

Performance Management

for Bargaining Unit Employees

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Performance Management for Bargaining Unit Employees is a guide for managers and supervisors who are implementing performance management programs for bargaining unit employees in the Nova Scotia public service. For information on performance management for excluded employees, please consult the *Excluded Employees Performance Management Instruction Guide*, Province of Nova Scotia.

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http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/v2/hrCentre/resources/ode/performanceManagement_employeeType.asp

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Overview of the Performance Management Process

In a recent survey, most employees reported that their number one motivator was to be held responsible for the results of their own work. This is precisely the reason that supervisors and staff use performance management. It provides a structured way to hold staff accountable for their own performance results while providing them with the support they need to get the job done.

Performance management is a process in which supervisors and staff jointly set clear performance expectations within their department's overall objectives. Supervisors provide support to staff in achieving their goals, monitor progress, and evaluate results. It ensures regular, clear communication on priorities and performance issues between supervisors and staff. It delegates to the employee the responsibility to manage the areas of work assigned by their supervisor. It helps each employee see how their work contributes to the overall achievements of their department. It provides a forum for discussion of the training and development needs of staff.

Performance management has three key components: planning, coaching, and review.

Planning

Effective planning means that scarce resources such as time, money, and energy are focused on those parts of the organizational mandate that are the highest priority. It allows for a clarification of performance expectations between supervisors and staff and ensures that all of the operational aspects of the annual business plan are assigned to members of the staff team.

The first step is to ensure that there is agreement between the supervisor and staff on their **key work responsibility areas**. After the areas of responsibility are established, the key word is 'results'. The employee must have sufficient detailed knowledge of their performance expectations to be able to manage their workload to achieve the desired results. The results need to be clearly defined in **objectives and standards**. Objectives and standards set at the *beginning* of the evaluation period form the basis for the review, which happens at the *end* of the period.

Sometimes the employee may be challenged to take on a task that will require knowledge or skills that they currently do not have. When this happens they will work with their supervisor to develop a **training and development plan**, which may include formal training courses or other informal options such as mentoring, job shadowing, assigned reading, etc.

Coaching

As the team leader, the supervisor has an ongoing role to ensure that the planned results become a reality. This involves monitoring each staff member's progress on their plan and making revisions to the plan when required.

In addition, **giving and receiving feedback** on the results are critically important. Any comments made to staff throughout the year that recognized their achievement or made constructive suggestions about ways to improve their results should be documented.

Performance Review

Based on feedback received throughout the year, the review normally takes place at the end of the review period. There should be no surprises for the employee in this part of the process. The employee and supervisor review the goals for the planning period. They do a frank assessment of the results achieved by the staff member. Then they review the records of feedback that occurred between the supervisor and the employee. They consider what, if any, external factors that were beyond the employee's control that might have led to less than adequate results. The review is completed using the appropriate form.

After thorough discussion with the employee, the supervisor indicates, on the form, their overall assessment of the employee's performance. The employee is invited to add their comments in Part 3 of the performance review form.

Under current policy, each staff member is entitled to an annual performance review. It is the responsibility of their manager or supervisor and ultimately the deputy minister of the department to ensure that this opportunity is provided.

Performance Management: Planning

During the planning process, the manager and employee(s) **jointly**

- discuss and agree on the employee's responsibility areas
- clearly define the expected performance of each responsibility area in terms of performance goals

This process involves the following steps:

1. Establish links with organizational plans.
2. Identify responsibility areas.
3. Write performance goals for each responsibility area.
4. Write the training and development plan.
5. Confirm the employee's understanding and agreement with the performance plan.
6. Document the performance plan.
7. Review the employee's progress periodically.
8. Update the performance plan as required.

Establishing Links with Organizational Plans

As a basis for preparing individual work plans, the supervisor should first review existing information on the department, division, or work unit, such as

- role and mission statements
- goals and objectives
- strategic priorities
- action plans

It is important to ensure that individual employees understand where they "fit in," and how their work contributes to the larger goals of the organization. This allows them to understand that they are an important part of a larger team effort and that their contribution has a real impact on the success of their work group.

Identifying Responsibility Areas

Using departmental strategic plans, project plans, work unit plans, the employee's job description, and any other information pertaining to the employee's role and responsibilities, the supervisor and employee jointly identify the employee's major areas of responsibility.

Responsibility areas are those areas in which performance at the expected level is critical to the unit's effectiveness in achieving its goals and objectives (i.e., the "make or break" areas of the work).

To help determine which areas are critical, the following questions may be helpful:

- What percentage of the employee's time is spent performing it? (This should be at least 10 per cent unless other factors listed below are also involved.)
- How would inadequate performance in the responsibility area affect the work unit's effectiveness in meeting its objectives?

- What is the impact of error? Could inadequate performance in the responsibility area contribute to injury, death, serious property damage, or loss of time and/or money?
- Are there legislative, regulatory, or contractual requirements that make adequate performance of the responsibility critical?

In identifying responsibility areas, remember to include both ongoing, repetitive functions that will continue indefinitely as core requirements of the job, **and** special projects, assignments or program improvement initiatives that are specific to the current performance period.

Examples of responsibility areas

- public inquiries (receptionist)
- data entry (data entry clerk)
- environment safety (staff nurse)
- safety audits (engineer)
- emergency response (staff nurse)
- facility security (correctional officer)

Writing Performance Objectives or Standards

The next step is to develop statements of expected performance for each critical responsibility area. Expected performance can be expressed in the form of *either* objectives *or* standards.

Objectives

A performance objective is a statement of the *results* or *outcomes* the employee is expected to accomplish.

Each objective must describe in measurable terms

- the conditions that will exist when the desired outcome has been accomplished (in terms of quality and/or quantity)
- a time frame during which the outcome is to be completed.

Examples

Submit report on a 20-year forecast of energy demand in Nova Scotia, by fuel and consumer sector, and in accordance with all requirements outlined in the project terms of reference, by July 31, 2012.
Coordinate the move of work unit offices from the third floor of the office building to the sixth floor by September 30, 2012.

Standards

A performance standard refers to a set of *actions* or *behaviours* that are required on a continuing basis, and describes process rather than results. Like objectives, standards must also be expressed in measurable terms; that is, they must specify the expected quantity and/or quality and/or timeliness of the employee's performance.

Example

Perform a minimum of two surveys per year on each unit; report results in accordance with established guidelines; audit all incident reports; and submit monthly report to director on same, describing violations and follow-up actions taken, no later than the 14th day of the following month.

When to use objectives and when to use standards

Following are some additional guidelines to consider in determining whether to express expected performance in terms of results (objectives) or in terms of actions or behaviours (standards).

Focus on results (use objectives) when	Focus on actions (use standards) when
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The employee is skilled and knows what actions are required to produce the expected result.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The employee, through inexperience or other reasons is not fully competent in all responsibility areas; in such cases, it is beneficial in terms of employee development to make explicit the specific behaviours/actions expected in those responsibility areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A number of different but equally acceptable methods can be used to achieve the expected results; in such cases, allowing the employee to determine the “how” makes the job more interesting and allows them to develop their skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Because of restrictions due to safety, legislative, policy considerations, etc., only one method or set of behaviours is an acceptable means to achieve the results.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Results can be accomplished within period covered by the next review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Results are long term and will not be achieved within the period covered by the next review.

For many positions, a combination of both objectives and standards is appropriate. For example, performance expectations for special projects or assignments can usually be expressed best in terms of objectives, while the ongoing, routine aspects of the job may be stated most effectively in terms of standards.

Suggestions for developing objectives and standards

- Think of “critical incidents” of satisfactory and unsatisfactory performance or specific behaviours that are consistently demonstrated by employees who perform the job well, but not by those who perform poorly. Restate these in the form of objectives or standards of expected performance.
- Involve staff. A “brainstorming” session with staff members may uncover useful measures that might otherwise be overlooked. Their active involvement in the process also increases their understanding and commitment to the objectives and standards that are set.

- Do not restrict yourself to measures of performance based on currently available information. Think of additional sources of information on performance that could be introduced, or existing sources that could be used more systematically; e.g., periodically sampling recipients of services provided to obtain feedback on quality of service (customer/client surveys).
- Appropriate measures for quality of performance often already exist in the form of professional standards, policies and procedures, terms of reference, protocols, etc.
- Use peer/group performance norms; e.g., “Carry out within 10 per cent of the average number of assessments completed by other assessors in District X.”

Guidelines for evaluating objectives and standards

In developing or reviewing existing performance objectives and standards, the following guidelines may be helpful. Both objectives and standards should be

- **Stated concretely and specifically.** They should enable the employee to know what they have to do to meet the standard or objective and should enable the supervisor to measure the employee’s actual performance against the standard or objective to determine whether the performance was acceptable.
- **Practical to measure in terms of cost, accuracy, and availability of data.** They should provide the necessary information about performance in the most efficient manner possible.
- **Meaningful.** They should assess what is important and relevant to the purpose of the job, to the achievement of objectives, and/or to the user or recipient of the product or service. Quantitative criteria should be used if possible.
- **Realistic and based on sound rationale.** Expectations of performance should be realistic and achievable. The level at which standards are set may be arrived at on the basis of historical information (e.g., the level achieved in a previous year), comparison (e.g., the level achieved by other employees in a similar setting), or a more job-specific procedure. To the extent possible, arbitrariness in setting standards should be avoided. Sometimes, however, when no historical precedents or logical sources for comparison are available, the supervisor and employee will simply have to select the level that seems most reasonable.

Sample statements of expected performance

Position: Program Manager

Responsibility Area: Staff management and development

Objective: Complete performance management process for all staff reporting to supervisor (planning, coaching, and evaluation) in accordance with departmental policies and procedures by March 31, 2012.

Position: Youth Worker

Responsibility Area: Intervention

Standard: Take action to ensure client adherence to Youth Centre rules and regulations using appropriate level of force and restraint according to departmental policies and procedures and using non-violent crisis intervention techniques.

Position: Senior Caseworker

Responsibility Area: Farmers' Assistance

Standard: Carry out all farm visits requested by farmers within assigned region, within two days of receiving urgent requests and two weeks for non-urgent requests. Recommendations provided are to be consistent with current research and appropriate to the farmer's needs and resources.

Position: Secretary

Responsibility Area: Word processing

Standard: Prepare all assigned forms, correspondence, and reports in accordance with established format, within deadlines given by supervisor, and error free by second draft.

Position: Program Manager

Responsibility Area: Program Management

Objective: Establish by August 15, 2012 an action plan to achieve greater consistency in program delivery across shifts and report on results achieved by March 31, 2012.

Writing the Training and Development Plan

The performance plan is completed by identifying, through discussion between the manager and employee, one or more *developmental* objectives that are unique to the individual employee and to the current evaluation period.

These should contribute both to organizational objectives and to the employee's career goals.

These will include personal development objectives directed toward enhancing the individual's capabilities in their present position or preparing them for possible future responsibilities.

Examples

To complete requirements for certification as an instructor in Non-violent Crisis Intervention for Youth by September 30, 2012.

To meet on a weekly basis with the manager of Client Services to receive advice on your implementation of the new client service procedure within your unit until July 1, 2012.

To attend regular monthly meetings of the Association of Support Professionals to learn more about established support practices.

Confirming the Employee's Understanding and Agreement

The communication of performance objectives or standards **at the beginning** of the review period is essential to sound performance management.

The best way to ensure that the employee clearly understands and is committed to the performance plan is to involve them directly in each step of the process. This will result in a better understanding of the work situation from both perspectives and a sense of ownership on the part of the employee.

If it is not feasible to involve employees in the preparation of the performance plan, it is important to discuss the established responsibility areas and standards/objectives with them, describe how and why they were developed, and explain how the employee's individual performance goals relate to the organization's goals and priorities.

Documenting the Performance Plan

Both the employee and supervisor should retain copies of the performance plan.

Reviewing Progress

The employee and supervisor should establish a schedule to meet periodically to discuss the employee's progress in implementing the work plan, any problems or obstacles encountered, and any measures required to assist the employee.

Updating the Performance Plan

The employee should be made aware that the plan is not "cast in stone." It can and should be updated as required, to reflect changes in work assignments or priorities.

Note: In some circumstances, reviews are completed where there has been no previous planning process with staff. In cases like this, care must be taken to ensure that performance expectations were clearly understood by staff during the performance period. It is not fair to evaluate staff on their performance if they have not been given adequate notice of performance expectations.

Performance Management: Coaching

Coaching is the process of providing ongoing support to staff to help them successfully achieve the standards and objectives set down in their performance plan. This involves periodically reviewing the performance plan with staff individually, observing and documenting performance, and providing ongoing feedback. It also includes taking corrective measures with staff when the actual performance does not meet the agreed-upon standard.

This may, at first glance, appear to be a challenge for the supervisor, who may have a large number of staff reporting to them and a significant operational role as well. Yet according to management literature, the failure to make performance planning meaningful through recognizing strong performance and intervening when plans go wrong can be highly de-motivating to staff. Staff can begin to feel that their efforts do not matter to the overall plan of the organization.

Here are some practical tips that may make this essential management process run more smoothly to benefit your management effectiveness and overall morale of the staff who report to you.

1. **Get a system.** A simple binder can make an excellent performance management tracking system. Place the performance plans for each staff member who reports to you in a separate section of the binder. Then add a number of Performance Observations forms after each staff performance plan (see page 21). Each time you review an employee's performance plan with them or make an observation about their performance, note it briefly on the form. These observations can form the basis for the performance review scheduled for the end of the current year.
2. **Make a date.** Set aside time on your calendar at least once a month to review all staff performance plans and make a comment on a Performance Observations form. Make sure that you briefly share your performance observation with staff.
3. **Keep performance plans up to date.** Many organizations develop extensive plans only to put them on the shelf, never to refer to them again. Keeping performance plans simple makes them easy to maintain. The role of maintaining performance plans can be delegated to each employee, and reviews can be requested on a monthly basis. An increased focus on managing their own planning can help staff become more accountable for deliverables and more autonomous in their performance.
4. **Negotiate the level of assistance required.** Most staff members will appreciate being given a mandate to implement their performance plan. During the planning process, the supervisor may ask the employee what type of support they think they need to accomplish the objectives and standards in their plan. Most employees will probably have only one or two areas that require particular attention, and these can form their basic developmental focus for the next year.
5. **Give feedback in a timely fashion.** Feedback needs to be shared with staff soon after the event that precipitated it. Whether the feedback is positive or constructive, employees need to hear the supervisor's input on their performance. There is an art to giving feedback to staff. The following information describes how to give feedback properly.

Providing Feedback

The goal in providing feedback is to help employees maintain or enhance good performance and change or improve unacceptable performance, by helping them to see the results of their work accurately and objectively.

To be effective, feedback should be honest, specific, constructive, balanced, and timely.

- **Honest.** Employees cannot maintain or improve good performance or change unacceptable performance if they do not receive accurate feedback. “Sugar-coating” negative feedback may create more serious problems in the long run.
- **Specific, factual, and related to performance, not personality.** If feedback is too general (e.g., “You’re just going to have to work a little harder”) employees will not know what to do to maintain or enhance their performance.

Likewise, if feedback evaluates the person (e.g., “You’re too aggressive”), rather than describing some aspect of their behaviour, the employee will probably become defensive, and be left with no clear idea of how to improve their performance.

Specific, factual feedback

- describes what was expected
- cites examples of how the employee’s performance met/exceeded/failed to meet expectations
- points out the consequences of their performance—i.e., its impact on the achievement of individual and/or organizational objectives
- **Constructive.** Employees need to know not only what is wrong, but how it can be corrected. Constructive feedback provides information about how to change performance. For best results, the manager should also involve the employee in suggesting solutions to performance problems.
- **Balanced.** Providing balanced feedback means
 - giving feedback on a regular basis.
 - giving feedback when something is done *right*, rather than waiting until things go wrong.
 - avoiding information overload – giving too much feedback at one time, particularly when it’s negative.
- **Timely.** Feedback should be given as close as possible to the event that it concerns. Delayed feedback conveys the message that the performance (whether good or bad) wasn’t very important.

Diagnosing the Need

Often supervisors will sense that there is a performance problem among their staff before they fully understand what factors are causing it. When this happens, it is helpful to step back and consider what actions should be taken and in what order. The following checklist provides a structured and analytical way to consider all of the possibilities before taking action.

Dealing with Performance Problems—A Trouble-Shooting Checklist

Area of concern	Corrective action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance specifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do performance standards exist? Do employees know what is expected and why? Do employees consider the standards attainable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly identify responsibilities. Define expected performance (what, when, how well, why). Verify understanding through discussion and feedback from the employee. Document.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task interference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can the employee easily recognize when action is required? Are the job procedures and work flow logical? Are adequate resources available? Are there barriers to effective completion of the tasks outside of staff control? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructure the job so that it has <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – clear inputs – a logical sequence of activities – minimal interference among tasks – sufficient resources Remove barrier.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consequences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any consequences for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – effective performance? – unsatisfactory performance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add positive consequences, remove negative consequences of desired performance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do employees receive information about their performance? Is the information they receive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – balanced? – timely? – specific? – constructive? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide specific performance information, regularly and frequently through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – direct communication – information systems (performance indicators, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge/Skill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do employees have the skills and knowledge necessary to perform at the expected level? Do they know why the desired performance is important? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide on-the-job and/or classroom training. Provide job aids (manuals, checklists, etc.). Explain the “big picture” and how their work contributes to end results.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are employees physically, intellectually, and emotionally able to perform? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change the job to fit the person. Provide assistance to enable the person to recover their capacity to do the job. Transfer the employee or take disciplinary action.

Conducting a Constructive Feedback Session

Sometimes it is necessary for supervisors to meet with staff individually to give them feedback on behaviour that is causing concern and affecting the productivity of the staff team. Many supervisors find it difficult to confront matters of this nature. Supervisors need to keep in mind that changing an employee's difficult behaviour can be of tremendous benefit to the staff member and to their coworkers. Following the procedure below can dramatically improve the supervisor's chances of positively resolving the issue.

1. Prepare for the meeting

- Analyse the problem (see page 15).
- Think through what you want to discuss.
- Hold the discussion in a location where there will be privacy and no interruptions.
- If you are emotionally upset about the problem, allow yourself time to calm down. Try to approach the discussion objectively and impersonally.

2. Set the climate

- Establish a positive and co-operative environment by using a non-threatening, matter-of-fact tone.

3. State the facts

- Describe the unacceptable performance in an objective, factual, non-judgemental way, citing specific examples.
- Identify negative impact on you, others, the work unit, department, etc. of the employee's performance.
- Describe expected results.

4. Listen

- Have the employee describe the situation as they see it (use active listening techniques).
- Be open to any new insights on the problem coming from the employee.

5. Obtain the employee's agreement that a problem exists

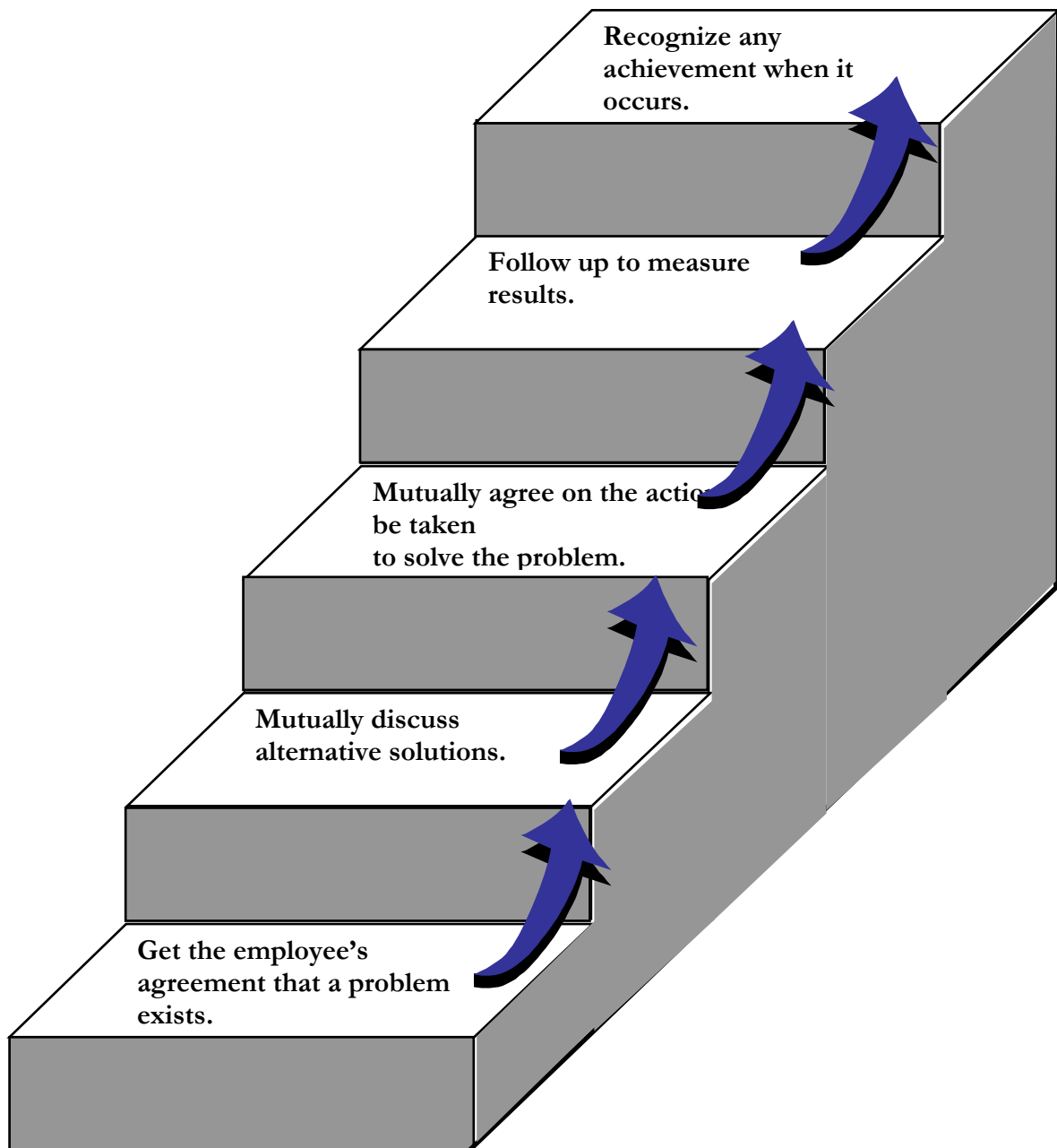
- Respond to denial, blaming of others, etc., by restating factual information and reviewing the negative impacts of the unacceptable behaviour.
- If necessary, specify the consequences for the employee if the problem is not corrected.

6. Agree on an action plan

- Ask the employee for their suggestions for solving the problem (use active listening skills).
- Offer your suggestions if necessary.
- Agree on a specific plan of action: have the employee tell you what they plan to do, how they plan to do it, and within what time period.
- Document the action plan.

7. **Follow up**
- Monitor results.
 - Meet periodically to discuss progress.
 - Provide positive reinforcement of any improvement.
 - Offer your help.

Constructive feedback steps



Active Listening Techniques

A key component of the coaching process is the capacity to properly listen to individual staff issues, concerns and successes. Trusting that their supervisor honestly cares about them helps improve staff motivation and productivity. Active listening skills help supervisors understand staff perspectives on issues, so that the problem can be dealt with more effectively.

Use

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Open questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask questions that can't be answered by a "yes" or "no."• Use words such as: what, where, when, who, why and how. For example: "What do you think we can do about the problem?" |
| Reflective questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paraphrase or summarize your understanding of what the employee has said, in order to clarify and confirm, for example:
Manager: "How are you doing on that report?"
Employee: "Well, (pause) not too well, I guess"
Manager: "You're discouraged by how slowly it seems to be going?"
Employee: "No, it's not that – I just don't see the point of it all." |
| Directive questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request expansion or explanation on one particular point.• Do not ask this type of question until you have obtained a complete expression of the employee's feelings and opinions and feel you understand their point of view as well as possible, for example:
Manager: "Since you agree that ..., what steps do you think could be taken to improve the situation?" |
| Neutral understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicate acceptance without either agreement or disagreement by using head nods and remarks such as "uh-huh," "I see," "really," etc.• Allow pauses either after a question to give the employee ample time to respond or after the employee has said something, to allow them to continue and expand on their point. |

Avoid using

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Closed questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not ask questions that invite a one-word answer. |
| Leading questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not ask questions that suggest the answer the manager is looking for, i.e., "You don't really believe that, do you?" |
| Derogatory phrases | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not use language that "puts down" the individual or implies that their comments are of no value, such as:
"If I were you ..."
"That's ridiculous ..."
"Yeah, but ..."
"You don't seem to understand ..."
"The trouble with you is ..."
"Whether you like it or not ..." |

Observing and Documenting Performance

Why document?

The performance standards or objectives that have been established during the planning phase provide the basis for evaluation. However, if the manager relies entirely on memory at the time of evaluation, there is a strong risk of an incomplete and inaccurate analysis. There is a tendency to remember recent events more vividly than earlier ones and they may exercise a disproportionate weight in the evaluation.

Ongoing documentation of relevant examples of performance helps to ensure that the overall evaluation is fair and balanced. It also provides a useful information base for interim reviews and ongoing coaching discussions.

What to document

- “critical incidents” of both inadequate and outstanding performance, noting
 - **when** the incident occurred (time, date)
 - **who** was involved
 - **what** happened
 - **what** was the impact or result (positive or negative)
 - **how** was it handled (what action did I take)
- commendation or criticism received about the employee’s performance
- specific examples of work output
- spot-check observations of employee’s performance
- attendance records
- records of any disciplinary action taken and copies of related correspondence
- records of discussions related to work performance and copies of related correspondence
- information about special activities or achievements that may be beyond the normal work expectations, but reflect directly or indirectly on their performance or potential

Note: the performance being documented should also be discussed with the employee at the time and commended or corrected as appropriate.

Observed behaviour vs. inferences

When documenting performance, include only factual information about observed behaviour. Avoid inferences or assumptions about the employee’s attitude or personality characteristics.

Summary

- Documentation is vital to an effective performance management program.
- It is composed of written material covering the full range of the employee’s work behaviour and performance.
- It must be accurate and complete regarding both positive and negative (if any) aspects of performance.

- It must contain all relevant information and so should be written as soon as possible after the incident.
- It must contain an accurate factual account of observed performance, rather than what is guessed or inferred.
- Since it involves confidential information, it must be kept in a secure place.

PERFORMANCE OBSERVATIONS

Name _____

Date	Contributed to Accomplishment of Desired Results	Date	Areas for Development

Important: Record incidents only after they have been personally discussed with the employee. Make entry *after* discussion.

Performance Management: Review

At the end of the performance period, the supervisor and staff member meet to discuss and evaluate the employee's performance over the period under review, as it relates to the performance standards previously established for each of the employee's major areas of responsibility. This information is documented on the performance review form, and a rating is assigned that summarizes the employee's overall level of performance.

The overall performance evaluation provides the basis for employee development and human resource planning.

If ongoing communication and feedback have been maintained throughout the review period, the performance evaluation discussion should hold no significant surprises for either the employee or the supervisor. It should merely consist of summing up performance during the period under review, providing a sound basis for performance improvement strategies and for human resource management decisions.

Preparing for the Performance Review Meeting

Careful advance planning is essential in order to achieve the maximum results from the performance review meeting in terms of positive impacts on subsequent performance (and to avoid any unintended negative consequences). Following are some suggested steps to follow in preparing for the interview.

1. Schedule a time and place for the meeting that will provide sufficient time and privacy with no interruptions.
2. Notify the employee of the interview with sufficient advance time to prepare for it. Ask them to prepare for the meeting
3. Ask the employee to prepare for the meeting by reviewing their performance in relation to the previously agreed-upon performance standards and also by rating their overall performance.
4. Review the standards of expected performance in each responsibility area and the results achieved in relation to each, referring to all records on hand pertaining to the employee's performance, such as
 - the standards set at the beginning of the performance period and any additions or modifications that have been made since they were originally set
 - all notes made during the review period to document your observations of positive/negative incidents of performance, action taken, and subsequent performance
 - notes made to document any performance review sessions, coaching sessions, or action planning discussions held with the employee during the period under review
5. Identify any factors beyond the employee's control that affected performance.
6. Identify the areas of greatest achievement; the most valuable contributions to the unit's output; aspects of the job in which standards were exceeded.
7. Identify any areas of below-standard or marginal performance.
8. Summarize your notes with respect to the items referred to above and prepare a preliminary draft of the performance review. Additional details on writing the review are presented in the next section.

9. Determine the rating that most accurately describes the employee's overall performance.
10. Identify possible performance improvement or employee development strategies to improve below standard performance and/or enhance existing strengths.
11. Plan the opening. Decide whether to spend a few minutes on "small talk" or to begin by outlining the purpose and sequence of the interview right at the outset. Use whichever approach is most natural for you and will make the employee feel most comfortable.
12. Plan the sequence of the review discussion. One frequently used approach is to structure your discussion following the sequence of the form, first requesting the employee's self evaluation on each item, then providing your own evaluation and discussing any major differences to reach consensus before moving on to the next item.
13. There is no single right or wrong approach. Use whatever approach works best in terms of encouraging productive two-way communication and promoting consensus.
14. Plan the conclusion. Decide how and when you want to end the interview, for example by summarizing areas of agreement, areas of disagreement (if any), changes to be made to the form (if any), and what you want to happen next (follow-up session to set new objectives, to discuss performance improvement plans, etc.).
15. Make an agenda for the interview, indicating the points to be covered and the sequence you plan to follow during the interview.
16. Have all documentation supporting your evaluation organized and accessible to you during the interview.

Writing the Performance Review

A sample review form is included in this manual on page 33.

The review form should provide a concise account of

- actual performance in relation to the performance expectations previously established
- areas of performance requiring improvement, if any
- areas of superior performance, if any
- specific actions planned in relation to employee training and development

In writing the report avoid

- **a long narrative:** brief comments that are to the point and job-related are communicated more effectively than lengthy descriptive statements,
- **lack of substantiation:** evaluative comments must be supported by specific references to results achieved in relation to performance standards, and
- **vague narrative:** evaluative comments should be clear, concise and concrete.

Rating Overall Performance

The following rating scale guidelines are to be used in determining the employee's overall performance rating.

Exceeds all performance standards

- Performance consistently and significantly exceeds all performance standards set with respect to all areas of responsibility.
- The employee has accomplished additional major projects and assignments, while continuing to exceed the performance standards set with respect to all regular areas of responsibility.
- The employee's work has involved an unusually high degree of pressure (arising from factors such as an extremely heavy workload, unusually demanding deadlines, work involving a high level of public scrutiny, or the requirement to demonstrate an exceptionally high level of professional expertise) over an extended period of time (one-half or more of the year).
- The employee is able, if circumstances require, to perform the job effectively and efficiently without direction.
- The employee is readily recognized by superiors, subordinates, and peers as exceptional on the basis of their performance in the past year.
- Any developmental activities identified for the employee are directed toward preparation for higher level responsibilities; no further development is required to meet the requirements of the current job.

Important considerations

- This rating is to be reserved for the few truly outstanding performers in a department, who excel in every aspect of their job. The number should not exceed a very small percentage of the total population.
- Due to the exceptional nature of this category, you are required to document specific examples of the individual's accomplishments during the evaluation period that warrant this rating.
- An individual would not be expected to maintain this rating from year to year. In fact, repetition of the rating would suggest either that the standards set for the position are too low, or that the individual is underemployed in the position.

Exceeds most performance standards

- Performance *consistently exceeds* the standards set with respect to most areas of responsibility, while performance of *all* other job requirements *meets* the standards.
- The employee's work has involved in unusually high degree of pressure (arising from factors such as an extremely heavy workload, unusually demanding deadlines, work involving a high level of public scrutiny, or the requirement to demonstrate an exceptionally high level of professional expertise) over a significant period of time (one quarter to one-half of the year).
- The employee functions efficiently and effectively with a minimum of direction.
- All work is consistently of high quality.

- All deadlines are met and many are surpassed.
- Errors are infrequent and of minimal importance.
- Any developmental activities identified for the employee are directed toward preparation for higher level responsibilities; no further development is required to meet the requirements of their current job.

Meets all performance standards

- Performance consistently meets the standards set with respect to all areas of responsibility and occasionally exceeds the standards of some responsibility areas.
- When requested to do so, the employee readily accepts and carries out additional responsibilities as required, while continuing to meet the standards of all regular responsibilities.
- The employee requires no more than the expected level of supervision and on a day-to-day basis functions with minimal direction.
- There is balance between the quality and quantity of their work.
- Errors are few and seldom repeated.
- Deadlines are met except in circumstances beyond the employee's control.
- Any developmental activities identified for the employee are directed toward refining job skills that are already at the acceptable level or acquisition of new skills required by changes in the job requirements.

Important considerations

- This rating should be given as an indication of *consistently dependable quality performance*.
- In a healthy work unit, approximately 75 per cent of staff are working at this level.

Meets most performance standards

- The employee's performance is uneven, meeting or even exceeding the standards set with respect to some areas of responsibility, but falling below the standards set for others, occasionally resulting in negative repercussions for the work unit.
- Priorities may be determined more by what the employee feels his/her strengths to be, than by the needs of the organization, resulting in some key aspects of the job being inadequately addressed.
- The employee requires more supervision than would be expected, given the level of the position.
- Work is occasionally late and/or productivity is somewhat below standard.
- Errors occur and/or are repeated more frequently than expected.
- Any developmental activities identified for the employee are directed toward improving current job performance in those areas in which the standards are not being met. The below-standard performance is not serious enough to be a major cause of concern to the manager and can normally be remedied through coaching sessions.

Important considerations

- This rating is appropriate for an inexperienced employee who requires further development and experience in their job in order to be able to fully meet the performance standards with respect to all aspects of the job, or an experienced employee whose performance in certain aspects of the job is below standard.

Fails to meet most performance standards

- The employee has failed to meet the standards set for most of the requirements of the position and that their performance is clearly below the satisfactory level.
- Due to the clearly unsatisfactory level of the employee's performance, close supervision is required even on the more routine aspects of their work.
- This rating implies that the employee failed to complete projects or assignments of major importance or that they were improperly done, resulting in serious consequences for the work unit.
- An initial rating at this level would indicate the need for immediate performance coaching by the manager, aimed at the implementation of specific corrective measures to improve each unsatisfactory aspect of performance.

Important considerations

- Any successive rating at this level, following implementation of developmental activities that have failed to bring about performance improvement, would indicate the need either for discussion aimed at transfer of the employee to a more suitable position or for initiation of standard disciplinary procedures.

Sources of Error in Rating

The major cause of inaccuracy in rating is subjectivity. The following are some examples of subjective error to be avoided.

- **The halo effect.** This is the tendency to let our evaluation of the individual's performance on one or a few aspects of the job influence our evaluation of other aspects of his or her performance.
- **Leniency/severity.** Every rater tends to have a personal set of standards that they use to make performance judgments. Depending on their personality, they may tend to rate consistently at either the low or high end of the scale.
- **Central tendency.** Many raters are reluctant to make judgments about other individuals. The result is a tendency to avoid using the extreme ends of the scale and to gravitate toward the centre. The result is that all of the people they evaluate appear to be "average."
- **Differential/assimilation.** Many raters unconsciously rate employees on the basis of "how similar to me" they are. The differential error refers to a general tendency on the part of the rater to judge others in a manner opposite to the way they perceive themselves. (For example, if the rater perceives him/herself to have excellent managerial ability, the tendency would be to evaluate others as having less managerial ability.)

The opposite of differential error is assimilation error. This occurs when the rater evaluates other people in the same way as they evaluate themselves.

- **Short-term memory.** When performance review interviews are conducted infrequently, and no records of performance are maintained throughout the review period, there is a tendency to appraise performance on the basis of the most recent and therefore best remembered events. Consequently, the resulting evaluation does not provide an accurate account of the employee's overall performance.
- **Contrast.** In this case, the rater uses the performance of other employees as the standard against which the individual is rated. Thus, if another employee has received a high rating, the next person evaluated may receive a lower rating than if that person had received a low rating.

In order to avoid subjective error

- Maintain an ongoing progress review. Meet with the employee periodically throughout the review period to discuss progress in achieving the expected results, to provide feedback and to take any actions necessary to improve performance.
- Keep anecdotal records including brief descriptions of *both* successes and problems, together with dates and actions taken.
- Keep the interview focused on performance. Measure only results achieved against previously established performance standards.

Conducting the Performance Review Meeting

The following is a suggested sequence for conducting the performance review meeting. It can be modified as appropriate to suit the particular circumstances and personal style of the individual manager.

1. Establish an atmosphere that is friendly, relaxed, and informal.
2. Clearly explain what you want to accomplish during the discussion. This should be stated in positive terms. For example, *(i)* to review performance in relation to each of the performance expectations set earlier, *(ii)* to review overall performance, and *(iii)* to discuss future performance and plan activities that will further develop staff strengths and skills.
3. Encourage staff to participate in the discussion. Make it clear that you want and need their input to obtain a complete and accurate picture of their performance.
4. Ask the employee to give an evaluation of their performance in relation to each responsibility area.
5. Describe your own evaluation of staff performance using the performance expectations set for each area of responsibility, referring to specific incidents or events related to the employee's behaviour.
6. Mutually discuss and reach agreement on the performance evaluation
 - Ask the employee to indicate those parts of your evaluation with which they agree or disagree.
 - Ask the employee to substantiate their disagreement with your evaluation by providing concrete evidence and specific examples.

- Elaborate or repeat specific behavioural incidents that support your own evaluation.
- Maintain your position on any area of disagreement if you feel that it is justified in light of all the information that has been brought forward, attempting to get the employee to understand and accept your reason, even if they do not agree with your conclusions.
- Change your original evaluation if their input convinces you that it was inaccurate.

7. Promote consensus and mutual understanding; avoid confrontation and argument. Even though differences of opinion are to be expected, it is essential to keep the communication lines open and to maintain feelings of mutual respect. The following techniques are useful in promoting consensus and reducing confrontation:

- **Be yourself.** The nervousness and anxiety for both parties created by some performance review meetings may drive each of the participants into their formal workplace roles because they seem safer, more impersonal. Try to prevent this from happening by being open and friendly, using a relaxed communication style, and sharing personal experiences, where appropriate. The employee will communicate more freely if they can relate to you as a total person, not just as “the Boss.”
- **Demonstrate respect for the individual.** It is essential (especially with marginal performers) that the interviewer clearly communicates their respect for the person’s ability to do the job well. Referring to specific incidents in which the person was effective, asking their opinion, and involving them directly in the setting of performance expectations are all ways of demonstrating respect. In a situation where developmental action is required, the employee must be directly involved in determining appropriate solutions to the performance problem that has been identified. For example, telling a person to attend a workshop is far less productive than having the person tell you that they need it and want to attend.
- **Really listen to the employee.** Use “active listening” techniques shown earlier in this document to assist in maintaining two-way communications and resolving disagreement.
- **Do not interrupt.** If both of you happen to start talking at the same time, you should be the one to stop and encourage the employee to go ahead. This signals to the employee that you respect the value of what they have to say.
- **Focus on performance not personality.** Performance should be evaluated, discussed, and reported in terms of concrete results achieved in relation to previously established standards. Criticism of personality characteristics or attitudes is counter-productive in its impact on performance and tends to undermine the manager-employee relationship.

If there are obvious discrepancies between what the person says they have accomplished and what they really have accomplished, point this out in an unemotional, concrete, and factual way. Choose language that is non-confrontational. You must remain calm. Do not get involved in heated discussions or arguments. Let the facts of the case speak for themselves.

- **Focus on the future not the past.** Past performance must obviously be discussed but a positive, problem-solving approach should be taken, emphasizing what can be learned from past experience that will help the employee to be more effective in the future.
 - **Place as much emphasis on the positive aspects of the employee's performance as on the negative.** Every employee has some strengths. The sense of worth and confidence that results from receiving full credit for the positive areas of performance helps the employee to respond more openly to the need for improvement in other areas.
8. Indicate your rating of the employee's overall performance and outline the specific reasons for the rating, referring to the rating definitions in this chapter and how they relate to the employee's performance.
 9. Summarize your evaluation of the employee's performance in terms of strengths and areas where improvements should be made. Discuss and reach consensus on these.
 10. Jointly identify and agree upon development activities that will help the employee to make better use of their strengths and improve their skills in those areas that require improvement.
 11. Conclude the interview on a positive note.
 - Thank the employee for their contribution, referring specifically to any areas in which their input was particularly helpful, i.e., providing a more accurate account of their performance, analysing strengths and weaknesses, training and development planning, etc.
 - Indicate that you will be providing a copy of the final review to the employee for their comments and signature.
 - Outline the process for approvals at the senior management level of the department.
 - Assure the employee of your full support in carrying out the training and development activities that have been planned for the next performance period.
 - Ask the employee to begin identifying expected results and performance expectations for the next review period.
 - Schedule a specific time to meet again to finalize the performance expectations for the next period.
 - Ask the employee if they have any final questions or comments.

Follow-up Activities

1. Evaluate the way in which you conducted the interview, and make notes on any aspects that you would handle differently the next time.
2. Prepare a final copy of the form, incorporating any changes that may have resulted from the discussion, and including any training and development plans that have been established with the employee.
3. Provide the form to the employee and ask them to add any comments they may have concerning the report and to sign the report to indicate that they have reviewed and discussed it with you.

4. Forward the report to your manager for review and approval. The reviewing manager's responsibility is
 - to ensure that performance evaluations are conducted fairly and accurately and that standards are consistently applied across the work unit
 - to ensure that training and development plans are realistic and to approve them accordingly
 - to resolve cases of manager-employee disagreement
 - to ensure that established goals are in accordance with the broader objectives of the work unit
 - to follow up on any recommendations of the immediate manager that require the reviewing officer's authority

Note: Disagreements between the reviewing manager and the supervisor who prepared the evaluation should *not* be recorded on the form. The reviewing manager should discuss any significant areas of disagreement with the supervisor and provide them with the opportunity to comment on their evaluation. If the reviewing manager's concerns persist, it may be necessary to request that the supervisor revise and resubmit the report.

Distributing the Performance Review Form

After receiving the reviewing manager's approval, the original copy of the form is placed in the employee's personnel file in their department. Copies are retained by the supervisor and the employee.

Completed performance review documents are considered strictly confidential. Chapter 9.1 of *Manual 500: Human Resource Management* states that they are not "to be shared beyond the employee, the immediate manager, the reviewing superior, the Deputy Minister and human resources staff without the consent of the employee."

**PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
SELF-REVIEW QUESTIONS**

The following questions are designed to help you prepare for the performance review meeting and get maximum benefit from it. Think about your own performance, development, and plans for the future. When completed, use this form as a guide in your upcoming discussion with your manager.

1. What were my major accomplishments over the past year?

2. Are there any aspects of my job that I would like to do better?

3. In what aspects of my job do I need more experience and/or training?

Appendix A
Performance Evaluation Form

Performance Evaluation

Department	Employee ID Number		
Name	Position Number		
Position Title	Classification		
Division	Section		
Evaluation Period	From	To	Anniversary Date

Part 1

(To be completed at the **beginning** of the evaluation period)

1A. Performance Expectations: (To be discussed and completed by the supervisor and employee together.) Please record performance goals for the current performance cycle. Goals should be **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-bound. Normally six to eight goals are sufficient.

1B. Employee's Career and Personal Development Plans: (To be completed by the employee.) Indicate what training and development, if any, you feel you need to increase your effectiveness in your present position. State any plans you have for self-development and any requests for support from your supervisor or department.

Employee's signature:

Date:

1C. Training and Development Plans: (To be completed by the supervisor.)

State what training and development plans you recommend for this employee during this period to support the implementation of performance goals.

Supervisor's signature:

Date:

Part 2

(To be completed at the **end** of the evaluation period)

2A. Results Achieved:

Describe results achieved based on the goals set in Section 1A. Explain, if necessary, where results exceeded or fell short of expectations.

Enter factors which may have affected performance during the evaluation period.

2B. (To be completed by the employee)

State what training and development action you took during the evaluation period. Keep in mind that development can be more than attending training courses.

Employee's Signature:

Date:

2C. State what support or assistance you (or your department) gave the employee during the period with respect to training and development.

Supervisor's Signature:

Date:

Part 3

(to be completed at the **end** of the evaluation period)

Overall Evaluation of Performance: (Please check one box)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds All Performance Expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Most Performance Expectations
<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Most Performance Expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Fails to Meet Most Performance Expectations
<input type="checkbox"/> Meets All Performance Expectations	
Comments by the Supervisor: Identify the major ways the employee has contributed to the effective operation of the department and/or areas of necessary development along with recommendations for performance management plans to meet these needs.	
Supervisor's Signature:	Date:
Comments by the Employee:	
Employee's Signature:	Date:
Employee's signature denotes only that the employee has reviewed the evaluation.	
Comments by Deputy/Designate:	
Signature(s) Deputy/Designate:	Date:

Send original to Human Resources, to be filed in personnel record.
Give copy to employee.

Appendix B

Performance Management Policy Chapter 9.1, Management Manual 500

Note: the most up-to-date version of the Performance Management Policy is found in Chapter 9.1 of the Management Manual 500. That version supersedes any other version.

9.1 Performance Management Policy

Policy Statement

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to supporting the growth and development of employees through effective performance management. A key element of performance management is the translation of government and department business plans into individual and team performance goals and competencies to ensure employees are able to contribute in a meaningful fashion. Performance management is an integral component of providing excellence in service to the general public. It is recognized that employees are the enablers of responsive and effective government, and performance management empowers employees to achieve their full potential within government.

Definitions

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

A process that links the government and department business plans to individual goals and ensures they are consistently being met in an effective and efficient manner.

COMPETENCY

The skills, knowledge, and behaviours needed to perform a job.

COACHING

An ongoing process whereby people who supervise others, guide or facilitate the continuous improvement on an employee's performance. It includes timely provision of constructive feedback, meaningful recognition, support for learning and development and assisting the employee with self-awareness and self-evaluation.

GOALS

What the employee must achieve in the coming performance cycle. They must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound).

PERFORMANCE PLAN

The work and possible competency goals established between employee and manager for the coming performance cycle. If applicable, employees will have competency goals.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The informal and formal meetings held between manager and employee to discuss the achievement and status of performance goals.

MANAGER/SUPERVISOR

The person who plans and reviews the performance of an employee. This person usually directs the work of the employee on a daily and ongoing basis.

REVIEWING MANAGER/SUPERVISOR

The person who verifies the performance reviews done by other managers for accuracy and consistency. This person is usually at a higher level in the organization's hierarchy.

Policy Objectives

This policy establishes methods for managing the human resources of government in an effective manner. The goals of the Performance Management Policy are to:

- achieve corporate plans and goals by linking individual and team performance goals to department business plans
- provide a balanced approach for measuring performance results and leadership competencies
- develop leadership competencies that reflect the values and skills that are necessary for individual and government success
- develop people through regular coaching and dialogue
- promote job satisfaction in a motivating environment and recognize and reward good performance.

Application

This policy applies to all civil servants whose terms and conditions are set out in accordance with the *Civil Service Act* and regulations and bargaining unit employees who are employed by the Government of Nova Scotia as identified in the collective agreements between the Nova Scotia Public Service Commission and Nova Scotia Government Employees Union, and the Nova Scotia Department of Justice and the union representing corrections employees, insofar as the provisions do not conflict with existing collective agreements.

Policy Directives

- Each employee will have a performance review conducted annually, or on a change of position or appointment, or more frequently as required, and will be provided with a copy of the review.

PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEES

- Probationary employees will have interim performance reviews conducted. Managers should check the applicable collective agreement to confirm the length of the probationary period. In circumstances where the probationary period may be extended, the employee must be notified at least one month in advance of the expiry of the initial probationary period. For bargaining unit employees, the length of the probationary period is specified in the relevant collective agreement.
- Where unsatisfactory performance is identified concerning a probationary employee and reasonable steps are taken to give the probationary employee an opportunity to make the required improvements and this fails to address the performance issues, the employment of the probationary employee shall be terminated.
- Employees who satisfactorily complete the probationary period and are appointed on a permanent basis must be provided with ongoing performance reviews that are consistent with the process of evaluation, performance review, and, if necessary, performance improvement.

PERFORMANCE PLAN

- A performance review includes the completion of a performance plan, which must be established jointly by the manager in consultation with the employee to ensure a clear understanding of performance goals and expected results. Individual performance goals must be linked to department business plans and must include measurable performance goals.
- A performance plan must be documented using the appropriate Performance

Management Form.

- Employee performance must be formally reviewed in relation to the performance goals and expected results as established in the performance plan.
- A performance plan should identify training and/or career development activities that support achievement of performance goals and identify opportunities for promotion/advancement.

PERFORMANCE COACHING

- Managers and employees must jointly keep track of the performance plan and identify shortcomings and solutions in a timely fashion.
- Managers should provide employees with ongoing feedback and coaching regarding job performance throughout the review period.

ACCESS TO PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

- Performance reviews are to be reviewed by the immediate supervisor of the manager who is responsible for preparing the review to ensure that reviews are comprehensive and consistently reflect performance goals established.
- Performance reviews are strictly confidential and are not to be shared beyond the employee, the manager, the reviewing supervisor, the Deputy Minister, and human resources staff without the consent of the employee.
- The Public Service Commissioner has the right to access performance reviews from the departmental employee master file for the purposes of carrying out the responsibilities established pursuant to the *Civil Service Act*.

UNSATISFACTORY JOB PERFORMANCE

- A manager is responsible for identifying and reviewing facts that are relevant to unsatisfactory job performance. All information collected must be properly documented. Unsatisfactory performance by employees must be addressed with the employee by the manager in a timely fashion. Specific information concerning the areas of deficiencies and the improvements expected must be provided to the employee, which should include, where appropriate, a specific date by which improvement is expected to be achieved. The manager should inform the employee of the availability of the Employee Assistance Program.
- An employee who disagrees with the evaluation of his/her performance may respond to the evaluation by providing either a verbal or written response to their manager.
- If a manager has a reasonable basis for believing that an employee is intentionally failing to meet the performance requirements of the position, this may result in disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination. A manager should consult with their respective Deputy Minister, Human Resources Director, and Staff Relations Consultant prior to administering disciplinary action.

MERIT INCREMENT

The granting of a merit increment is contingent upon an employee successfully meeting their individual performance goals as reflected in their annual performance review. Reference should be made to the collective agreement or civil service regulations as appropriate.

Policy Guidelines

Refer to the PSC website under Performance Management <<http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc>> Human Resources Management Manual

Accountability

DEPUTY MINISTERS

Deputy Ministers are responsible for:

- ensuring that managers participate fully in the performance management process
- ensuring that every manager has a performance review conducted
- ensuring that the Performance Management Policy and performance management process are followed
- explaining corporate/department goals and priorities to senior managers
- ensuring that the quality of performance assessments prepared by senior managers is maintained
- submitting assessment and performance ratings to the Public Service Commission.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Senior management (within departments) is responsible for:

- participating fully in the performance management process
- reviewing the business plan with their direct reports
- establishing individual performance goals in consultation with their deputy minister
- fulfilling their individual performance goals
- establishing individual performance goals with employees
- reviewing employees' performance annually or as required
- recommending a performance rating to deputy heads
- focusing on coaching, supporting, and developing their employees
- recognizing and supporting good employee performance
- dealing with performance deficiencies constructively and in a timely fashion
- ensuring that poor performance is clearly and consistently handled
- promoting communication, understanding, and dialogue between individuals and teams in the organization.

MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS

Managers/supervisors(within departments) are responsible for:

- participating fully in the performance management process
- reviewing the business plan with employees
- establishing individual performance goals in consultation with their manager
- fulfilling their individual performance goals
- establishing individual performance goals with employees
- reviewing employees' performance annually or as required
- recommending a performance rating to their manager
- focusing on coaching, supporting, and developing their employees
- recognizing and supporting good employee performance
- dealing with performance deficiencies constructively and in a timely fashion
- ensuring that poor performance is clearly and consistently handled
- promoting communication, understanding, and dialogue between individuals and teams in the organization.

HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISIONS/CORPORATE SERVICES UNITS

The Human Resources Divisions/Corporate Services Units are responsible for supporting Deputy Ministers, senior managers and managers/supervisors, and employees with performance management.

EMPLOYEES

Employees are responsible for:

- participating in the establishment of individual performance goals
- meeting their individual performance goals
- participating fully in the performance management process
- encouraging regular constructive dialogue and feedback on their own performance.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

The Public Service Commission is responsible for providing advice and support to departments.

Monitoring

Departments are responsible for complying with the terms of this policy. The Public Service Commission shall periodically conduct audits of departmental performance management practices to ascertain compliance by departments with this policy.

References

Nova Scotia *Civil Service Act* and regulations

Collective agreements between the Public Service Commission and the NSGEU, and Department of Justice and the union representing corrections employees.

Performance Management for MCP Employees

Performance Management for BU/AS Employees

Performance Review Forms

Performance Review forms can be found on the PSC Website <<http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc>>

- Management Employees
- Bargaining Unit Employees

Enquiries

Organizational Design and Effectiveness, Public Service Commission (902) 424-4271

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