slow to complete assignments, has difficulty meeting deadlines |

Comments:

Acceptance of Responsibility

- | | |
|--|--|
| | Accepts responsibility even for difficult tasks and takes full responsibility for actions |
| | Accepts responsibility for tasks and role in decisions or recommendations |
| | Often avoids taking a position or is unwilling to support a decision; frequently offers excuses when results are unfavorable |

Comments:

Meeting Changing Demands

- | | |
|--|--|
| | Has ability to adapt to new or changing working conditions; effective even under extreme demands and pressures |
| | Accepts procedural changes willingly; can cope with normal job pressures |
| | Resists change to routine procedures; often flustered by changes in workload or pressure of deadlines |

Comments:

Interpersonal Skills

- | | |
|--|--|
| | Highly successful team worker with strong ability to promote cooperation and gain support for programs or goals when required |
| | Works well with others; sensitive to the needs of others; an active team member; maintains professional, courteous relations with co-workers |
| | Will not go out of the way to help others; causes disruptions; diminishes productivity; is rude or unprofessional to colleagues |

Comments:

Problem-solving / Decision-making

Effective in evaluating problems and developing technically sound solutions; decisions or recommendations are workable as presented

Technically sound judgement, recommendations are timely and reflect proper consideration of alternatives

Does not make timely decisions; or appropriate choices; judgement is often unsound

Comments:

Working Without Close Supervision

Anticipates work needs and follows through without prior instructions or guidance; develops solutions to complex problems independently

Performs well without detailed directions; can think through most situations; and devise solutions to normal problems

Not a self-starter; easily loses sight of desired end-product without constant guidance

Comments:

Writing Skills

Ability to relate complex thoughts or events clearly, logically, and in a convincing manner

Written work is acceptable, understandable, and suitable for the intended recipient; documentation completed accurately and on time

Does not express thoughts well in writing; documentation is difficult to read, incomplete, inaccurate, or not done in a timely fashion

Comments:

Oral Communication Skills

Makes excellent oral presentations; speaks effectively and convincingly

Makes accurate and clear verbal reports to supervisor, and co-workers; and provides clear explanations to clients

Is not an effective speaker; unable to speak clearly, or articulate thoughts effectively to supervisor, co-workers or clients

Comments:

Client Service

<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistently demonstrates an exceptional ability to establish good relations with clients, showing courteous, patient and professional assistance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrates a satisfactory ability to relate to clients, showing courteous, patient and professional assistance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistently demonstrates a low level of ability to relate to clients, can be impatient, frustrated, rude, overbearing, or otherwise unpleasant to clients

Comments:

Supervisory Skills

<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistently excels at supervising others; treats employees fairly; regularly attends to supervisory responsibilities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrates satisfactory supervisory skills; usually attends to supervisory responsibilities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fails to meet minimal supervisory skills; frequently neglects supervisory responsibilities

Comments:

Attendance

<input type="checkbox"/>	Has exceptionally good attendance; reports for work on time; does not take extended breaks, or leaves early
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has good attendance; makes every effort to report for work; follows procedures in requesting leave
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has marginal attendance; tends to use sick leave as it is accrued; reported late for work; takes extended breaks or leaves early on more than one occasion.

Comments:

Presentation

<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistently reports for work in appropriate clothing; has good hygiene; complies with all worksite policies and requests regarding scents, and other personal care issues; always appears professional when on duty
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reports for work in appropriate clothing; has good hygiene; and complies with worksite policies and requests regarding scents and other personal care issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has reported for work in unkempt appearance; has personal hygiene or odour issues, does not have professional presentation

Comments:

Employee's comments (attach page(s) if insufficient space below):

Reviewer's recommendations and reasons (attach page(s) if insufficient space below):

Recommendations:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Grant Permanent Status (if probationary employee)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm in Position (if trial employee)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other - Specify
<input type="checkbox"/>	Terminate Employee

Reasons for Recommendation:

Employing Authority Decision:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Grant Permanent Status (if probationary employee)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm in Position (if trial employee)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other - Specify
<input type="checkbox"/>	Terminate Employee

Employee Signature: _____	Date: _____
Supervisor Signature: _____	Date: _____
Employing Authority Signature: _____	Date: _____

12PS15-35297

Provide a copy to the employee and the supervisor. Send the original to Human Resources for the personnel file.

Appendix D

Employee Performance Management Plan

Discussion Guidelines

The Performance Management Plan Process

Step 1: Preparing for the Discussion

- The supervisor will arrange a time and place convenient for both parties. This will be done several days in advance of the performance planning discussion. The supervisor will confirm the time and place in writing.
- The supervisor will provide the appropriate performance management plan for the position. Prior to the meeting, think about any information that may be pertinent to a discussion on the areas identified in the plan.
- Review any written records or materials relevant to past performance, including recommendations/goals from the last performance management plan (appraisal) meeting. If the current description and/or position questionnaire is not up-to-date, consult with human resources.
- Prepare an overview of the areas to cover with your supervisor and reflect on the intended outcomes of the discussion.

Step 2: Having the Discussion

- The supervisor will strive to maintain an open and friendly atmosphere where both parties can express themselves freely.
- Two-way communication will be emphasized throughout the discussion. Listen carefully and attentively to the supervisor's point of view throughout the meeting.
- The supervisor will review the areas outlined within the Performance Management Plan for Employees or for Managers and Supervisors, depending on your position.
- Constructive feedback discussion – ask the supervisor to provide constructive feedback. This is an opportunity for both parties to develop strategies that contribute to a positive outcome(s), better working processes and improved performance or behavior.
- Examine the points and information identified during the discussion. Try to agree on what performance, if any, should be done differently. It may not be possible to reach total agreement on all points, but it is important that both parties reach an understanding of the other person's views.
- The supervisor and/or employee may schedule a follow-up progress meeting.

Step 3: Developing Recommendations

Together with the supervisor, identify any performance changes required and/or any training and development opportunities for the next performance planning period. The following areas should be considered:

- Steps that can be taken to build on current strengths;
- Specific steps that can be taken to address opportunities for improvement;
- How much improvement in specific areas of performance should be achieved and within what time frame;
- What can be done if problems are encountered in achieving these goals between now and the date of the next discussion;
- Support the supervisor can provide to help successfully complete the action plan;
- Record specific recommendation on the plan.

Step 4: Progress Review

The objective of the performance management process is to provide ongoing feedback, coaching and support so that employees can perform their work well and meet defined expectations. Often this can be done on an informal basis. In some cases where there are particular concerns regarding performance and/or development, it may be valuable to schedule a time with the supervisor for a follow-up discussion to review progress on action items identified in the performance management plan.

- Discuss issues that have been encountered and what can be done to resolve them. The purpose of the progress discussion is to maintain motivation and to keep the goals realistic;
- Emphasize willingness to perform well and to develop work skills and knowledge;
- Work with the supervisor to identify the most relevant learning needs and how to access those opportunities.

Appendix E

Manager and Supervisor Performance Management Plan

Discussion Guidelines

Perhaps the most significant benefit of a performance management plan is that, in the rush and bustle of daily working life, it offers a rare chance for a supervisor and their direct reports to have time for a one-on-one discussion of important work issues and developmental goals that might not otherwise be addressed.

Almost universally, where performance management plans are conducted properly, both supervisors and employees have reported the experience as beneficial and positive.

The performance management process is continuous communication which provides the guidance, correction, encouragement and recognition needed to optimize each employee's job performance.

For many employees, an "official" performance management plan meeting may be the only time they get to have exclusive, uninterrupted access to their supervisor. The value of this purposeful interaction between a supervisor and his/her employee should not be underestimated.

The Performance Management Plan Process

Step 1: Preparing for the Discussion

- Arrange with the employee a time and place that is convenient for both parties. Do this several days in advance of the performance planning discussion. Confirm time and place in writing.
- Provide the employee with the appropriate performance management plan for the employee's position. Prior to the meeting, ask the employee to write down any information that may be pertinent to a discussion on areas identified in the plan.
- Review the employee's job description and any written records or materials relevant to the employee's past performance, including recommendations/goals from the last performance management plan (appraisal) meeting. If the employee's job description and/or position questionnaire is not up-to-date consult with human resources.
- Prepare an overview of the areas to cover with the employee and reflect on the intended outcomes of your discussion.

Step 2: Leading the Discussion

- Select a place that is private and quiet, where you will not be interrupted.
- Establish an open, friendly, non-threatening atmosphere in which both parties can express themselves freely.
- Be aware of any feelings, attitudes, or issues that may be influence reactions to the employee and, be tuned-in to possible reactions from the employee.
- State why the discussion is taking place (even though both parties are aware). Explain how the discussion will be handled and what role each of you will play.
- Emphasize the importance of two-way communication and listen intelligently, understandingly, and skillfully to the employee's point of view throughout the meeting.
- Constructive feedback discussion – ask the employee to provide feedback first. This is an opportunity for supervisor and employee to develop strategies that contribute to a positive outcome(s), better working processes and improved performance or behavior.
- Examine the points and information that have been identified during the discussion. Try to agree on what performance, if any, should be done differently. It may not be possible to reach total agreement on all points, but it is important that both parties reach an understanding of the other person's views.
- The supervisor and/or employee may schedule a follow-up progress meeting.

Step 3: Developing Recommendations

Together with the employee, identify any performance changes required and/or training and development opportunities for the next performance planning period. The following areas should be considered:

- Steps the employee can take to build on his/her strengths;
- Specific steps that can be taken to address opportunities for improvement;
- How much improvement in specific areas of performance should be achieved and within what time frame;
- What can be done if problems are encountered in achieving these goals between now and the date of the next discussion;
- Support the supervisor can provide to help the employee successfully complete his/her action plan;
- Record specific recommendation on the plan.

Step 4: Progress Review

The objective of the performance management process is to provide ongoing feedback, coaching and support to employees. Often this can be done on an informal basis. In some cases where there are particular concerns regarding performance and/or development, it may be valuable to schedule a time for a follow up discussion to review progress on the action items identified in the performance management plan.

- Discuss issues that have been encountered and what can be done to resolve them. The purpose of the progress discussion is to maintain the employee's motivation and to keep the goals realistic;
- Emphasize your availability for continuing support, guidance and resources;
- Work with the employee to identify and access the most relevant development opportunities.

Step 5: Ongoing Communication with the Employee

A fundamental component of successful coaching and performance management is regular communication between the supervisor and the employee. Building effective working relationships is essential to achieving desired results. Regular two-way communication between the employee and supervisor helps build this relationship.

- Brief discussions should take place whenever appropriate. Formal sessions should be scheduled at least once during the performance management plan period to discuss what is going well and what can be improved.
- Use these sessions to describe rather than evaluate performance. Inquire about any changes in the work situation since the previous discussion and review any learning and/or development plans that were agreed to as part of the process. Determine if there are any obstacles blocking success.
- Ask about resources that the employee may need to accomplish their objectives.
- Acknowledge accomplishments during this period. Discuss new priorities in the organization so the employee can re-focus efforts, if appropriate.
- Modify the employee's performance management plan document to reflect any changes.
- It is important for both parties (supervisor and employee) to maintain open communication in order to keep each other informed of work progress and to work together to resolve problems if they occur. It is far better to resolve problems sooner before they become less manageable.
- A key principle that encourages employees to accept constructive feedback is to be "hard on the problem, and soft on the person." The focus should be on

correcting the problem or behavior, not on chastising the employee. The performance management planning discussion is an assessment of performance and should not be punitive. If effective performance management is occurring, this meeting will not be, nor should it be the time an employee hears about performance issues.

- A useful motto for the performance management plan discussion should be "no surprises." Through this approach, you can reduce the likelihood of the employee becoming emotional or resistant during the meeting.

Strive to provide continual feedback concerning expectations and performance. When things are going well discuss how and why this is so. When things are not going well discuss what needs to be done to make them right. When an employee is not doing things properly, get together and plan what needs to be done to correct the matter. If there is a performance gap, help the employee understand the cause and the action necessary for correction. Support plans for professional development.