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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents ........................................................................................................ iii
Lesson 1: Performance Management Overview ......................................................... 1
Lesson 2: Engaged Employees .................................................................................... 25
Lesson 3: Continuous Feedback ................................................................................ 50
Lesson 4: Planning Performance ................................................................................ 81
Lesson 5: Monitoring Performance .......................................................................... 144
Lesson 6: Evaluating Performance .......................................................................... 190
Lesson 7: REcognizing and Rewarding Performance ................................................. 225
Lesson 8: Addressing Performance Issues ................................................................. 247
Glossary ...................................................................................................................... 289
Welcome to the introduction to the Performance Management and Appraisal Program.
The purpose of Lesson 1 of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program Training course is to provide an overview of performance management in general, and to specifically review requirements, processes, and responsibilities of both supervisors and employees in the new the Performance Management and Appraisal Program.
Please tell us:

- Who are you?
- What do you do?
- Where do you work?
- What experience do you have with performance management at DoD or other agencies?
- What are your burning questions? That is, what is it that you want this course to answer about the Performance Management and Appraisal Program?

References:

- L1 Supervisory Role Focus on Performance
- L1 Performance Overview for Employees
- L1 Communicating With Employees
During our time here, class starts at: ____________
Class ends at: ____________
Lunch will likely happen at: ____________

Your instructor will give you specific information about smoking areas, location of bathrooms and emergency exits, and review the mobile devices policy for our course.

**The Parking Lot:** There might be times during this course when the instructor cannot provide an immediate answer to someone’s question. There may also be instances when a question might be answered later in the course. In those cases, the instructor will put the issue in the Parking Lot so it is not forgotten. At the end of the lesson or course day, the instructor will review the questions in the Parking Lot.
Ground rules allow the instructors to get through all of the lessons on schedule, and they create a successful learning environment.

- **Participate:** To get the most out of this class, active participation is required. Active participation helps everyone learn more through the many exercises that require group activity and input.

- **Share experiences:** Sharing individual employee relations experiences helps others. Please share successes and some learning experiences that are relevant to the discussions.

- **Respect divergent opinions:** One of the exciting, and sometimes frustrating, aspects of employee relations is that few answers apply to every situation. If you disagree with a statement, do it respectfully.

- **Ask questions:** Questions are strongly encouraged. Remember, there are no dumb questions. One person’s question may well be on the minds of others, too.

- **Avoid private side conversations:** Some topics are going to stimulate your thinking, and it might be tempting to begin discussions with others; however, it is important that everyone hear what is being said in a group discussion.

- **Honor time commitments:** Prompt attendance on everyone’s part is needed to keep things moving efficiently. Please commit to arriving on time and returning on time from lunch and breaks.
This course will take place over two days. The course may be taught in a modular format by splitting the lessons into smaller training classes over a longer period of time, or may be provided as just-in-time training as individuals transition into the Performance Management and Appraisal Program.

The focus of the two days will be as follows:

- Day 1 will focus on an overview of performance management concepts and the first phases of the program.
- Day 2 will focus on the rest of the phases: recognizing performance, rewarding performance, and addressing performance issues.

The Lessons are:

- Lesson 1: Performance Management Overview
- Lesson 2: Engaged Employees
- Lesson 3: Continuous Feedback
- Lesson 4: Planning Performance
- Lesson 5: Monitoring Performance
- Lesson 6: Evaluating Performance
- Lesson 7: Recognizing and Rewarding Performance
- Lesson 8: Addressing Performance Issues
Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe how performance management links to Department of Defense (DoD) mission and values
- Identify DoD core values
- Identify key performance management roles and responsibilities
- Identify key performance management features
- Identify the DoD performance management process (model)
You may be a little nervous about a new performance management program. It’s not what you’re used to. But the fact is you already know a lot about performance management. You already have performance goals in your every-day work, you know your job, and you’ve talked with your supervisor about his or her expectations. This is not a new concept. What is new is that this program was built to apply to the majority of employees across DoD and is focused, from its inception, on including employees in the process.

And it’s not trying to pull the rug out from under you with a program that doesn’t make sense. Instead, the program empowers employees. It helps both the supervisor and the employee be more successful and effective, which ultimately makes DoD more effective. The hope is it will make your work more engaging and make performance management a more meaningful process for you as an employee.
Do you know your organization’s mission and strategic goals? Do you know how your work directly contributes to those goals? Before we can start effectively managing our performance, it is important that you understand how your work aligns with your organization’s goals and priorities.

Understanding this alignment can make it easier for you to develop your job objectives. It’s important that everyone understands how their work fits into the organization’s goals and priorities. I say “their work” because even supervisors are employees in the Performance Management and Appraisal Program. Alignment happens when you understand how you are contributing and how your work helps your organization accomplish its mission. Your organization’s mission, function statement, and other strategic and project planning documents provide the basis and context for the work and its relationship to the greater DoD mission. Establishing the “line of sight” is important because it underscores the importance of duties and how they support the organization.

It’s the supervisor’s responsibility to find a way to link the organization mission to specific goals, link the goals to specific employee tasks, and then align the tasks at the employee’s job and salary level. The linking process starts at the top and moves down the organizational structure to the individual. Individual goals and activities are then reported back up the organizational structure. In this model, everyone’s efforts are harnessed and directed toward the most important organizational outcomes. Individuals know the importance of their efforts and how their work fits in with the work of others and the larger organization.
Union representatives were directly involved in every step of designing this program. The most important message about labor relations is that there is **nothing in the Performance Management and Appraisal Program that changes the rights of employees, unions, or management.**

There may be some local considerations but, on the whole, the unions who participated in designing the program have approved the process and the concepts we’re going to review during this course.

- The DoD engaged with labor representatives through the DoD Roundtable  
  - Unions holding National Consultation Rights (NCR) under the Labor Relations Statute participated in the development of the new Performance Management and Appraisal Program with senior DoD leadership
- Nothing in the Performance Management and Appraisal Program changes the rights of employees, unions, or management
- How the program is implemented may be guided by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)
  - Depending on the procedures contained in the CBA, bargaining may be required prior to local implementation of the new program
- Consult your local Human Resources (HR) Labor & Employee Relations office for collective bargaining guidance
Performance management is a strategic tool to increase individual success and accountability, achieve organization and organizational goals, and improve operational efficiency. The official definition for our purposes comes from 5 CFR 430.102:

“Performance Management is the systematic process by which an Agency involves its employees, as individuals and members of a group, in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of Agency mission and goals.”

An effective performance management program helps supervisors recognize their employees’ full performance potential by differentiating between high achievers and those requiring improvement, thereby assisting DoD in meeting its mission and goals. Performance management should be a continuous cycle of communication, development, and results rather than a once-a-year event. The DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program is designed to actively encourage two-way communication between the supervisor and the employee throughout the performance appraisal process.

Each phase in the three-phase process represents a continuum with events that must occur at certain points but may also occur throughout the process. For example, performance plans are always developed at the beginning of the performance process but may be updated at any point to reflect changes in the organizational mission, team priorities, or employee duties. Let’s talk about each step in the process.

**Planning** performance is the critical first step to a successful performance management process and is essential to achieving and sustaining a high-performance culture. During planning, the supervisor establishes and clearly communicates performance expectations
Lesson 1: Performance Management Overview

in order to focus efforts toward achieving organizational goals and objectives. Each performance plan identifies specific performance expectations that have been established for the employee and for which the employee will be held accountable. Supervisors and employees share responsibility for planning performance. We’ll talk more about shared responsibility later.

In a high-performing organization, supervisors are continually and consistently monitoring assignments and projects to measure performance and provide ongoing feedback to employees and work groups on progress toward reaching their goals. In addition to providing feedback whenever exceptional or ineffective performance is observed, supervisors should provide periodic feedback about day-to-day accomplishments and contributions. During the monitoring process, communication is the most important determinant of success of the employee and supervisor. For the feedback process to work well, communication must be a two-way process and a joint responsibility of both supervisors and employees.

For our purposes today, “evaluating performance” means rating employee performance against the elements and standards in an employee’s performance plan and assigning a rating of record. Supervisors are required to rate each performance element based on an approved plan and provide a rating of record for each employee who has been under an approved performance plan for at least 90 calendar days during the appraisal process. A written rating of record must be given to each employee after the end of the appraisal process and is based on work performed during the appraisal process. The DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program utilizes three performance summary levels: a 5 is “Outstanding,” a 3 is “Fully Successful,” and a 1 is “Unacceptable.”

It’s important to remember that this is not a linear process, nor is it a cycle. Yes, supervisors are required to hold three documented performance discussions (communicating the performance plan, progress review, and the performance appraisal) during the appraisal process. But the emphasis of this program is on continuous and timely planning, monitoring, and evaluating throughout the performance year. The goal for both supervisors and employees should be “no surprises” at the end of the appraisal process. The formal performance appraisal discussion session should be a culmination of discussions which have occurred throughout the appraisal process. We are trying to de-emphasize the traditional year-end appraisal as a capstone event, and instead emphasize a new culture of continuous communication.

Recognition and rewards motivate employees and acknowledge their achievements or contributions which is an integral part of performance management. It happens throughout the process, so we don’t consider it a phase. It is important to recognize good performance and achievements throughout the appraisal process as they occur. It is important that recognition and rewards be granted in a timely manner—ideally, immediately after the recognizable action. Otherwise, the reward can lose its relevance.
and employees will not have a clear sense of what behavior or accomplishment is rewarded. Honorary awards and time-off awards should be used throughout the appraisal process. Supervisors are encouraged to use non-monetary awards, especially when funds for monetary awards are limited and restricted.
DoD core values are an integral part of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program.

They are: Leadership, Professionalism, and Technical Knowledge through dedication to duty, integrity, ethics, honor, courage, and loyalty.

Core values are the foundational principles that guide how people in an organization will conduct their everyday business. Core Values guide the strategies of the organization and establish a foundation of accountability.

When supervisors and employees discuss these values, there is an increased awareness of the common ground shared by all individuals within the DoD. Helping employees see a “clear line-of-sight” between organizational goals and the Department’s strategic priority is an important way of making sure they are focusing their efforts on the work that makes the greatest contribution to mission accomplishment.
Culture is a leading contributor to a high performing organization. You can think of culture as “the way things get done around here.” It is the workplace’s basic attitude and is deeply rooted in every aspect of everyday operations. Culture is an often overlooked aspect of performance management. Research indicates that high-performing companies have a culture that makes success and achievement a priority. In turn, this idea creates an environment and a workforce that shares a commitment to high performance.

High-performing organizations have a culture that embraces values such as the importance of accountability and integrity at all levels, a focus on continuous learning and improving, an appreciation for the value of diversity and respect for the individuals that make up the organization, and knowledge of how to effectively communicate. It is important to note that these attributes and values cannot be mandated and instilled in an organization’s culture overnight; rather, they must evolve and are reinforced by policies and practices over time.

Let’s discuss the following foundational values that are essential to the success of our daily work.

- Accountability
- Integrity
- Continuous Learning and Improvement
- Diversity
- Communication
- Respect
There is a link between each employee and the overall DoD mission success that starts at DoD level, flows down through the Components, commands, and activities, to the supervisor and employees. Each of these levels of leadership ensures that performance planning and monitoring are focused on one thing: supporting the DoD mission.

DoD is responsible for providing a fair, credible, and transparent performance management program. In executing this program, it is the Component, command, or activity that is ultimately responsible for creating a culture of high performance in support of its mission. This includes encouraging effective communication between employees and supervisors, and ensuring that supervisors have the skills and time needed to carry out performance management responsibilities successfully. Senior leaders drive performance by communicating the mission and goals of the organization and setting the tone for the organization’s mission and values. Second-level supervisors provide guidance and coaching and ultimately hold first-level supervisors accountable.

Strong, purpose-driven leadership is the key to success. But it is through the collaborative efforts of first-level supervisors and employees that mission accomplishment happens.

Supervisors are responsible for developing performance expectations with the participation of employees; communicating throughout the performance management cycle about employees’ goals, performance, and development; recognizing successful performance and coaching for improved performance; and ensuring that employees have the tools, training and development, and resources needed to carry out their duties successfully.
Supervisors, in their day-to-day interactions with employees, have the power to impact the individual performance of all of their employees. Performance management is one of the most important aspects of supervisory and managerial responsibilities. We will talk later about specific actions and key activities for supervisors related to the three phases of performance management.

Employees at all levels are responsible for actively communicating with their supervisors about their performance, taking an active role in planning their development, being accountable for their actions, and continually striving for excellence in their performance in support of DoD’s mission.

Interactions between supervisor and employee, while often initiated by the supervisor, need to be viewed as a two-way communication; both supervisor and employee have responsibilities for exhibiting behaviors that lead to positive outcomes within the work unit. The employee is expected to take an active role in their own performance management. In a performance-based culture where employee engagement and the critical role of supervisors are emphasized, both supervisors and employees should not underestimate the value engaged employees have in the performance management process. Getting employees involved helps them to understand how their work affects the organization’s mission accomplishment and gives them a sense of ownership in their performance plan.
Here are some key requirements of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program.

The performance appraisal cycle runs from April 1 through March 31 of the following calendar year, and the rating of record is effective June 1.

A minimum of three documented performance discussions is required, but there is a strong emphasis on continual feedback that should occur many times throughout the appraisal process.

The Performance Management and Appraisal Program is characterized by a three-level rating pattern that includes:

- Clearly developed performance elements and standards linked to organizational goals
- Descriptive narrative assessments that show distinctions in performance
- Documented performance that informs other personnel decisions

The three levels are: Unacceptable, Fully Successful, and Outstanding.
The three additional requirements of the program are:

*Continuous recognition and rewards* are highly recommended, and these may include monetary awards or non-monetary and time-off awards. The key theme here is that recognizing and rewarding employees does not only happen at the end of the appraisal cycle; it should happen throughout the performance year. We’ll talk more about incentives later today.

The program focuses on fostering *cultural and attitudinal changes regarding performance management*. This effort will require a positive message that change is important—and that all levels of the organization support this need for change. Ensuring DoD has a culture that facilitates employee engagement and high performance requires senior DoD leadership to wholeheartedly embrace, communicate, and model the attributes necessary for a high-performance culture to develop and succeed. Because culture and employee engagement are vital in the creation and sustenance of a high-performing workforce, DoD must begin the change to any proposed performance management program by examining these cultural attributes and engagement themes to determine DoD’s performance strengths and weaknesses. Cultural change will take a lot of time and work, and we will begin that journey in *Lesson 2: Engaged Employees* and *Lesson 3: Continuous Feedback* today.

Finally, the Performance Management and Appraisal Program implements DoD’s *automated performance appraisal tool*, MyPerformance (which is located within the MyBiz application). There will be training available on that tool as your Components begin to implement the program.
The DoD Performance Management Model is comprised of three phases. They are the 1) Planning, 2) Monitoring, and 3) Evaluating. Each phase is addressed briefly in this overview, but will be explained in detail, later in the course.

**Planning Phase** – During the Planning Phase, supervisors set performance expectations for the performance year and meet with their employees to ensure understanding of the performance plan.

**Monitoring Phase** – The Monitoring Phase is all about providing ongoing, timely, and constructive feedback to employees related to the performance elements in their plan. The goal of an effective Monitoring Phase is an evaluation discussion with no surprises for either the supervisor or the employee – in other words, this is not the first time that an employee should be made aware of a performance issue.

**Evaluating Phase** – The Evaluating Phase is the end of the appraisal cycle, and requires supervisors to rate employee performance against the elements and standards in an employee’s performance plan and assign a rating of record.
You should be able to:

- Describe how performance management links to Department of Defense (DoD) mission and values
- Identify DoD core values
- Identify key performance management roles and responsibilities
- Identify key performance management features
- Identify the DoD performance management process (model)
Here are some additional resources and learning tools.


Additional resources are available on the DCPAS LERD web site https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Pages/Home1.aspx. This includes such things as:
What questions do you have about Lesson 1?
LESSON 2: ENGAGED EMPLOYEES

The purpose of Lesson 2 of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program Training course is to define employee engagement in terms of the DoD culture of high performance; show supervisors and employees why it is important to be engaged at work; to discover and identify activities that can improve supervisor-employee engagement and relationships.
Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Define the relationship between organizational effectiveness and performance management
- Define employee engagement in terms of the DoD culture of high performance
- Identify activities that can improve supervisor-employee engagement and relationships
- Identify strategies to enhance employee engagement
Performance Management is defined as the integrated process by which an agency involves its employees in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of agency mission and strategic goals. So, what exactly is organizational effectiveness? Organizational effectiveness is how well an organization is able to meet its goals.

Performance management is centered on supervisors engaging with their employees to plan work, monitor employee progress and provide constructive feedback, address training and development needs, assess performance, and recognize performance when appropriate. It involves more “soft” concepts such as building trust throughout the workforce; establishing credibility, transparency, and equity in the processes; treating employees fairly; and increasing accountability. When executed properly, performance management practices can greatly increase employee commitment, engagement, and performance. Effective performance management significantly improves organizational performance.
Employee engagement is the foundation for a high-performing work environment. A high-performing work environment is a place where success and achievement are a priority. This kind of organization focuses on employee engagement, development, and performance, and fosters personal accountability.

Generally speaking, there are two types of high-performance environments: directive and collaborative. Directive high performance is based upon supervisors giving instructions and employees carrying them out effectively. Collaborative high performance goes in both directions—the supervisors provide instructions and manage their employees while employees provide feedback (often known as “upward feedback”).

Both types have their use in the workplace.

Discussion Questions:

- When is it appropriate to use the directive style?
- Do you work in a directive environment? A collaborative environment?
- Which environment creates an organization that can meet its goals?
Employee engagement is a heightened connection among employees, their work, their organizations, and the people with whom they work, including their supervisors. Employee engagement includes a high level of motivation to perform well at work combined with passion for the work. When employees are engaged, they are absorbed intellectually and emotionally in their work and vigorously invest their best efforts to achieve the outcomes needed by the organization to achieve its goals.

The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) has done a lot of research into engaging Federal employees. They identified six themes that are important to Federal employees. When employees perceive the organization’s culture embodies these themes, they perform at high levels, believe their work is important, and derive personal satisfaction from a job well done. The greater the employees’ engagement, the more likely it is they will choose to spend time improving their performance and the overall performance of the organization. This choice is vital to a culture of high performance.

Therefore, a performance management program that facilitates employee engagement will naturally help create and support a culture of high performance.

In contrast, disengaged employees do not commit enough attention and effort to perform at their best. In addition to lower levels of performance, the results of low employee engagement can include high turnover, grievances, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints, disciplinary actions, performance-based adverse actions, absenteeism, negative attitudes, and low morale.

Employee engagement is the foundation of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program. The DoD culture of high performance is one that fosters employee engagement and personal accountability in maintaining high performance.
Engagement between the employee and the supervisor is one of the keys to a high-performance work environment. For employees to be engaged, they must be able to communicate openly with their supervisors. This provides a powerful opportunity to actively engage in frequent communication between employee and supervisor about accomplishments, current work, and future goals.

Employees should arrange a time to meet with their supervisor to discuss the following topics:

- **DoD core values.** Supervisors are one of the main sources of spreading core values throughout the organization. Supervisors should be sure to integrate DoD core values into their work teams. If employees have questions about the core values, they should ask their supervisor for an explanation.

- **Organizational goals.** One a supervisor’s main roles is to form a bridge between organizational goals and the individual goals of the employees. If an employee does not understand how their job impacts the larger organization, their supervisor should be able to help them make the connection.

- **Work assignment and accountability.** Employees need to know what is expected of them, and what they should be working on during their work day. This is especially important for employees who work on a variety of tasks throughout their day/week.

- **Time, resources, and changing mission requirements.** Supervisors should know with time, resources, and mission requirements have to change. An open dialog between employees and supervisors during those times is critical for reducing the challenges that come with changes in these kinds of fundamentals.
• Career goals and interests. Employees should be sure to tell their supervisor about career goals, professional interests, or other developmental opportunities. Supervisors should make a point of encouraging employees to find ways to address their career goals and interests.

• Focus on performance planning. Supervisors are responsible for writing performance plans for employees. But employees are strongly encouraged to provide input to their supervisor during the planning process.

• Skill development and learning opportunities. Keeping skills fresh and learning new techniques or methods benefits everyone in the organization. Employees have the best insight into their own development and learning needs, and they should keep an open dialog with their supervisor about these needs.

Both supervisors and employees have a responsibility to ensure they are having continuous, meaningful two-way discussions related to current performance and progress in meeting performance goals.
Employees who feel a sense of ownership in the organization can help their supervisors be more effective. Employees and supervisors should engage in open communication about how to improve organizational effectiveness and employee engagement.

Supervisors need to understand how employees accomplish work, which provides information on how to best support them. There can be differences between how supervisors perceive the strengths and areas for improvement of employees versus how employees perceive their own performance. There is no process in the current program to ensure stakeholder awareness of the gaps for collaborative resolution.

This process consists of three roles for employees:

1. **Team Empowerment:** Sharing the load of team management with the supervisor by being an active partner in the team. Employees can help a supervisor manage the team by:
   - Helping to maintain team cohesion
   - Understanding what others on the team do
   - Sharing their sense of the team’s strengths and areas for improvement
   - Sharing their understanding of the team’s biggest challenges

2. **Upward Coaching:** Transparency into how the work gets done.
   - Helping the supervisor understand both the team’s and their responsibilities
   - Sharing the best informal ways of getting things done
• Sharing the team’s long-term work goals
• Teaching their supervisor a new skill, concept, process, or procedure

3. Upward Feedback: Communicating about the supervisor’s effectiveness in engaging employees:
   • Giving their supervisors constructive feedback
   • Providing feedback on their supervisors’ ideas
   • Sharing their understanding of supervisors’ strengths and areas for improvement

This collaborative engagement by employees has the potential to increase the effectiveness of the supervisor and the productivity of the work unit. It is important for supervisors to facilitate the process of employees engaging in these activities. For example, supervisors can ask employees for their feedback and discuss with them how the feedback will be used. This open communication, in addition to increasing supervisory effectiveness, has the added benefit of building employee engagement because employees feel a sense of ownership in the organization when they see that their input is valued.

Regardless of the specific method used, it is most effective if there is a trusting supervisor-employee relationship in place.
The purpose of this exercise is to review employee engagement scenarios with a small group, assess level of employee engagement, and offer feedback for improvement.

**Instructions:**

- Break out into small groups and appoint a note taker, a time keeper, and a spokesperson.
- With your group, review the assigned scenario and answer the accompanying questions.
- Be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

**Time:** 25 minutes.
For Group #1:

**Scenario:** Betty is a supervisor who loves her job and is very passionate about what she does and how she does it. She takes advantage of opportunities to learn more about her field, attending an annual conference and signing up for seminars when they are offered. Her personal values align well with those of the agency, and she emphasizes the importance of their mission to her employees. She ensures that her team is prepared to take advantage of developmental opportunities. Her employees always know her expectations for their work because she meets with them regularly to discuss their work. Her employees always give her their best and follow her lead in looking for opportunities to grow professionally. They take great pains with their work to ensure it’s the best they can do. They often collaborate with each other, reaching out to help each other achieve their goals.

Betty has never thought to nominate her team for the agency’s annual Outstanding Department of the Year Award for exceptional performance, even though supervisors often tell her how much they enjoy working with her team. They often praise the team’s professionalism and say that the team’s work is first-rate. Betty takes great pride in receiving these compliments and believes it is because of the high standards she has instilled in the team.
For Group #1:

Questions:

1. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is being disengaged and 5 is being highly engaged, how engaged do you think Betty is? What is the basis for your judgment?

2. What are some of the positive results of Betty’s level of employee engagement in her job?

3. How would your employees respond to Betty’s style and level of employee engagement? Why?
For Group #2:

**Scenario:** Sam was promoted to supervisor almost a year ago, partly because of his strong technical skills, but also because he so clearly loved what he was doing. His values closely matched the mission of the organization, which made him work harder than many of his counterparts. He is highly competent in his team’s technical area, and often prefers to solve problems himself rather than delegating appropriately to his employees or ask their opinions on how to proceed.

Although Sam is courteous and respectful to his employees, he does not spend much time talking with them to find out about their career goals or professional interests. He is very reserved and his team seems to be reluctant to initiate conversations with him about topics such as his expectations for their performance, opportunities for growth, or offering to take more responsibility for decision making.

Sam received feedback during his performance review that suggested he should focus on his interpersonal skills as a way to help his employees become more engaged with their work and the agency. Since he received this feedback, Sam has become less enthusiastic and involved in his work. He often leaves work early and avoids having one-on-one conversations with his team. He knows that this is having a negative effect on his team’s engagement and motivation, but he does not know what to do.
For Group #2:

**Questions:**

1. What effect will Sam's diminishing engagement have on his team's level of engagement?

2. If you were Sam's supervisor and you noticed this change in behavior, what would you do?

3. If Sam really wants to change things and get his team engaged in their work, what could he do?
For Group #3:

**Scenario:** Francine is an experienced supervisor who absolutely loves her job. She enjoys both the technical work and, particularly, being in a position to assist and influence others in their career development. She feels that working with her team is one of the most important things she does, and looks forward to opportunities to mentor them and share her knowledge. Francine also acts as a conduit for information from other parts of the organization. Last month, her supervisor told her that several budget-cutting actions were coming within the next two months. These included cutting training classes and cuts in awards programs for the rest of the fiscal year. Depending on how much money is saved through these cuts, leadership is considering reorganizing some departments to improve efficiency.

Her employees seemed to appreciate her interest and they came to her for advice and, following her example, they worked very collaboratively. After she told her team about the upcoming budget cutting measures, she has noticed that they seem to be working more on their own rather than seeking out others to share ideas or discuss problems. In addition, they are not communicating with her in person, often choosing to email her rather than call or come to her office. So far, performance has not decreased, but Francine is concerned that the cuts are causing her team to feel less engaged with the agency.
For Group #3:

Questions:

1. What are some potential causes for the change within the team?

2. What can Francine do to help improve the team’s engagement level?

3. What effect might her supervisors’ lower levels of employee engagement have on Francine’s own attitude and engagement? What could she do to re-energize herself?
What are some strategies that supervisors can implement to enhance employee engagement immediately upon returning to the workplace?

In this exercise, you will brainstorm ideas for enhancing employee engagement in the workplace. Then you will review and compare the ideas and vote on the best ideas.

Instructions:

1. You will have three minutes write down three ideas for enhancing employee engagement that would work in your office.
2. Write the ideas on separate sticky notes and then stick the notes on chart paper pages on the wall.
3. Once everyone has put their sticky notes on the wall, you should review the other ideas and vote for your favorites.
4. You will get 5 votes in the form of circle stickers (1 sticker = 1 vote). You can put all of your votes on a single idea or spread them around as you see fit.
5. You will have a few minutes for voting. Then the instructor will tally the votes.

Time: 15 minutes.
Here are some additional ideas for engaging employees in the workplace.

Supervisors can:

- Create teambuilding activities. Many offices hold division-level retreats and seminars that include all divisional supervisors. These meetings typically focus on topics of interest to the division and often include segments that are used to identify ways to improve the operation of the organization.
- Bring food into the equation. Supervisors may bring in food (e.g., pizza, cupcakes), coordinate team lunches, and/or coordinate potluck events with their team.
- Develop and monitor individual development plans (IDPs). As part of the performance process, employees and their supervisors discuss their IDPs. This includes discussing goals, performance expectations, and things they will do throughout the year.
- Give employees the opportunity to provide input. Encourage employees to express interest in and have their names proposed to work on specific projects.
- Encourage and model work-life balance: Supervisors walk around and talk to employees in their environment. Supervisors can also publicly support work-life programs such as telework, EAP, or health and fitness programs, as appropriate.
- Create lateral and rotational assignments. Employees are frequently assigned collateral duties on teams, working groups, and steering committees that allow the individual to work on tasks that are outside their routine. These assignments are helpful in instilling ownership, inclusion, and a sense of collaboration in the employees and their respective offices.
• Take opportunities to provide positive feedback. Give positive reinforcement and feedback. Project being on the same team rather than making power plays.

Encouragement is another powerful employee engagement strategy. There are several ways for supervisors to encourage development within the workplace:

• Encourage inquiry and a sense of constant curiosity. This may include a seminar series that provides opportunities for employees to give presentations about their various areas of expertise to other employees. They can also collaborate with other supervisors to act as panel experts for discussions or presentations and lend knowledge to panel discussions on various topics. Invite employees to these forums, allowing them to ask questions and gain new knowledge.

• Encourage service and volunteerism. Encourage employees to volunteer within their communities to further develop their particular skill sets as well as to develop leadership skills by taking on leadership roles within their communities.

• Encourage interdepartmental learning. Promote resources already available in the organization by inviting employees who have a variety of skill sets or belong to other offices to collaborate and work on projects together. You may also organize informal interdepartmental get-togethers during lunch, breaks, or brown bag sessions to discuss, build relationships, and build communities of practice.

• Encourage employees to find a mentor. Talk to your employees to find out which of them are interested in mentoring or even job shadowing. Then think about who would make good matches to provide both parties with developmental opportunities. Be a facilitator in helping employees form relationships with other individuals, such as supervisors, that you have access to. Use mentoring to get older and younger employees talking, such as sharing knowledge and ideas and combining perspectives in new and interesting ways.

Supervisors can help everyone stay engaged by:

• Sharing their time with all employees: This shows that they support and value them and their work, and that they are accessible and interested in them. This can be done by simply walking around and having informal conversations with employees.

• Providing agency resources, tools, and other support: An environment conducive to working can help instill a sense of pride in the workspace and the organization. It also sends the message that the organization wants to take care of them and provide for their work needs.
• Fostering and requiring a culture of ongoing feedback: Supervisors can set up a cycle of regular formal progress reviews, informal interactions, and continuous learning for employees on giving, receiving, requesting, and utilizing feedback.
How well do these engagement ideas work in your workplace?

Discussion Questions:

- In your workplace experience, what have you seen that engages people?
- What disengages them?
You should now be able to:

- Define the relationship between organizational effectiveness and performance management
- Define employee engagement in terms of the DoD culture of high performance
- Identify activities that can improve supervisor-employee engagement and relationships
- Identify strategies to enhance employee engagement
Here are some additional resources and learning tools.


Additional resources are available on the DCPAS LERD web site at: [https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Pages/Home1.aspx](https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Pages/Home1.aspx)
What questions do you have about Lesson 2?
LES S 3 N: CONTINUOUS FEEDAACK

The purpose of Lesson 3 of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program Training course is to describe how effective performance management is critical to the DoD culture of high performance; identify trust behaviors between supervisors and employees that build engagement and improve performance; and explain how constructive performance feedback is beneficial for supervisors and employees in terms of performance management.
Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe how effective performance management is critical to the DoD culture of high performance
- Identify trust behaviors between supervisors and employees
- Explain how constructive performance feedback is beneficial for supervisors and employees in terms of performance management
- Practice giving, getting, and observing performance feedback in a small group

This lesson will take approximately one and one-half hours to complete.
There are two concepts that form the foundation of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program: effective performance management and the DoD culture of high performance. These two concepts support each other in a virtuous cycle.

Effective performance management does three things:

1. Increases employee commitment, engagement, and individual performance
2. Aligns the efforts of supervisors and employees with organizational goals
3. As a result of these two things, effective performance management significantly improves organizational performance—if individuals are performing, the organization will too

With the Performance Management and Appraisal Program, DoD is committing to building a culture of high performance that focuses on employee engagement, development, high performance, and accountability. Remember, in Lesson 1 we said culture was “the way things get done around here.” It is the workplace’s basic attitude and is deeply rooted in every aspect of everyday operations. Culture impacts how seriously an organization takes performance management. You may have experienced an organization that checked the box on performance management, and as a result never realized the full potential of effective performance management.

Effective performance management fosters a culture of high performance that emphasizes the importance of employee engagement, the critical role of supervisors, and accountability and integrity at all levels. This culture in turn reinforces effective performance management practices that align the efforts of supervisors and employees with organizational goals, promote consistency in performance review, and motivate employees to perform at their best.
Both of these concepts support the DoD core values, which form the foundation of the DoD culture of high performance. Do you know the DoD core values? They are:

**Leadership, professionalism, and technical knowledge through dedication to duty, integrity, ethics, honor, courage, and loyalty.**

Can you see how these values influence both performance management and a culture that emphasizes high performance?

**Discussion Questions:**

- Where have you seen examples of effective performance management?
- What was the culture like there?
- Have you experienced a high performance culture?
One aspect of both a culture of high performance and effective organizational performance management is the level of trust between supervisors and employees.

Trust between supervisors and employees is essential in high-performing organizations and a key part of effective performance management. The trust behaviors listed here are a common set of interactions that an employee and supervisor will have in a culture of high performance. These are the behaviors that employees and supervisors exhibit in a trusting relationship.

Ongoing discussion about these behaviors leads to consistent application, which helps to create a culture of high performance. Whether you are an employee or a supervisor, discuss these behaviors regularly as part of performance feedback.
Trust Behaviors are a common set of interactions that an employee and supervisor will have in a culture of high performance. These are the behaviors that employees and supervisors exhibit in a trusting relationship.

**Engaging and Motivating**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connects employee’s work to the organization’s strategy and success</td>
<td>Brings “best self”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages employees to be positive and enthusiastic</td>
<td>Openly shares opinions and needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expresses confidence in employee’s abilities</td>
<td>Commits to the success of the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sets examples of desired work behaviors</td>
<td>Willingly cooperates to attain goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets commitments and admits mistakes</td>
<td>Participates in team activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens carefully to views and opinions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuades and encourages others to move in the desired direction (corrective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages employee innovation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages employee engagement with co-workers through teaming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows personal interest in employee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sharing Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifies relevant information</td>
<td>Asks for needed information and establishes understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensures that employees develop a shared understanding</td>
<td>Attends informational briefs, actively listens to shared information, and reads informative messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actively listens to employee's opinions and concerns</td>
<td>Shares opinions and concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps establish robust communications channels between all levels of the organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Planning Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breaks down projects into manageable components</td>
<td>Asks for further guidance as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translates goals into step-by-step plans</td>
<td>Provides critical and strategic input based on expertise and knowledge of workload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates clear work plans and time tables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assigning and Managing Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understands the projects and tasks that best utilize employees’ skills and abilities and preferences</td>
<td>Recognizes and shares his or her preferences for types of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives challenging assignments</td>
<td>Accepts challenging assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishes clear expectations</td>
<td>Acknowledges understanding of expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps teams get started on new projects</td>
<td>Strives to meet expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redefines workload as priorities change</td>
<td>Maintains flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains continuity of work assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 3: Continuous Feedback

Finding Solutions and Removing Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Listens to employee issues and concerns</td>
<td>• Conveys/reports issues that have arisen during work on assigned projects and tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assists in problem-solving</td>
<td>• Makes suggestions for overcoming difficulties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coaches employee to come up with resolutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Providing Ongoing Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Maintains awareness of employee results and accomplishments</td>
<td>• Provides status of accomplishments and results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides feedback that is fair, accurate, timely, and performance-related, and that feedback stresses employee strengths and successes</td>
<td>• Acknowledges and responds to feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offers specific suggestions for improvement</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Appraising Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Explains all aspects of the performance appraisal process</td>
<td>• Participates in the development of performance standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establishes and communicates performance standards</td>
<td>• Understands and seeks clarification of performance standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consistently and regularly assesses and captures performance outputs with meaningful metrics and measures</td>
<td>• Actively listens to performance appraisals and initiates changes as necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Schedules and prepares for required performance review discussions per established timelines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Takes fair and equitable performance-based actions in a timely manner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Managing Talent

DCPAS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discusses short-and long-term career goals</td>
<td>Discusses short-and long-term career goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifies and discusses the need for competency development in current</td>
<td>Completes training assignments in a timely manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and future roles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares ideas for required developmental activities to meet competency</td>
<td>Participates in identifying needs for development of skills, aptitude,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gaps and goals</td>
<td>knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps employees build internal job-focused networks; connects employees</td>
<td>Actively seeks opportunities for development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to optimal set of talented co-workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides necessary resources and opportunities for development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Performance feedback is a critical part of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program. One of the guiding principles of performance management is to create a culture of engagement by fostering ongoing feedback. Another principle is to emphasize the ongoing nature of performance management while deemphasizing the year-end appraisal event. Performance feedback is continuous and meaningful, and should always be two-way.

In a high-performing organization, supervisors continually monitor assignments and projects consistently to measure performance and provide ongoing feedback to employees and work groups on progress toward reaching their goals. In addition to providing feedback whenever exceptional or ineffective performance is observed, supervisors should provide periodic feedback about day-to-day accomplishments and contributions, as this is very valuable. Feedback is essential because timely feedback allows employees the opportunity to adjust accordingly.
An effective performance feedback session is not a one-way dialogue; rather, it is an opportunity for two-way communication between supervisor and employee. Employees are encouraged to proactively engage with their supervisor, participate in meaningful performance discussions to foster positive and beneficial outcomes, and ask clarifying questions about expectations. Another important aspect of two-way communication is active listening. Both supervisor and employee should focus on what is said. Don’t interrupt or get defensive; both parties should take time to consider the feedback and response.

This collaborative engagement by employees has the potential to increase the effectiveness of the supervisor and the productivity of the work unit. Open, honest and/or direct feedback is very important because it builds trust between employees and supervisors. Supervisors who encourage and engage in open feedback and discuss with employees how they plan to use this feedback can increase engagement and team productivity because employees will feel a sense of ownership in the organization when they see that their input is valued and included in decision-making.
Why is feedback important? There are numerous studies that show quantifiable performance benefits from meeting often with employees to share fair, accurate, helpful, and specific feedback. This simple, yet powerful, supervisor behavior has been shown to boost commitment to the organization.

As part of a package of effective performance management practices, meeting regularly to review progress and provide feedback is a key factor in employee engagement.

Feedback is important for both the supervisor and the employee.

For the employee, it gives him or her a voice. We should not underestimate the positive influence this has on an employee’s engagement level. When employees feel like their opinions are valued, they are much more likely to increase their performance levels. In addition to the simple matter of promoting understanding and perspective, there are three contexts for understanding the importance of feedback to employees.

For supervisors, they can ask employees for their feedback and discuss how the feedback will be used. This open communication, in addition to increasing supervisory effectiveness, has the added benefit of building employee engagement because employees feel a sense of ownership in the organization when they see that their input is valued. Regardless of the specific method used, it is most effective if there is a trusting supervisor-employee relationship in place.

Feedback benefits go far in helping supervisors and employee, depending on the context or environment:
Lesson 3: Continuous Feedback

- The **performance context** relates to our individual performance in the workplace. It’s the ruler we use to measure our impact on the overall organization.

- The **developmental context** informs us about how well the work is getting done. Are we as efficient or effective as we could be? Without feedback we would never know if we can improve.

- The **personal context** tells us how others perceive us. Personal feedback is important to keeping our relationships healthy and functioning.

**Why is feedback important?**

- Promotes an understanding of the issue/topic/concern
- Makes the other person aware of one’s perspective
- In a performance context, feedback provides the supervisor’s perspective of what’s working (or not)
- In a developmental context, feedback provides opportunities to improve competence, to learn, and to progress in careers
- In a personal context, feedback can (hopefully) improve the quality of relationships
This table provides examples of effective feedback techniques. These techniques should be used during performance discussions to ensure that both employees and supervisors are communicating in the best possible way.

The table is printed below for your reference.
**Examples of Effective Feedback Techniques**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Statement</strong></th>
<th><strong>Explanation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Example</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“When you...”</td>
<td>State specific facts of behavior (non-judgmental)</td>
<td>When you do not attend staff meetings like you did today and last week ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I'm concerned...”</td>
<td>Describe how behavior affected you or the office.</td>
<td>I get concerned ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Because I...”</td>
<td>State why the observed behavior affected you in this way.</td>
<td>Because I value your contributions. You play an important role in this office accomplishing its goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pause and listen for response</td>
<td>Ask if the other person has ideas about what to do. Give the other person an opportunity to respond.</td>
<td>Do you have any ideas regarding the design of our new project? (pause and give ample time for response)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I would like...”</td>
<td>Describe what change you want the other person to consider.</td>
<td>I would like you to consider planning your schedule so that you can attend meetings or call in in advance if there is an important reason for the meeting to be rescheduled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Because...”</td>
<td>State why the change is needed.</td>
<td>Because you are a valuable member of our team and we miss your input when you are not here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What do you think...”</td>
<td>Listen to response. Discuss options and compromise on a solution, if necessary.</td>
<td>One way to ensure that both our needs are met is to ..</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One of the guiding principles of performance management is to create a culture of engagement by fostering ongoing feedback.

The purpose of this exercise is to explore both the challenges and importance of giving and receiving feedback.

**Instructions:**

1. Your instructor will divide the class into two groups.
2. Each group should appoint a note taker and a spokesperson.
3. With the chart paper provided, work with your group to answer the questions on the slide.
4. You will have five minutes to record your answers, then we will review the questions and answers with the full class.

**Time:** 10 minutes
Here are a few guidelines for practicing feedback.

- Be specific and factual; don’t evaluate or judge. Sticking to the facts reduces the emotions involved in receiving feedback.
- Separate observations about behavior from the impact of the behavior. The impact of the behavior is more important.
- Check for clarity to ensure that the receiver fully understands what’s being conveyed. It’s easy to be misunderstood when giving or receiving feedback, so take a moment to check to see if you are making the point you think you are making.
- Refer to behaviors about which the receiver can do something.
- Provide timely feedback after the behavior. The closer the feedback to the behavior, the more impact the feedback will have.

Discussion Question:

- After reading through these, would you change anything from the previous exercise?
If you are receiving feedback you have one job?: Just listen. Receiving feedback is that easy. Don’t interrupt. Don’t get defensive. Don’t respond at that moment. Remember, it’s not easy to give feedback. Appreciate the risk the person giving you feedback has taken, and try to accept it from a positive place.

Discussion Question:
What do you think will happen the next time someone needs to give feedback to you if you violate these guidelines?
We’ve all had challenges in both giving and receiving feedback.

*Discussion Questions:*

- What are some of the difficulties in giving feedback?
- What are some of the difficulties in receiving feedback?
- What are some ideas for overcoming the barriers to giving and receiving feedback?
One way to address the challenges of giving feedback is to use a tool to help you focus your feedback. The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) has created one such tool called the Situation-Behavior-Impact (SBI) model.

Effective feedback can help the receiver understand exactly what he or she did and what impact it had on you and others. When the information is specific but without interpretation or evaluation, there is a better chance that the person getting the feedback will be motivated to begin, continue, or stop behaviors that affect performance. The CCL has developed the SBI model as a simple way to help the receiver understand the impact his or her actions had on you or others.

- **Situation** = The setting and circumstances (when and where). It anchors feedback in time, place, and circumstance and helps the receiver remember and/or understand the context.
- **Behavior** = Observable actions of the person you’re giving the feedback to (what the person did that you observed). Telling what you observed allows the feedback receiver to know exactly what he or she did that had impact.
- **Impact** = Emotions and feelings you have as a result of the behavior (what the behavior causes). When you share your feelings and thoughts, and how you or others behaved as a result of the feedback receiver’s behavior, you are explaining the consequences of the behavior that the receiver may not have considered.
Note that, when it’s a supervisor talking to an employee, this might be a good place to ask the employee what he or she thinks their behavior causes, rather than telling them. This creates more of a coaching conversation/learning point for the employee. This model takes emotion and assumptions out of the conversation and focuses on observable facts.
Here is an example of the SBI model.

“In the lobby before our program started (situation), you smiled, introduced yourself and put your hand out to shake (behavior), which made me feel relieved to have made a connection with someone among a room full of strangers (impact).”
This is another example of the SBI model.

“In our mid-year discussion, while I was sharing my accomplishments (*situation*), you picked up your phone and started texting (*behavior*). I felt like our discussion was not important enough to you to give me your full attention (*impact*).”
As with any new thing, you will need to practice the SBI model in order to make it a regular part of how you give feedback.

The point of this exercise is to practice creating SBI statements.

**Instructions:**

1. The *SBI Model* handout has three situations.
2. You should write SBI feedback for each of the situations.
3. Then you need to write an example of effective SBI model feedback you could give to someone you work with using the SBI model.
4. Pick a partner to review your statements while you review theirs.

**Time:** 15 minutes.
The goal of effective feedback is to reduce the emotion and focus on the facts. But what happens if you can’t? Take a moment if you are feeling defensive. If necessary, ask for time to reflect on the feedback and say you will follow up later.

You MUST follow up if you can’t discuss at the moment. Wait just long enough for the adrenaline to wear off, then seek out the person to continue the conversation. Feel free to ask clarifying questions, but make sure you’re doing it to gain further understanding and remember not to argue or make excuses.
Your approach to feedback makes all the difference in how effective it is. Your mindset plays a critical role in how it is delivered and received. If you don’t have the right mindset when giving the feedback, it won’t go well. So take time to prepare to give the feedback. Do some self-reflection to make sure you have the right motives when providing the feedback.

Here are some important questions to ask yourselves before you give the feedback. If you can answer yes to all of the questions, you’re ready to give the feedback.

- Is my feedback intended to help, not control or manipulate?
- Is my feedback based on facts, not assumptions or judgements?
- Am I presuming innocence rather than attributing negative motives?
- Will I be authentic—candid, yet compassionate, to build trust and respect?
- Do I have a positive intent?
- Will my feedback stimulate mutual learning and inspired action?
The purpose of this exercise is to give you more opportunities to practice giving feedback in a face-to-face situation.

**Instructions:**

1. Partner with someone in the class.
2. Practice offering positive, SBI-based feedback based on an experience they had with their partner earlier today.

**Discussion Question:**

- What did you find challenging? What was easy? What did you learn?

**Time:** 5 minutes.
You should now be able to:

- Describe how effective performance management is critical to the DoD culture of high performance
- Identify trust behaviors between supervisors and employees
- Explain how constructive performance feedback is beneficial for supervisors and employees in terms of performance management
- Practice giving, getting, and observing performance feedback in a small group
Here are some additional resources and learning tools.

- Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) with Karen Kirkland and Sam Manoogian. *Ongoing Feedback: How to Get It, How to Use It (1st Edition)* (Greensboro: Pfeiffer, 2007)
- Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) with Raoul J. Buron and Dana McDonald-Mann. *Giving Feedback to Subordinates (1st Edition)* (Greensboro: Pfeiffer, 2007)

Additional resources are available on the DCPAS LERD web site at: [https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/](https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/)
What questions do you have about Lesson 3?
The purpose of Lesson 4 of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program Training course is to explain the performance planning process, including how to link an organization’s performance plan (e.g., strategic workforce plan, Performance Assistance Plan) to the individual development plan (IDP); and how to write specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely (SMART) performance standards.
Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Explain the performance planning process and its importance in the DoD culture of high performance
- Explain how to link an organization’s performance plan (e.g., strategic workforce plan, Performance Assistance Plan) to the individual development plan (IDP)
- Write specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely (SMART) performance standards

This lesson will take approximately two and a half hours to complete.
REFERENCES:

- L4 Checklist for Performance Plans
- L4 Performance Plan Discussion Checklist
- L4 Performance Planning Roles and Responsibilities
- L4 Performance Standards Fact Sheet
- L4 Tips for Establishing Performance Plans

Video: Lesson 4 - Planning Meeting Video

5 CFR § 430.206. Planning Performance

(a) Appraisal period.

(1) An appraisal program shall designate an official appraisal period for which a performance plan shall be prepared, during which performance shall be monitored, and for which a rating of record shall be prepared.

(2) Each program shall specify a single length of time as its appraisal period. The appraisal period generally shall be 12 months so that employees are provided a rating of record on an annual basis. A program’s appraisal period may be longer when work assignments and responsibilities so warrant or performance management objectives can be achieved more effectively.

(b) Performance plan.

(1) Agencies shall encourage employee participation in establishing performance plans.

(2) Performance plans shall be provided to employees at the beginning of each appraisal period (normally within 30 days).

(3) An appraisal program shall require that each employee be covered by an appropriate written, or otherwise recorded, performance plan based on work assignments and responsibilities.

(4) Each performance plan shall include all elements which are used in deriving and assigning a summary level, including at least one critical element and any non-critical element(s).

(5) Each performance plan may include one or more additional performance elements, which—

(i) Are not used in deriving and assigning a summary level, and
(ii) Are used to support performance management processes as described at § 430.102(b).

(6) A performance plan established under an appraisal program that uses only two summary levels (pattern A as specified in § 430.208(d)(1)) shall not include non-critical elements.

(7) An appraisal program shall establish how many and which performance levels may be used to appraise critical and non-critical elements.

(8) Elements and standards shall be established as follows—

(i) For a critical element—

(A) At least two levels for appraisal shall be used with one level being “Fully Successful” or its equivalent and another level being “Unacceptable,” and

(B) A performance standard shall be established at the “Fully Successful” level and may be established at other levels.

(ii) For non-critical elements, when established,—

(A) At least two levels for appraisal shall be used, and

(B) A performance standard(s) shall be established at whatever level(s) is appropriate.

(iii) The absence of an established performance standard at a level specified in the program shall not preclude a determination that performance is at that level.

Excerpt from: *DoDI 1400.25 V431 (pg. 8-10)*

3.3. Planning Performance. Employee and supervisor engagement that provides opportunity for employee input is the first step in establishing ongoing communication and understanding of performance expectations and organizational goals throughout the appraisal cycle. This results in effective performance planning. Specific performance measures will be used to determine whether expectations and goals are being met. Each employee must have a written performance plan established and approved normally within 30 calendar days of the beginning of the appraisal cycle or the employee’s assignment to a new position or set of duties. The supervisor will communicate the performance plan to the employee after it has been approved in accordance with DoD Component procedures.
a. **Employee Performance Plan.** The performance plan will clearly document for each employee how the expected outcomes and results are linked to the organization’s goals and objectives and how his or her performance will be measured throughout the appraisal cycle. The performance plan includes the employee’s performance elements and performance standards for the appraisal cycle. Changes to mission, organizational goals, work unit priorities, or assigned duties that occur during the appraisal cycle may necessitate revisions to the performance plan.

b. **Performance Elements.** Performance elements describe the expectations related to the work being performed. All performance elements must be critical elements and clearly align with organizational goals. For ratings of record, each ratable element will be assigned a performance element rating. For assistance with alignment of performance elements to organizational goals, supervisors should review organizational plans and may consult with their performance improvement officer, or equivalent, as necessary. The USD(P&R) must approve DoD-wide performance elements for groups of employees, as needed. The two types of performance elements are:

1. **Critical Element.** Performance plans must have a minimum of one critical performance element, and each element must have associated performance standards that define expectations. A critical element is a work assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that an employee’s overall performance is rated as “Unacceptable.” Critical elements are only used to measure individual performance; supervisors must not establish critical elements for team performance.

2. **Supervisory Element.** All performance elements related to supervisory duties are critical elements. The number of supervisory performance elements on performance plans for supervisors will equal or exceed the number of non-supervisory (technical) performance elements. The requirement for the number of supervisory performance elements to exceed the number of non-supervisory elements does not apply to employees coded as ‘Supervisor (CSRA)’ (Civil Service Reform Act code ‘4’ in DCPDS).

c. **Performance Standards.**

Performance standards describe how the requirements and expectations provided in the performance elements are to be evaluated. Performance standards must be provided for each performance element in the performance plan and must be written at the “Fully Successful” level. The standards should include specific, measureable, achievable, relevant, and timely (SMART) criteria, which provide the framework for developing effective results and expectations. SMART standards objectively express how well an
employee must perform his or her job to achieve performance at the “Fully Successful” level by providing standards that are:

(1) **Specific.** Goals are sufficiently detailed in describing what needs to be accomplished.

(2) **Measurable.** The accomplishment of the performance element is clear and can be quantified or substantiated using objective criteria.

(3) **Achievable.** Goals are realistic, yet challenging and can be accomplished with the resources, personnel, and time available.

(4) **Relevant.** The critical element aligns with or links to organizational mission and success.

(5) **Timely.** Goals will be completed within a realistic timeframe.

d. **Developing and Communicating Performance Expectations.** Written performance plans must be developed and approved by supervisors, clearly communicated to employees, and acknowledged by employees.

(1) Normally within 30 days of the beginning of each appraisal cycle, supervisors and employees should discuss performance goals for the upcoming cycle. Supervisors must allow employees the opportunity to provide input into their performance elements and standards. While employees have the opportunity to provide input into their performance plans, supervisors must develop and approve the performance elements and standards.

(2) Supervisors must communicate each approved performance plan and how the performance expectations link to any organizational goals with their employees. This also provides an opportunity for the supervisor and employee to achieve a common understanding of the performance required for mission success.

(3) The date of the meeting or communication will be documented in the MyPerformance appraisal tool or on the DD Form 2906 and acknowledged by the employee.

e. **Modifying the Plan During the Appraisal Cycle.**

A performance plan is a flexible, living document and should be reviewed and discussed throughout each appraisal cycle. Plans may be modified as organizational goals and priorities or employee responsibilities change. All approved modifications to performance elements or standards must be discussed with and communicated to the employee, and the employee should acknowledge the revisions in the MyPerformance tool.
appraisal tool or on the DD Form 2906. If considering a change to an element or standard within 90 calendar days of the end of the appraisal cycle when work requirements change or new duties are assigned, the supervisor may:

(1) Revise the element or standard at the beginning of the next appraisal cycle;

(2) Update the plan and, if the employee does not have an opportunity to perform the new element(s) for the minimum 90-calendar-day period, do not rate the revised element(s); or

(3) Extend the appraisal cycle by the amount of time necessary to allow 90 calendar days of observed performance under the revised element or standard. Extending the appraisal cycle will affect the start date of the employee’s subsequent appraisal cycle; however, the subsequent appraisal cycle should still end March 31 of the following calendar year.
Lesson 4: Planning Performance

One of the cornerstones of the DoD culture of high performance is an effective system for performance tracking and continuous dialog about performance and recognition. It is important to note that performance management is an ongoing process. While there is a cycle with a beginning and an end, the Performance Management and Appraisal Program de-emphasizes the traditional end-of-cycle performance management event. Performance management is not about the year-end appraisal we all know. Performance management should be a continuous process throughout the year.

During the planning process, supervisors establish performance expectations for each employee. Supervisors must meet with their employees within 30 days of the new cycle to communicate these elements for the upcoming year and create a performance plan. But this should be a joint effort. In the end, it is still the supervisor’s responsibility to create a performance plan, but the recommendation is to involve the employee in the planning process.

Employees are encouraged to actively participate in defining performance expectations and standards. As a matter of fact, with their direct, first-hand knowledge of how the work gets done and the barriers and constraints that may impact their performance, employee participation is essential for developing realistic expectations and standards.

This approach to performance management is renewed to emphasize and encourage employee proactivity to contribute to the DoD culture of high performance, with its focus on employee engagement, development, performance, and accountability. It aligns employees’ performance expectations and work with organizational goals and DoD’s mission.
Based on this kind of culture, the Performance Management and Appraisal Program recognizes and rewards employees based on their performance and contributions to the DoD’s mission. Employees who do not perform at an acceptable level should not be rewarded with a salary increase on the same schedule as those employees who do perform at an acceptable or higher level.

As we have discussed, the performance management cycle is:

- Proactively planning work and setting expectations;
- Continually monitoring performance;
- Evaluating performance in a summary fashion; and
- Recognizing and rewarding good performance.

There are specific activities that take place during each phase of the cycle. In this lesson, we’re going to look at the first phase: Planning.
Planning is the critical first step to a successful performance management program and is essential to achieving and sustaining the DoD culture of high performance.

One aspect of this kind of culture of high performance is defining what is important. During the planning process, the supervisor establishes and clearly communicates performance expectations in order to focus efforts on achieving organizational goals. Each performance plan identifies specific performance expectations the supervisor establishes for the employee and for which the employee will be held accountable. It is important to plan work and set expectations for the outcomes of an employee’s appraisal cycle.

Why this emphasis on planning?

Employees perform best when they feel their work is connected to the accomplishment of the organization’s mission. In a performance-based culture where employee engagement is emphasized, planning is a critical step. It is the supervisor’s responsibility not just to write the, recommending changes in the performance plan, and setting high standards for themselves.

Remember, the DoD culture of high performance emphasizes employee engagement, development, performance, and accountability. All four of these elements are wrapped up here in the planning process. Getting employees involved in the planning process helps them understand how their work affects the organization’s mission accomplishment and leads to:

- A better understanding of the DoD mission, what needs to be done to accomplish that mission, and why it needs to be done
- An increased awareness of expectations and results, which ones are to be attained, and why they are important in supporting the performance of the organization
- A sense of ownership in their performance plan
- Improved performance resulting directly from participating in the establishment of both the goals and the standards by which they will be evaluated

In addition to the four elements of the culture of high performance, an agreed-upon performance plan with proper elements and standards holds both supervisors and employees accountable for their performance, protecting both if questions arise about performance levels during the appraisal period.
During the Planning Phase, supervisors and managers should meet with their employees to set their performance expectations for the upcoming year and create a performance plan.

We briefly reviewed the planning phase during Lesson 1:

- As we just discussed, planning is a shared responsibility.
- Per DODI 1400.25, volume 431, performance plans must be established, approved, and communicated to each employee, normally within 30 calendar days of the beginning of the appraisal cycle (April 1, for most employees).
- Performance elements and standards establish expectations of employee performance. Elements and standards identify baselines for measuring performance results. Performance elements tell an employee what to do; performance standards tell an employee how they will be measured.
- Performance elements should be written with SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely.
- The Performance Management and Appraisal Program emphasizes the importance of the supervisory responsibilities to the performance management process. Supervisors have a number of key performance management responsibilities.
The two key roles involved in the planning phase are Employees and Supervisors.

The emphasis on employee involvement in the planning phase is part of what sets this new program apart from previous programs.

During the planning phase, employees should:

- Identify achievable elements and standards for themselves. Employees know their work best, and should share their opinions on what should be measured and how during the appraisal cycle.
- Provide input to the performance plan. While supervisors are responsible for writing the performance plan, it does not mean employees should not help their supervisors write an achievable and realistic plan. Employees can have a big impact on their appraisal cycle success by providing input to their supervisors on the specific elements and standards in a performance plan.
- Ask questions to clarify the supervisor’s expectations of their performance. If you have a question, it is critical to ask about it during the planning phase. Don’t let the appraisal cycle get started without you knowing exactly what is expected of you.

During the planning phase, supervisors will:

- Identify the organizational performance goals.
- Set appropriate performance elements.
• Identify quantifiable/measureable performance standards.
• Conduct planning discussion meetings.
• Develop and clarify performance expectations.
• Encourage continuous, meaningful two-way communication.
• Proactively communicate the plan to the employee.
• Provide a copy of the approved performance plan.
• Modify the performance plan, as needed.

In summary, supervisors have the bulk of the responsibilities during the planning phase, so we’re going to dive into these over the next few slides.
The performance plan helps employees understand why their job exists, where it fits in the organization, and how the job’s responsibilities link to DoD and organizational goals. Performance expectations serve as a foundation for communicating about performance throughout the year and the basis for reviewing employee performance. When a supervisor and employee set clear expectations about the results that must be achieved and the methods or approaches needed to achieve them, they establish a path for success.
There are two other types of plans that support an employee’s performance plan.

The Individual Development Plan (or IDP) is used to record the learning and experience needed for short- and long-range career goals. It documents the specific competencies, knowledge, skills, and abilities an employee might need to improve their performance or deepen their knowledge. An IDP lists the training, education, and other professional development strategies needed to develop the desired competencies.

Organizational performance plans document the organization’s learning and development opportunities in a systematic and planned way. One example of an organizational performance plan is the Performance Assistance Plan (PAP). PAPs are organizational performance plans typically developed by the Training, Education and Professional Development (TE&PD) activity within a Component. Your organization’s Office of Strategic Planning likely has a PAP or similar plan that you can review and incorporate into your planning process.

PAPs are not to be confused with a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). PIPs are used to give an employee whose performance is unacceptable an opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance. More information on IDPs and organizational performance plans, such as PAPs, can be found in DODI 1400-25 V410, titled, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Training, Education, and Professional Development.

The combination of an IDP linked to an organizational performance plan assists in making employee performance more effective in present or future positions and is used for employees below the executive level. The gaps in the skills or competencies needed by the organization are identified by the workforce management process.
organizational performance plan addresses those gaps, and an IDP documents the
individuals who are developing those skills or competencies.

Example: If succession planning activity identifies a shortage of employees with
acquisitions experience, an organization can create a PAP that documents how they will
offer experiential learning or development opportunities that addresses the needed
acquisitions experience. The employee with an IDP may use the organizational
performance plan to find developmental or mentoring opportunities to help achieve his
or her goals. And the supervisor would reference the employee’s IDP when writing the
elements and standards of the performance plan.
After the supervisor lists the tasks for which the employee is responsible, the tasks are converted into elements and standards.

The difference between a task and a standard is subtle but important. Tasks focus on activities and standards focus on results.

Elements and standards describe a future situation. This means that, at the end of the year, both the supervisor and the employee can judge whether the work over the past year led to the situation described in the element and standard. If the work did not lead to the situation described, the element and standard were not met.

Elements and standards should be written in plain English and be easy to understand. Typically, most employees will have 3 to 5 elements and standards. Ultimately, it is the supervisor's responsibility to document these elements and standards; however, employee involvement is crucial.

It is important to note that performance standards must be written according to the level of output that will result in a “Fully Successful” rating. If you write the standards at the highest level of performance, it will be impossible to exceed them and receive an “Outstanding” rating.
Elements describe what work is being performed. According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), elements “tell employees what to do.” An example of an element is: “Provide accurate, timely customer service.” Note that the element does not say how “accurate, timely customer service” will be measured – that’s the job of a standard (which we’ll cover next).

Performance plans must have a minimum of one performance element, maximum of 10, and each element must have an associated performance standard that defines the expectation.

The number of supervisory performance elements on performance plans for supervisors will equal or exceed the number of non-supervisory (technical) performance elements.

An organization may have standardized elements that can be applied to all employees.
Performance standards describe how the requirements and expectations provided in the performance elements are to be evaluated. Performance standards must be provided for each performance element and express how well an employee must perform to achieve the “Fully successful” level. There are three rating levels in the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program: “Outstanding,” “Fully successful,” and “Unacceptable.” Supervisors may also describe standards of success for the “Outstanding” level.

Performance standards should be written using the SMART criteria, which provide the framework for developing effective results and expectations. We'll discuss SMART performance standards next.

When a standard uses 100%, always, or never, it is called an absolute standard. While absolute standards are acceptable in occupations where protection of life is a critical aspect of the job, like Air Traffic Controller or Surgeon, who must always follow protocols and are not expected to make mistakes, most jobs allow for some errors or missed deadlines.
Performance standards should be written using the SMART criteria, which provide the framework for developing effective results and expectations.

In order to help you remember the criteria for an effective performance standard, we will utilize the acronym SMART, which stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely.

Not every performance standard has to have a quantitative standard assigned to it, but whenever possible supervisors should include specific deadlines, time limitations, budget restrictions, or other standards for quality, quantity, timeliness, or cost-effectiveness. While not every performance standard lends itself to utilizing all five aspects of the SMART criteria, supervisors should strive to include as many of the SMART criteria as possible.
Here are three examples of performance standards that are NOT completely SMART.

1. Provides timely, thorough, and accurate guidance.

2. Seeks and demonstrates a broad knowledge level of applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and technologies.

3. Maintains liaison with internal and external customers to ensure high quality advisory services.

One set of possible SMART revisions can be found on the next page.
1. Provides timely, thorough, and accurate guidance.

   - Provides timely, thorough, and accurate guidance in the appropriate format identified by the (specific) Instruction [specific] to (input specific career field), during the appraisal period ending 31 March 2017 [time-bound]. Guidance will reflect multiple stakeholders, will provide a coordinated approach [relevant], and will incorporate at least 75% of the available data sources. [measureable/achievable]

2. Seeks and demonstrates a broad knowledge level of applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and technologies.

   - Seeks and demonstrates a broad knowledge level of applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and technologies related to (input specific career field) [specific] to include information available to the office through both classified and open sources [relevant]. Achieve closure within 10 business days [time-bound] of assignment of action items. [measureable/achievable]

3. Maintains liaison with internal and external customers to ensure high quality advisory services.

   - Maintains liaison with internal and external customers [relevant] (input specific career field) to ensure high quality advisory services [specific] throughout the performance period ending 31 March 2016 [time-bound]. Each deliverable must be produced according to applicable guidelines and procedures and may contain only minimal errors, as determined by supervisor review. [measureable/achievable]
“S” is for “Specific.” Stated as simply, concisely, and explicitly as possible: what needs to be accomplished?

The standard must be sufficiently descriptive and specific in its relation to your organization’s or department’s goals. It should be something that is affected by organizational expenditures, policies, or other actions. In other words, it’s a good way to measure the impact of what you are doing.

The performance standard answers questions such as: how much, for whom, for what, and how often?
“Specific” means that the standard should be sufficiently descriptive. It should have a clear link to the organizational goals and be directly related to decision-making and resource allocation.

For example, we may have a goal related to “providing quality and timely customer service to internal clients” and two performance standards. You might ask yourself the question: Does Performance Standard A, “Deliverables contain only minimal errors,” or Performance Standard B, “Submit draft work plan for approval within one week of project assignment,” best capture the impact of the organization’s policies and investments? And, is there a clear link to the goal?

The answer would be that both standards could be important for the organization. There are a number of externalities to account for in Standard A, which is an output standard. Standard B is a good example of an outcome-oriented standard. Where both could be important, Standard B might be more suitable for a customer service-oriented goal.
“M” is for “Measurable.” It is outcome-oriented. Where is the performance target? This criterion is the gauge for quantifying the accomplishment of the performance element. It stresses the need for criteria to measure progress toward the goal. If you don’t know how to measure your progress, you can’t write a measurable goal. Writing measurable performance standards allows for a clearer, more objective evaluation.
“Measureable” refers to developing standards in terms of output or outcome.

Standards should focus on performance outcomes, results that really matter. While agencies will also use output standards that measure levels of activity or how much is being done, performance management is focused primarily on outcomes. There is a practical limit on the number of standards that are affordable/feasible, so each standard should not only be measurable, but be measuring an important aspect of performance. Pick an aspect that you and your stakeholders care about.

This particular example shows two standards. Performance Standard A, “Draft report is due by 31 July,” is an output standard. You are measuring a suspense date, in this case the due date of the report. To explain output standards a different way, they are related to an activity or some event that has been achieved. Meeting the 31 July suspense date is an output standard.

Performance Standard B, “Make feasible recommendations to improve the course,” is an example of an outcome standard. It is related to achieving that same overarching goal of “Evaluate security training to determine if it effectively covers the learning objectives.” The outcome standard brings an element of some benefit to the user of the security training, in this example, recommendations to improve the course.
“A” in SMART is for “Achievable.” Can the goal be accomplished with the resources, personnel, and time available?

Is the goal sufficiently challenging but not so complex that it is unrealistic? Achieving the job elements is something an employee or a team can reasonably be expected to do to support a work-unit goal. The job element is achievable with the resources and personnel available and within the time available.
The “A” in the SMART acronym stands for “Achievable.”

The performance element should be achievable within the employee’s control and not overly dependent on outside factors. The employee should be rated only on work for which he or she is responsible. For example: If the performance element requires higher authority approval within the evaluation period, the employee should not be penalized if the external approval is not received, unless the delay is associated with the employee missing a deadline and/or an activity that was within his or her span of control.

For example, consider Performance Standard A, “Number of recommendations released for final signature,” and Performance Standard B, “Number of recommendations submitted to the appropriate authority,” under the goal, “Submit recommendations to the appropriate authority by year-end.”

Which standard is more under control of the employee? Performance Standard B is an example of a standard in control of the employee. There are many more constraints outside of the control of the employee when considering the release of recommendations for final signature.
“R” in the acronym is for “Relevant.” Why is the goal important? The element should be important to both the employee and the organization.

The employee’s work fits into the organization’s goals and priorities. The organization’s mission, function statement, and other strategic and project planning documents provide the basis and context for the work and its relationship to the greater DoD mission. Establishing the “line of sight” is important because it underscores the importance of duties and how they support the organization. “Relevant” ties the work to the organization’s goals.
A “Relevant” performance element should have a direct and obvious link to the employee’s job, the work unit’s goals, and important organizational goals. It should be job-specific and focus on work important to the organization’s success. When writing performance elements, they may be created based on the organization goals.

Performance Standard A, “Able to meet projected server needs over next three years,” and Performance Standard B, “Present recommendations in a briefing using the standard organizational format,” have both been developed for the goal, “Develop and recommend a long-term solution to recurring server limitation problems.”

Is reliable data available to evaluate each of the standards? Is the standard realistic for the organization? Can the standards be traced to a source?

Performance Standard A is likely realistic because “projected server needs” can be collected and forecasted through the use of forecasting models already in use by the IT organization.

Performance Standard B may sound good, since it is easy to measure if the employee used the correct PowerPoint template. But it may be more problematic in terms of a direct and obvious link to the goals. It is not clear how using the correct briefing template furthers the organizational goal of “meeting the technological needs of the mission.” Is it a relevant standard?
“T” is for “Timely.” When will the goal start, or when will it be completed? Is the timeframe acceptable?

If possible, performance standards should outline a specific timeframe. For some physical conditions, this may be a number of months; for some operational standards, results can be tracked daily.

Performance standards should not be written to reflect assignments or goals that are longer than the performance appraisal period. Likewise, a critical standard should not be for less than 90 days in duration. If a multiple-phase project is being evaluated, it is important to name the specific outcome that is expected for the current period.

The timeframe associated with each standard needs to be understood and communicated clearly so that expectations for results are understood and acceptable.
A “Timely” performance element should specify a timeframe associated with production of the product or service. Such timeframes help clarify performance expectations and ensure the work gets done in a timely manner. Timeframes can be within a certain period of time or by a certain date and must be within the appraisal cycle.

The goal is “Provide quality and timely customer service to internal clients,” which would be a typical goal for a work unit plan. Performance Standard A is “Submitting the draft report by 31 July.” Performance Standard B is “Final report is due within 10 business days after feedback is received from the reviewer.” Both of these clearly state when the goal is completed.

Looking at the examples, which of these standards are sensitive to changes within the evaluation timeframe?

It could be that Standard B is more sensitive to external factors. The completion of the standard assumes the reviewer will be able to return feedback within 10 business days. It could be impacted by a number of externalities or factors out of the control of the organization. Standard A is a more solid standard, as it is time-based with no dependencies on anyone else. Standard A could be more sensitive in a near term timeframe.
Here is an example of a performance element. Can you identify the SMART elements in it?

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timely
The elements that make this SMART are:

**Specific:** “appropriately coordinated intelligence report”

**Measurable and Achievable:** “at least 90%”

**Relevant:** “reflect engagement with other analysts and stakeholders, and incorporate their coordinated views.”

**Timely:** “by 31 August.”
Here is another example of a performance element. Can you identify the SMART elements in it?

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timely
The elements that make this SMART are:

**Specific:** “appropriate format identified in SOP25”

**Measurable and Achievable:** “meet suspenses 90% of the time. Provide accurate responses with no more than 2 errors per request.”

**Relevant:** “supports the organization’s commitment”

**Timely:** “period ending September 30.”
Practice writing SMART performance standards.

**Instructions:**

1. Break out into small groups and appoint a spokesperson.
2. Follow the instructions on the *SMART Performance Standards Worksheet*, working with your group to make the performance standards SMART.
3. Be prepared to share your work with the rest of the class.

Note that the final question on the worksheet asks you to write a SMART performance standard you can use for your own performance plan. Please take a moment to finish this question, as we will use it again later this lesson.

**Time:** 20 minutes.
Review the SMART performance standards.
Here’s a checklist of questions that may help supervisors and employees determine the effectiveness of the elements and standards they developed and whether those standards meet legal and regulatory requirements.

In order to avoid performance issues, it’s helpful to establish mutually understood, acceptable performance levels. The Performance Plan Checklist contains questions about nine important criteria for employee performance plans that represent sound management principles and comply with regulations and Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) and court decisions:

- Is the acceptable performance level clearly understood by supervisor and employee?
- Are the standards achievable?
- Are the standards fair?
- Are the standards applicable?
- Will employees understand what is required?
- Are the elements and standards flexible?
- Can the “Fully Successful” level be surpassed?
Are the expectations established in the elements and standards quantifiable, observable, and/or verifiable? Is the meaning of “acceptable performance” clear?

Expectations that are specific, clearly define what must be done, and how well it must be done, are more effective for managing and directing performance than vague or general expectations.

In addition, MSPB and the courts have ruled that employees must know what they have to do and how well they have to do it to perform at an acceptable level. Both sound management principles and court rulings support this key criterion.
Are the standards achievable? Are expectations reasonable?

MSPB and the courts have ruled that, in most instances, retention standards must not require absolute perfection. In addition, from a sound management perspective, research has shown that setting expectations that are impossible or nearly impossible to achieve can actually cause performance levels to drop because employees tend to give up if they perceive the goal as impossible.
Are the standards fair? Are they comparable to expectations for other employees in similar positions? Applying different standards to employees doing the same work does not appear on its face to be fair or valid. Requiring higher-level management review of standards for similar work across an organization may be one way of ensuring equity.

Also, do the standards allow for some margin of error? Requiring perfection is not fair in most instances. There are some cases where 100% accuracy is necessary – for instance, the standard could be “100% safe landings of aircraft.” In this case, it is fair to have no margin of error. But most jobs should allow for a few errors.
Are the standards applicable? Can the supervisor use the standards to appraise performance? The standards should clearly describe the factors that the supervisor would look for and how well those factors should be done.

The standards should specify one or more of these requirements:

- Quality
- Quantity
- Timeliness/Timeframe
- Cost-effectiveness

In addition, can the supervisor effectively use the data collected through the measurement process? If monitoring performance on the element is too costly or time-consuming, the standard might need to be altered to include more manageable standards.
Will employees understand what is required?

If the standards are generic, have they been supplemented with specific information so that employees know what they have to do to demonstrate “Fully Successful” performance? It’s helpful to have generic elements and standards, but the next step to make them useful is to tailor them to a specific job.

Elements and their standards should be written clearly and be specific to the job.
Are the elements and standards flexible? Can they be adapted readily to changes in resources or objectives?

Elements and standards can be modified during the appraisal period to meet changing organizational goals and other situations, as long as the employee works under the new standards for at least 90 days. They are a living document that should flex with the changing circumstances and priorities throughout an appraisal cycle.

This flexibility allows performance plans to be used as management tools to manage employee performance on a day-to-day and week-to-week basis.
In order to appraise elements at levels above the “Fully Successful” level, an employee must be able to surpass the standard? Is it possible for an employee's performance to exceed it?

By including “Fully Successful” standards that cannot be surpassed, the performance plan effectively eliminates the opportunity for a higher appraisal. It’s important to leave some room for “Outstanding” performance.
There are numerous benefits to following the performance plan checklist.

- A better understanding of what is expected. The checklist asks specific questions about elements and standards. These questions help to tightly focus the performance expectations written into the performance plan. Both the supervisor and employee will benefit from a deeper understanding of the specific performance expectations.
- An understanding of the terminology used. After reviewing the checklist, do you have a better understanding of the difference between “Fully Successful” and “Outstanding” ratings?
- An understanding of how performance will be measured. The checklist measures whether standards clearly describe the factors that the supervisor would look for and how well those factors should be done (i.e., the quality, quantity, timeliness, and cost-effectiveness requirements).
- Acceptance and trust in the process. Following the checklist introduces consistency and transparency into the performance planning process.

These benefits can be greatly enhanced by involving employees in the development of performance plans.
Use the Performance Plan Checklist to validate the SMART performance standards participants created in the previous exercise.

**Instructions:**

1. Use the *Checklist for Performance Plans* to review and validate the SMART performance element you wrote for yourself in the previous exercise.
2. Make any corrections to your SMART element, if necessary.
3. Then pair up with a partner.
4. Use the checklist to review your partner’s updated SMART performance element and give some feedback.

**Time:** 15 minutes
The purpose of this exercise was to show the importance for both supervisor and employees of documenting mutually understood acceptable performance levels in the performance plan.

Share the outcomes of your SMART element for review.
After the supervisor has created the list of elements and standards for the employee, he or she needs to meet with the employee. Because one of the key benefits of performance management is increased employee ownership, it is necessary to involve the employee in the planning phase. Employees who contribute to their performance plan generally feel more engaged and responsible for their performance.

Supervisors should work with the employee to judge how feasible the elements and standards are. They should consider the employee’s input since he or she may recognize some issues that have been missed in the draft. The employee can recommend adding standards to the performance plan that they think will be beneficial to his or her individual development pursuits.

During this meeting, supervisors need to communicate the elements and standards they selected for the employee. Job elements identify what the employee does; the standards identify how the elements will be measured. Supervisors also need to explain how standards and elements relate back to the larger organizational goals. They should ask for employee input on these, and they may need to explain the purpose of the elements and standards. Supervisors should also help employees understand why those particular elements and standards were picked. In addition, they should take employee feedback and make any modifications that are reasonable.

**Discussion Questions:**

- What are some of the other outcomes of the planning meeting?
- What are some potential benefits of the planning meeting?
Once supervisors have integrated the employee’s input, they can finalize the performance plan. It is the hope that both supervisors and employees agree with the elements and standards in the performance plan, but agreement is not required.

For example, a supervisor may want an employee to make 100 widgets, but the employee may only want to be accountable for making 80. In that case, the supervisor is the one who decides, but the employee should be encouraged to provide input to the supervisors about why the higher expectations may not be attainable—perhaps due to training requirements, fire drills, all-hands meetings, or other events that get in the way of production. Maybe the employee knows that the facility doesn’t stock sufficient widget oil to make 100 each day, or maybe the widget machine only makes 10 per hour maximum. These are all things that would be considered in determining the performance standards, and an example of the collaborative nature of performance planning in a culture of high performance.
The purpose of this exercise is to watch a successful planning meeting and figure out what made it work so well.

**Instructions:**

1. The instructor will be playing a brief video for you. The video will depict a planning meeting between a supervisor and an employee. While you are watching the video, pay close attention to the effective aspects of the meeting.

**Time:** 20 minutes
Planning Meeting Video Script

Scene 1: A supervisor, LISA, sitting in her office alone. She is sitting behind a desk reviewing a stack of papers. Behind her is a whiteboard with the heading “Elements and Standards”

LISA
What would be reasonable to assign CECIL?

[Supervisor rises and begins writing objectives on the whiteboard]

[Objective 1: Complete all assignments in a timeframe consistent with that assigned by the supervisor.
Objective 2: Ensure that all output matches quality and design standards put forth in the employee handbook.
Objective 3: Actively support coworkers and assist as needed.]

LISA
[To herself] That should do. Let’s see what CECIL has to say about these.

[CECIL knocks on the door and enters.]

CECIL
You wanted to see me?

LISA
Yes, I would like to discuss your performance plan for the upcoming year.

CECIL
Excellent, I was wondering when that would happen.
[CECIL takes a seat at the desk]

LISA

[Hands a piece of paper to CECIL with the above objectives listed]

Here are the job objectives I’ve begun fleshing out for you. I wanted to review them with you and get your input.

[CECIL takes a moment to scan the list]

LISA

As you can see, the first objective is fairly straightforward. You should be aware that one of our critical elements this year is the quality of our work. All of our assignments need to be completed on time and with a high level of quality.

CECIL

Of course.

LISA

This leads us to your next objective. Both objectives tie directly to the quality and timeliness of your work.

CECIL

Assuming you provide accurate due dates, I see no reason why either of these will be an issue.

LISA

Good to hear, how do you plan on accomplishing these tasks?

CECIL

Well, I’ve been staying current on our design standards and keep a copy at my desk. If I am ever in doubt, I refer back to it. [With a chuckle] I’ll probably have the whole thing memorized by the end of the year. As for timely completion of assignments, I’ve been
trying to build the habit of relying on my calendars. I set notifications to remind me of
due dates and I try and set intermediary goals so that I am always on pace for an on-time
delivery.

LISA

Good to hear. Sounds like you’ve got quite a grasp on those. How do you feel about the
last objective laid out for you?

CECIL

Well, to be honest... [CECIL acts hesitant and trails off at the end]

LISA

Go on, I value our input.

CECIL

It’s just that I think it’s kind of vague.

LISA

How so?

CECIL

I’m not all that clear on what supporting coworkers means. And with that said, I’m not
sure how I am supposed to complete it.

LISA

That is quite understandable. And you’re right, it is rather vague. I should tell you that
this is in support of our new mission that focuses on team building. This year it is an
additional element and will have no bearing on your performance review.

CECIL
Then why include it?

LISA
Since it’s new, we wanted to track it and see how it manifests itself. That way, further down the road we can try to quantify it. Think of this as a test run. So long as you continue being the team player that you always have, you’ll be fine. All I ask is that as you assist your coworkers try to think about how you are helping and why you are doing it.

CECIL
Well, okay, that makes sense. I guess I don’t have any issue with that then.

LISA
Excellent. So you agree with these objectives and will strive to complete them over the next year?

CECIL
Yes, I accept these objectives. Where do we go from here?

LISA
We will need to sign off on your performance plan objectives and I will get a copy to you. In about 6 months we will have a formal mid-year review to make sure that you are on the right track. Between now and then, we should plan to discuss your progress or problems, if any, on a regular basis. Let’s look at our calendars and set up a couple of meetings for the next month to see how things are going.

CECIL
Sounds great.

[They both move toward the supervisor’s computer to set up some appointments.]
Although performance plans are initiated at the beginning of the appraisal cycle, they are flexible, living documents and can be updated to meet the organizational needs. One benefit of continuous monitoring is the ability to quickly revise a plan when it is clear that the performance standards can’t be met.

Any number of events can take place during an appraisal cycle that would warrant changing a plan. For example, plans may be changed to reflect:

- New organizational goals
- A change in assignment(s), position, or duties
- Updated goals when outside influences beyond an employee’s control make the original goals unachievable
- A change in assumptions about what can be reasonably achieved during the appraisal cycle
- The priorities of a new supervisor
- Shifts or changes in mission

When necessary, performance plans are modified to reflect the new goals and priorities and then communicated to employees. Just as when creating performance plans, changes should also be done with employee input.

All approved modifications to performance elements or standards must be discussed with and communicated to the employee, and the employee should acknowledge the revisions in the MyPerformance appraisal tool or on the DD Form 2906.
Changes to work requirements or assignment of new duties may require a supervisor to change an element or standard. If this occurs within 90 calendar days of the end of the appraisal cycle, the supervisor may:

- Revise the element or standard at the beginning of the next appraisal cycle,
- Update the plan and, if the employee does not have an opportunity to perform the new element(s) for the minimum 90-calender-day period, do not rate the revised element(s), OR
- Extend the appraisal cycle by the amount of time necessary to allow 90 calendar days of observed performance under the revised element or standard. **Note:** Extending the appraisal cycle will affect the start date of the employee’s subsequent appraisal cycle; however, the subsequent appraisal cycle ends March 31 of the following calendar year.
You should now be able to:

- Explain the performance planning process and its importance in the DoD culture of high performance
- Explain how to link an organization’s performance plan (e.g., strategic workforce plan, Performance Assistance Plan) to the individual development plan (IDP)
- Write specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely (SMART) performance standards
Here are some additional resources and learning tools.

- **DODI 1400.25, Volume 410, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Training, Education, and Professional Development.**
- **DODI 1400.25, Volume 431, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Performance Management and Appraisal Program.**
- **DODI 1400.25, Volume 451, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Awards.**
- **Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Workforce Compensation and Performance Service. A Handbook for Measuring Employee Performance: Aligning Employee Performance Plans with Organizational Goals (OPM, September 2011).**

Additional resources are available on the DCPAS LERD web site at: [https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Pages/Home1.aspx](https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Pages/Home1.aspx)
What questions do you have about Lesson 4?
LESSON 5: MONITORING PERFORMANCE

The purpose of Lesson 5 of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program Training course is to explain the Monitoring Phase and its key attributes; highlight the importance of documenting employees’ accomplishments; emphasize the advantages of monitoring performance and having frequent discussions throughout the appraisal cycle; and to review types of informal feedback needed to identify and addressing performance issues.
Lesson 5: Monitoring Performance
Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Explain the Monitoring Phase
- Discuss key attributes of the Monitoring Phase
- Explain the importance of documenting employees’ accomplishments
- Explain the advantages of frequent discussions throughout the appraisal cycle
- Explain the value of monitoring performance throughout the appraisal cycle
- Identify barriers to performance success in order to revise performance plans as needed
- Explain the importance of informal feedback in identifying and addressing performance issues

This lesson will take approximately 3 hours to complete.
REFERENCES:

- L5 PM Cycle Monitoring and Develop Roles and Responsibilities
- L5 Performance Discussion Checklist
- L5 Communicating With Your Supervisor
- L5 Performance Discussion Guide
- L5 Supervisors Checklist - Performance Counseling
- L5 Supervisors Guide to Performance Reviews
- L5 Preventing Performance Issues

Video:

- Lesson 5 - Mid Year Review Gone Wrong
- Lesson 5 - Mid Year Review Gone Right

5 CFR § 430.207. Monitoring Performance -(a) Minimum period. An appraisal program shall establish a minimum period of performance that must be completed before a performance rating may be prepared. (b) Ongoing appraisal. An appraisal program shall include methods for appraising each critical and non-critical element during the appraisal period. Performance on each critical and non-critical element shall be appraised against its performance standard(s). Ongoing appraisal methods shall include, but not be limited to, conducting one or more progress reviews during each appraisal period. (c) Marginal performance. Appraisal programs should provide assistance whenever performance is determined to be below “Fully Successful” or equivalent but above “Unacceptable.” (d) Unacceptable performance. An appraisal program shall provide for— (1) Assisting employees in improving unacceptable performance at any time during the appraisal period that performance is determined to be unacceptable in one or more critical elements; and (2) Taking action based on unacceptable performance.
Excerpt from: DoDI 1400.25 V431 (pg.10-11)

The DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program:

(1) Provides a framework for supervisors and managers to communicate expectations and job performance.

(2) Links individual employee performance and organizational goals.

(3) Facilitates a fair and meaningful assessment of employee performance.

(4) Establishes a systematic process for planning, monitoring, evaluating, and recognizing and rewarding employee performance that contributes to mission success.

(5) Nurtures a high-performance culture that promotes meaningful and ongoing dialogue between employees and supervisors and holds both accountable for performance.

(6) Supports and is consistent with merit system principles in section 2301 of title 5, U.S.C.

3.4. Monitoring Performance. Monitoring performance consists of ongoing assessment of performance compared to the stated expectations and ongoing feedback to employees on their progress toward reaching their goals.

a. Continuous Monitoring of Performance. By monitoring performance throughout the appraisal cycle, supervisors can provide timely feedback on meeting expectations and identify performance deficiencies during the appraisal cycle in order to provide assistance to improve performance, rather than waiting until the end of the cycle when a rating of record is assigned. Additionally, while monitoring performance, supervisors may identify an employee’s need for training or developmental opportunities in order to enhance the knowledge, skills, or abilities related to the employee’s job performance in his or her current position.

b. Performance Discussions. The supervisor and employee will discuss the employee’s work performance and its link to organizational effectiveness. The discussions may consist of verbal feedback sessions, regular one-on-one meetings, or impromptu recognition or acknowledgement of performance. Supervisors or employees may initiate performance discussions at any time during the appraisal cycle to foster ongoing engagement and understanding. Performance discussions help ensure that the performance plans accurately reflect the work being evaluated. Effective communications include ongoing, meaningful feedback to contribute to overall employee and organizational success.
c. **Progress Reviews.** Progress reviews may only be initiated by supervisors. They are performance discussions that must be documented in the MyPerformance appraisal tool. While employees must have at least one documented progress review, providing additional progress reviews throughout the appraisal cycle is encouraged. Employees are not given a performance narrative or performance element ratings on performance discussions. The supervisor and employee should engage in meaningful communications throughout the appraisal cycle to convey:

1. Organizational goals and priorities.
2. Performance elements and standards, including ensuring the performance plan accurately reflects the work being evaluated.
3. Supervisor’s expectations.
4. Employee’s accomplishments and contributions.
5. Employee’s level of performance, including any areas that need improvement.
7. Employee’s developmental needs and career goals.
Performance management is an ongoing process that consists of several steps and phases. There are specific activities that take place during each phase. In this lesson, we’re going to look at the Monitoring Phase.
Performance management is a continuous process with joint input from both supervisor and employee.

Per DoDI 1400.25, V431, monitoring performance is the ongoing assessment of performance compared with the stated expectations and ongoing feedback to employees on their progress toward reaching their goals.

Monitoring entails supervisors checking in with their employees on a continuous basis to gauge how they are progressing with their performance plans.

Monitoring performance is a critical part of a successful performance management program. In a high-performing organization, supervisors continually monitor assignments and projects consistently to measure performance and provide ongoing feedback to employees and work groups on progress toward reaching their goals.
During the Monitoring Phase, supervisors have a continuous, two-way and open dialog about performance.

We briefly reviewed monitoring in Lesson 1. To recap:

- Discuss progress on performance goals and address employee strengths or areas for improvement
- Provide a consistent opportunity for the employee to convey his or her career goals and any tools, resources, and support he or she may need from the rater
- Provide timely recognition and reward for excellent performance

During the monitoring process, communication is the most important determinant of success for both the employee and supervisor.
During monitoring, employees should:

- Ask questions. Employees who understand where they fit in the big picture and what they need to do to succeed will be better engaged in mission accomplishment. If employees are not sure what their supervisor expects of them, they should ask clarifying questions until they reach a shared understanding of the performance required for mission success.

- Remain engaged in self-development. The employee is the best steward of his or her career, and continuous self-development is one of the keys to advancing careers and maintaining the technical knowledge that is one of the foundations of the DoD performance culture.

- Keep their supervisor informed on the outcomes of their work. Employees do not wait for their supervisor to come to them. The Performance Management and Appraisal Program encourages and expects informal feedback. When employees complete a goal or have some issues preventing them from accomplishing it, their supervisor needs to know.

- Provide input about their accomplishments, relative to the performance elements and standards, during the performance discussions. The goal of performance...
discussions and other feedback is to ensure that supervisors stay informed of employees’ progress towards their elements.

- Identify needed changes to performance elements/standards as appropriate.

- Work with supervisor to find solutions to barriers to success. Continuous performance discussions throughout the appraisal cycle also provide opportunities for supervisors and employees to discuss and document any needed adjustments to performance plans. Employees should give meaningful suggestions to their supervisor when it applies. When citing an area that needs attention, employees should offer suggestions for improvement and identify barriers to meeting goals outlined in the performance plan.

**Supervisors should:**

- Continuously communicate with and provide encouragement, meaningful feedback, and appreciation to all employees. Effective and timely feedback during the performance appraisal cycle provides employees with an understanding of how well they are performing, what they are doing well, and if there are areas which need improvement. Feedback can come from many different sources, such as observation, measurement programs, peers, and input from customers. We will cover feedback in Lesson 3: Continuous Feedback.

- Provide employees an opportunity to highlight their accomplishments. These opportunities may come during informal feedback sessions, or through employee input. Supervisors should be open and positive when their employees highlight their accomplishments—they are likely proud of what they did, and supervisors should honor their success.

- Identify needed changes to performance elements/standards as appropriate.

- Review IDPs to identify development opportunities such as training, on-the-job training, counseling, and coaching opportunities. A supervisor should consider the IDP a start to the performance management dialog with the employee. As we mentioned, the IDP should be considered a partnership between the employee and the supervisor.
• Be knowledgeable regarding each employee’s skills and abilities, and look for opportunities to help employees further develop their skills. Supervisors should consider stretch goals, informal learning, coaching engagements, and developmental assignments in addition to traditional skills training.

• Document performance discussions. Ongoing communication and feedback are essential to a successful performance management program. Performance discussions provide an opportunity for a meaningful dialogue between supervisors and employees that focuses on performance—what is working well and what are the opportunities for improvement? Keeping track of performance discussions and feedback simplifies the end of cycle evaluation phase, reducing the amount of time and energy a supervisor has to spend on this critical activity.

• Recognize and reward performance throughout the performance appraisal cycle rather than waiting until the end of the appraisal cycle. As we mentioned earlier, Lesson 7 is all about recognition and reward.
According to DoDI 1400.25, V431, monitoring includes at least one mandated documented progress review. Lesson 5 - Mid Year Review Gone Wrong is an example of one of these kinds of meetings with an unexpected outcome.

The purpose of this exercise is to look at a progress review that did not go well. You should compare and contrast this with a successful progress review.

Instructions:

1. The instructor will play a brief video for you. The video will depict a mid-year review. While you are watching the video, pay close attention to the effective aspects of the meeting.
2. Be prepared to discuss what you noticed with the rest of the class.
3. Watch the second video and discuss what went better in the second interaction.

Time: 15 minutes.
Lesson 5: Mid-Year Review Gone Wrong Video Script

Scene 1: This starts with a sequence of short scenes showing a male manager, RAUL, hurriedly discussing paperwork with KIM who is standing next to him. The manager is interrupted by a knock on his open door; the manager has clearly forgotten the appointment. A younger, female employee, SHELLY, enters. She is bristling with irritation and resentment.

RAUL
I’m pretty sure I didn’t print it out [searches his desk] and I know you didn’t e-mail it to me.

KIM
Well, I’ll resend it.

RAUL
Yeah, please. ‘Cause I can’t do what I need to do until – [knock on door]

SHELLY
It’s time for our meeting.

RAUL
Oh God, that’s right. Yeah. Come on in.

SHELLY
Should I come back? We can reschedule....

RAUL
No, thank you. That’s fine. [Aside to the other employee] Thanks. We’ll do this later. No, I’ve got to keep this train running. I’ve got eight mid-year reviews going, plus I’ve got to type up them out — you know the drill.

SHELLY
Well, not really. I actually —

RAUL
You sit there and I sit here and we talk about your work which is, ah, pretty good, and then we do it for real in October. Got it?

SHELLY
[Seething pause] Got it.

RAUL
So, let’s see. Oh, right, let me get out that plan we developed. [Looks around at a messy desk and then locates a folder] Here it is. [Mumbles to himself as he skims it] So, we determined that you have four elements — do you have a copy of this? [She indicates no.] You should. This really should be something you have nearby at all times, and next time you should bring it to the meeting. So, one of your objectives is [Reads aloud] ‘complete all tasks in a timely manner.’ How do you think that’s going?

SHELLY
Well, I wish I could finish that report, but I’m still waiting for input from Diane —

RAUL
That’s right, I remember. You know, it’s really important to keep the train running on this project. I think you should proceed without her input. Then, when you get it, you can work her changes in later.

SHELLY
That doesn’t make much sense to me. I feel like I’d be doing the work twice —

RAUL
[Growing exasperated] You gotta keep the train running. Your performance depends on accomplishing these objectives. When I rate you in October, I want to be able to say
‘Fully Successful’ — which I remember you’ve had some trouble getting in the past. Any questions about that?

SHELLY

[Glaring resentful look] I’ll try my best.

RAUL

Let’s move on. Did you complete the training I recommended you take?

SHELLY

No.

RAUL

You didn’t? That’s too bad. I thought doing some online training on time management would help you improve.

SHELLY

I started the training, but it was 4 hours long and pretty much impossible to do it all at one time. I kept getting interrupted.

RAUL

Well, that’s ironic.

SHELLY

Yup.

RAUL

[Long pause] The truth is: I don’t know how I’m going to give you the rating you probably think you deserve. I just don’t see the quality of work —
SHELLY
Well, I feel like I’m always choosing between quality of work and meeting deadlines —

RAUL
That’s your problem. You have to deliver both — perform at a high level and meet those deadlines. You have to figure this out for yourself.

SHELLY
Are we done?

RAUL
Do you have any questions?

SHELLY
No.

RAUL
Then we’re done. But remember, finish your work and complete that training, please.

SHELLY
Okay.
Here is another example of a mid-year review, with a more positive outcome. Compare and contrast with the outcome of the previous performance discussion.
Lesson 5: Mid-Year Review Gone Right Video Script

Scene 1: LISA, a supervisor sitting in her office. CECIL, the employee, is sitting on the other side of the desk.

LISA
After our planning meeting, you were doing really well. I could tell you were committed to achieving the objectives we discussed.

CECIL
Yes, and a couple weeks ago you stopped by to let me know how impressed you were with how I was meeting deadlines. I really appreciated that.

LISA
Good. You are definitely skilled at keeping yourself on task. But I am wondering if in your quest to meet your deadlines, you are sacrificing some of the quality of your work. I have noticed a few issues lately.

CECIL
How so? I feel that the content I’ve been producing has been top notch.

LISA
It’s not the content that’s the problem, it’s the quality.

CECIL
Could you please define quality a little further for me? If the content is good, I don’t understand the issue?

LISA
While the content is good and well-informed, we have had to make edits and formatting changes in just about every one of your documents. Part of your job, and one of your initial objectives, is to ensure quality and design standards.
CECIL

I know quality is important. And it is one of my objectives. I think I got so caught up in making sure the content was good, that I let the quality standards slip.

LISA

Ok. Just keep in mind that the packaging is important. It’s difficult to see the caliber of your work if there are formatting errors.

CECIL

Ok.

LISA

The last objective we discussed was supporting and assisting your co-workers. I talked to some of your co-workers and they definitely noticed your assistance more. But a few also expressed concern that you may be stretching yourself too thin. That you seemed a bit more stressed than usual lately?

CECIL

I can understand that concern. My wife and I have been trying to adopt a baby and the last few weeks have been a flurry of paperwork and deadlines and it got a little hectic. But we have all our information and are on a waiting list, so I am much more calm now.

LISA

Congratulations, that’s excellent news!

CECIL

Thank you. I tried not to let it affect my work but sometimes it was difficult.

LISA

I’m sure it was. Would you like to re-evaluate any of your objectives?
CECIL
I don’t think that’s necessary. I still think they are achievable and that I’m on the right path.

LISA
What about the quality issue? Would you be open to some refresher training?

CECIL
Yes, I think that would be good. I used to be more knowledgeable on the handbook but have lost a lot of that knowledge lately. I think some refresher training could go a long way.

LISA
Great, I’ll set something up.

CECIL
Thank you. I think by the time of our end-of-year meeting, you’ll see some real progress.

LISA
I think that I will. And we’ll continue to touch base in the coming months
Throughout the monitoring process, **supervisors** should:

- Continuously communicate with and provide encouragement, meaningful feedback, and appreciation. Research from the Corporate Leadership Council shows that engaged supervisors have the largest impact on employee engagement.
- Offer each employee an opportunity to provide input on accomplishments relative to the performance elements and standards. Employees have the best insight into their accomplishments and how they relate to their performance elements.
- Have continuous performance discussions. Our emphasis is on regular discussions with employees.

Throughout the monitoring process, **employees** should:

- Keep a record of their accomplishments so that they are able to discuss them throughout the cycle. Employees should write down their accomplishments while they are fresh in their memory to capture all of the details.
- Provide input on any adjustments that need to be made if there are significant changes to their work or organizational goals. Changing performance elements is relatively easy during this phase, so don’t wait to make adjustments until the end of the appraisal cycle.
- Participate in continuous performance discussions. Our emphasis is on regular discussions with employees.
Why is there an emphasis on this continuous process to monitor performance?

Discussion Questions:

- Why do we use a continuous process to monitor performance?
- What would happen if we didn't?
- Why do we require inputs from both the supervisor and employee?

Supervisors and employees should meet continuously to make sure they are on track to achieve their elements. Making performance discussions a regular part of a business routine builds mutual trust and confidence that they are working together to achieve individual and organizational success. These sessions can occur informally in brief meetings or e-mail exchanges or on a more formal basis.

As supervisors monitor their employees’ performance, they are able to identify strengths and examples of success, and see how employees did and what they can do to repeat the successes. In addition, supervisors are able to note areas for improvement as they happen. Taking time to communicate with employees about their performance ensures their awareness and, if a problem surfaces, provides time for supervisors to help them improve before the appraisal cycle ends. This interaction builds performance accountability. Employees will be more engaged in the process and more inclined to take ownership of their performance.
Performance management success doesn’t just fall upon supervisors. Employees should also foster successful relationships with their supervisors and hold them accountable.

Supervisors and employees both should participate in giving feedback. An employee should feel allowed to offer upward feedback to a supervisor. The benefits include improved communication between employee and supervisor; and higher morale and job satisfaction for both supervisor and employee. All of this leads to a better chance of achieving your organizational goals.

Employees should:

- Get to know their supervisor. Employees should communicate in a way that works best for their supervisor. This will help employees better understand what supervisors want from them. One approach is to spell out details on a smaller scale: “Does it work better for you if I send you weekly email updates about my projects, or would you rather talk about them in the monthly staff meeting?” This shows the supervisor that the employee is considering his or her perspective.

- Anticipate and jump in. Employees should always offer help during a work “emergency” but also make a habit of paying attention to the normal rhythms of their organization to discover where they might be able to pitch in more continuously.

- Imagine the bigger picture. If there are times when employees think they can do a better job than their supervisor, they should take a moment to think about the supervisor’s decision to hire and work for them. The best leaders deliberately build
their organizations with people they think are brighter and more talented than they are.
Communication is the most important determinant of success in a performance management program. The Performance Management and Appraisal Program requires two-way communication between employees and supervisors.

Supervisors need to be sure to explain that:

- Individual performance expectations are linked to organizational goals. They should describe how organizational goals relate to the DoD mission and explain the near- and long-term goals of the organization and how individual performance impacts mission accomplishment.
- Each employee is responsible for individual success. Employees work with their supervisors to establish performance goals and to meet expectations, and are recognized and rewarded for achieving their performance goals through individual and team accomplishments.
- Employees and supervisors openly discuss individual performance goals and expectations. Performance towards meeting performance expectations is discussed and evaluated on a frequent basis through informal and formal discussions.
What are the elements of effective communication?

- **Good communications**—*continuous and candid communication* between employees and supervisors — is the key to a performance evaluation program that holds no surprises for anyone during performance discussions and end-of-year evaluations.
- Communication provides a vehicle for continuous feedback on staff's strengths, areas for improvement, and guidance on projects and responsibilities.
- **Active listening** is imperative in a successful performance evaluation and feedback program.
In monitoring performance, the overall goal is mutual understanding between employee and supervisor, which helps eliminate surprises at the end of the rating period.

Continuous performance discussions help to ensure that both the supervisor and employee have a clear understanding of the outcomes at the final performance appraisal discussion.

When feedback has been provided on an ongoing basis, the performance appraisal discussion should be a culmination of discussions which have occurred throughout the appraisal cycle. In other words, there should be a shared understanding of performance outcomes in the performance appraisal discussion. During this meeting, supervisors should discuss with employees their ratings, narratives, and rationale for the evaluation given.
When supervisors and employees meet continuously to make sure that employees are on track to achieve their elements, what are the benefits?

Discussion Question:

- What are the benefits of having continuous performance discussions?

Ultimately, the benefit of a continuous conversation about performance is that there are no surprises come rating time.

Continuous performance discussions build trust and confidence between employee and supervisor. They ensure both parties are working together to achieve individual and organizational success. They provide time for supervisors to help employees improve before the performance process ends. They build accountability in both employee and supervisor.
During the appraisal cycle, it is the employee’s responsibility to communicate what they have achieved.

It is the supervisor’s responsibility to help their employees achieve their elements by creating an environment that fosters success. Supervisors may also need to help employees set up a plan to document their accomplishments. One way to do that is to suggest that employees record their accomplishments throughout the appraisal cycle. For instance, an employee could share feedback he received from customers with his supervisor so he or she is aware of the great job the employee is doing.

Though written employee input is voluntary, employees should be encouraged to:

- Write their accomplishments in a clear, concise manner
- Identify specific examples of what they achieved as they relate to the performance elements and standards
- Demonstrate how their accomplishments contributed to the organization achieving its goals
When you record successes along the way gives supervisors a chance to keep track of and celebrate performance success in a timely fashion.

Both parties should acknowledge performance success as often as possible. There are several ways to capture performance success, including writing notes on a calendar, sending emails, or communicating verbally during meetings.

What are some other ways to capture and celebrate performance success?
Both employees and supervisors can help continuous discussions happen by raising topics that the other may not be thinking about throughout the appraisal cycle. These topics can be explored in less formal communications throughout the year as well as during both progress and end-of-cycle meetings.

This exercise explores examples of questions both employees and supervisors can ask to enrich the continuous discussions they should have throughout the appraisal cycle.

**Instructions:**

1. Find a partner and role-play a discussion between a supervisor and an employee.
2. Use the *Sample Performance Discussion Questions for Managers to Ask Employees* document to think about questions a supervisor should ask of an employee. The *Sample Performance Discussion Questions for Employees to Ask Managers* document provides some questions for an employee.
3. Have a quick discussion for each of these categories:
   - Past performance
   - Connection of work to mission
   - Satisfaction with work and work environment
   - Career goals
   - Goals for next year.

**Time:** 30 minutes.
There will be some barriers that both employees and supervisors may face when implementing the new Performance Management and Appraisal Program.

Generally speaking, barriers come in three forms: internal, external, and systemic.

An example of an internal barrier is not understanding how to create elements and standards. This is a barrier that can be overcome with training, coaching, training, or other skill development activities.

An external barrier may be that an employee’s supervisor doesn’t provide effective feedback, or doesn’t provide much feedback at all. Overcoming external barriers often requires more than one person with a shared understanding of the barrier to work on the issue. It may also require intervention from outside of the team.

A systemic barrier is the most challenging to address. It is often the result of the way a department is organized, or based on legal or regulatory requirements that neither the supervisor nor the employee has any control over. An example of this is the challenge of getting employees to participate in the planning process because of the way the shifts are structured. Systemic barriers should be overcome by identifying the barrier and cooperating to find an alternative approach.
Continuous monitoring makes it possible to quickly revise a plan when it is clear that the performance standards can’t be met. Although performance plans are initiated at the beginning of the appraisal cycle, they are flexible, living documents and can be updated to meet the organizational needs.

Any number of events can take place during an appraisal cycle that would warrant changing a plan. For example, plans may be changed to reflect:

- New organizational goals
- A change in assignment(s), position, or duties
- Updated goals when outside influences beyond an employee’s control make the original goals unachievable
- A change in assumptions about what can be reasonably achieved during the appraisal cycle
- The priorities of a new supervisor
- Shifts or changes in mission

When necessary, performance plans are modified to reflect the new goals and priorities, and communicated to employees. Just as when creating performance plans, changes should also be made with employee input.

All approved modifications to performance elements or standards must be discussed with and communicated to the employee, and the employee should acknowledge the revisions in the MyPerformance appraisal tool or on the DD Form 2906.
Changes to work requirements or assignment of new duties may require a supervisor to change an element or standard. If this occurs within 90 calendar days of the end of the appraisal cycle, the supervisor may:

- Revise the element or standard at the beginning of the next appraisal cycle;
- Update the plan and, if the employee does not have an opportunity to perform the new element(s) for the minimum 90-calendar-day period, do not rate the revised element(s); or
- Extend the appraisal cycle by the amount of time necessary to allow 90 calendar days of observed performance under the revised element or standard.

**Note:** Extending the appraisal cycle will affect the start date of the employee’s subsequent appraisal cycle; however, the subsequent appraisal cycle still ends March 31 of the following calendar year.
What are some potential barriers supervisors and employees may face in implementing this new program?

The purpose of this small group activity is to discuss ways to overcome the barriers to performance success.

Instructions:

1. Break out into small groups and appoint a spokesperson.
2. Each group should discuss and list three barriers employees or supervisors may face in implementing this new Performance Management and Appraisal Program. These barriers can be internal, external, or systemic in nature.
3. For each barrier, discuss ways to overcome or work around them.
4. Be prepared to share the barriers with the other small groups.

Time: 15 minutes.
Review the results of the Overcoming Barriers exercise.

Do any of these barriers sound familiar? Can you use any of the methods for overcoming a barrier?
What happens when performance fails to meet expectations?

The first step in addressing performance issues is to provide employees with informal feedback. Informal feedback may take several forms (e.g., telephone, private office, e-mail, etc.) and, in order to have the maximum benefit, should be given as soon as the supervisor identifies performance deficiencies.

The steps for providing informal feedback:

1. State what has been observed using facts, not emotions
2. Provide a statement regarding the impact of the action on others, or state the standard for acceptable work
3. Wait for a response (let them talk)
4. Ask for a solution; give suggestions if needed
5. Set a follow-up date and time
6. Thank the employee for his or her time
7. Continue to monitor
It’s imperative that the supervisor communicate expectations and performance problems. Supervisors should use the following checklist and ask themselves the following questions:

- Are you sure the issue is primarily a performance problem (as opposed to misconduct)?
- Have you communicated performance standards to the employee?
- Are the standards clear and reasonable?
- Have you asked the human resources staff to review the standards for any possible problems?
- Have you given the employee specific examples of when their work did not meet the standards?
Whenever a supervisor detects a decline in performance, early intervention is imperative. Assistance should be provided to the employees at any point during the appraisal cycle, whenever there is a need for improvement or any time there is a decline in performance.

**Discussion Question:**

- What actions should be taken when there is a decline in performance?
What happens when supervisors don’t take immediate action?

It is important to take immediate action for a number of reasons. Failure to take immediate action with problem employees could mean:

- Damaging office morale. Other employees will resent the performer(s) with performance issues and resent the supervisor for not addressing the problem.
- Introducing additional disciplinary problems. It is not unusual for performers with performance issues to have attendance problems, or to misuse their computer and telephone. These problems should disappear once they are productively engaged.
The best way for supervisors to handle performance issues is to take action to avoid performance problems before they occur.

Such preventive actions include the following:

- Communicate clear performance standards and expectations to employees. Supervisors should consider sharing performance expectations with their staff. If employees don’t understand what is expected, it will be very hard, if not impossible, for them to meet those expectations. Providing clear expectations doesn’t necessarily require supervisors to lay out precisely written, detailed instructions on every performance component. Generally, the question supervisors should ask themselves is: “Would a reasonable person understand what was expected?”

- Provide frequent feedback on performance. Such feedback, both positive and negative, whether given in continuously scheduled meetings or in unscheduled discussions, is crucial to ensuring that expectations are understood. Frequent feedback lessens the likelihood that an employee will be surprised if it becomes necessary to take formal steps to resolve performance issues. Supervisors should always look for opportunities to confirm that their employees understand what is expected.

- Reward and recognize good performance, informally and formally. Recognizing good performance is simply another way of clarifying expectations.

- Make full use of the probationary period for new employees. Performance problems often first show up during the initial period of employment. This period is designed to provide an opportunity for supervisors to address such problems.
Furthermore, an employee who is terminated during this period is not entitled to most of the procedures and appeal rights granted to employees who have completed probationary/trial periods. A recurring theme in successful resolution of performance problems is that taking action early is always better than waiting. This statement is definitely true when considering ways to prevent performance problems. Early communication, early feedback (positive and negative) and, if appropriate, early termination during a probationary or trial period are all good ways to prevent future performance problems. Investing time early is always time well spent.

Discussion Questions:

- Think of a time you had to communicate expectations to employees. What did that conversation look like? Was it ultimately successful in improving performance? Why or why not (ask multiple participants for their opinion)? Looking back on the situation, was there anything else you could have done or done differently?
- What can you do now to start or continue preventative actions? What should you do if problems are already occurring?
# Lesson 5: Monitoring Performance

## Learning Objectives

You should now be able to:

- Explain the Monitoring Phase
- Discuss key attributes of the Monitoring Phase
- Explain the importance of documenting employees’ accomplishments
- Explain the advantages of frequent discussions throughout the appraisal cycle
- Explain the value of monitoring performance throughout the appraisal cycle
- Identify barriers to performance success in order to revise performance plans as needed
- Explain the importance of informal feedback in identifying and addressing performance issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DCPAS</th>
<th>IT’S NOT ABOUT THE 365TH DAY</th>
<th>January 2016</th>
<th>(20)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

You should now be able to:

- Explain the Monitoring Phase
- Discuss key attributes of the Monitoring Phase
- Explain the importance of documenting employees’ accomplishments
- Explain the advantages of frequent discussions throughout the appraisal cycle
- Explain the value of monitoring performance throughout the appraisal cycle
- Identify barriers to performance success in order to revise performance plans as needed
- Explain the importance of informal feedback in identifying and addressing performance issues
Here are some additional resources and learning tools.

- Checklists and Fact Sheets on the DCPAS Labor & Employee Relations Division Web Site at:
  
  
  - PM Cycle Monitoring and Develop Roles and Responsibilities
  - Progress Review Checklist
  - Communicating With Your Supervisor
  - Performance Discussion Guide
  - Supervisors Checklist - Performance Counseling
  - Supervisors Guide to Performance Reviews
  - Preventing Performance Issues

Additional Checklists and Fact Sheets are available on the DCPAS Labor & Employee Relations Division Web Site at:

What questions do you have about Lesson 5?
The purpose of Lesson 6 of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program Training course is to explain the Evaluating Phase; show how and why an employee should provide input to a final performance appraisal discussion; describe the benefits of continuous feedback to the final performance appraisal discussion; and show how shared understanding is the overall goal of performance discussions.
Lesson 6: Evaluating Performance

No surprises for either party at the end of the appraisal cycle
Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Explain the Evaluating Phase
- Incorporate employee input to a final performance appraisal discussion
- Describe how continuous feedback benefits the final performance appraisal discussion
- Identify how shared understanding is the overall goal of performance discussions

This lesson will take approximately 1 hour to complete.
REFERENCES:

- L6 Employee Input Fact Sheet
- L6 Employee Input Tip Sheet Do’s and Don’ts
- L6 Employee Input v Appraisal Fact Sheet
- L6 Employee Input Worksheet
- L6 Performance Appraisal Discussion Checklist
- L6 Writing Employee Input

Video: Lesson 6 - End of Year Appraisal

5 CFR § 430.208. Rating Performance

(a) As soon as practicable after the end of the appraisal period, a written, or otherwise recorded, rating of record shall be given to each employee.

(1) A rating of record shall be based only on the evaluation of actual job performance for the designated appraisal period.

(2) An agency shall not issue a rating of record that assumes a level of performance by an employee without an actual evaluation of that employee’s performance.

(3) Except as provided in § 430.208(i), a rating of record is final when it is issued to an employee with all appropriate reviews and signatures.

(b) Rating of record procedures for each appraisal program shall include a method for deriving and assigning a summary level as specified in paragraph (d) of this section based on appraisal of performance on critical elements and, as applicable, non-critical elements.

(1) A Level 1 summary (“Unacceptable”) shall be assigned if and only if performance on one or more critical elements is appraised as “Unacceptable.”

(2) Consideration of non-critical elements shall not result in assigning a Level 1 summary (“Unacceptable”).

(c) The method for deriving and assigning a summary level may not limit or require the use of particular summary levels (i.e., establish a forced distribution of summary levels). However, methods used to make distinctions among employees or groups of employees such as comparing, categorizing, and ranking employees or groups on the basis of their performance may be used for purposes other than assigning a summary level including, but not limited to, award determinations and promotion decisions.
(d) Summary levels.

(1) An appraisal program shall use one of the following patterns of summary levels (See chart listed in CFR 430.208).

(2) Within any of the patterns shown in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, summary levels shall comply with the following requirements:

(i) Level 1 through Level 5 are ordered categories, with Level 1 as the lowest and Level 5 as the highest;

(ii) Level 1 is “Unacceptable”;

(iii) Level 3 is “Fully Successful” or equivalent; and

(iv) Level 5 is “Outstanding” or equivalent.

(3) The term “Outstanding” shall be used only to describe a Level 5 summary.

(4) The designation of a summary level and its pattern shall be used to provide consistency in describing ratings of record and as a reference point for applying other related regulations, including, but not limited to, assigning additional retention service credit under § 351.504 of this chapter.

(5) Under the provisions of § 351.504(e) of this chapter, the number of years of additional retention service credit established for a summary level of a rating of record shall be applied in a uniform and consistent manner within a competitive area in any given reduction in force, but the number of years may vary:

(i) In different reductions in force;

(ii) In different competitive areas; and

(iii) In different summary level patterns within the same competitive area.

(e) A rating of record of “Unacceptable” (Level 1) shall be reviewed and approved by a higher level management official.

(f) The rating of record or performance rating for a disabled veteran shall not be lowered because the veteran has been absent from work to seek medical treatment as provided in Executive Order 5396.

(g) When a rating of record cannot be prepared at the time specified, the appraisal period shall be extended. Once the conditions necessary to complete a rating of record have been met, a rating of record shall be prepared as soon as practicable.

(h) Each rating of record shall cover a specified appraisal period. Agencies shall not carry over a rating of record prepared for a previous appraisal period as the rating of record for subsequent appraisal period(s) without an actual evaluation of the employee’s performance during the subsequent appraisal period.
(i) When either a regular appraisal period or an extended appraisal period ends and any
agency established deadline for providing ratings of record passes or a subsequent rating
of record is issued, an agency shall not produce or change retroactively a rating of record
that covers that earlier appraisal period except that a rating of record may be changed—

(1) Within 60 days of issuance based upon an informal request by the employee;
(2) As a result of a grievance, complaint, or other formal proceeding permitted by
law or regulation that results in a final determination by appropriate authority
that the rating of record must be changed or as part of a *bona fide* settlement of a
formal proceeding; or
(3) Where the agency determines that a rating of record was incorrectly recorded
or calculated.

(j) A performance rating may be prepared at such other times as an appraisal program
may specify for special circumstances including, but not limited to, transfers and
performance on details.

Excerpt from: *DoDI 1400.25 V431* (pg. 11-14):

**3.5. Evaluating Performance.** The supervisor will evaluate employee performance
by assessing performance against the elements and standards in the employee’s
approved performance plan and assigning a rating of record based on work performed
during the appraisal cycle. A written rating of record must be provided at the end of the
appraisal cycle for each employee who has been under an approved performance plan for
90 calendar days during the cycle.

**a. Preparation and Submission of Performance Appraisals.**

Performance appraisals will be prepared consistent with this volume and documented in
the MyPerformance appraisal tool.

(1) Employee Input.

Employees can provide written input about their performance accomplishments for
supervisors to consider in evaluating each of the performance elements and overall
performance accomplishments.

(a) Employee input, while not mandatory, is highly encouraged and valuable for
progress reviews during and at the end of the appraisal cycle where the employee
input becomes a part of the employee performance file.
(b) The absence of employee input does not relieve the supervisor of the responsibility for writing a narrative statement assessing the employee’s performance standards and contributions.

(2) Performance Narrative.

Supervisors will write a performance narrative that succinctly addresses the employee’s performance measured against the performance standards for the appraisal cycle.

(a) The performance narrative justifies how an employee’s ratings are determined and provides support for recognition and rewards (or any administrative or adverse action, if necessary).

(b) Performance narratives are required for each element rated “Outstanding” and “Unacceptable.” Additionally, performance narratives are highly encouraged for each element rated “Fully Successful” as a means of recognizing all levels of accomplishments and contributions to mission success.

b. Descriptions of Performance Rating Levels.

The performance rating assigned should reflect the level of the employee’s performance as compared to the standards established. Some samples that may be useful in developing standards for an employee are provided in the following subparagraphs. These samples are intended to be illustrative only, do not apply to all work situations, and must be tailored to each particular situation.

(1) Level 5 – Outstanding

(a) Produces exceptional results or exceeds expectations well beyond specified outcomes.

(b) Sets targeted metrics high and far exceeds them (e.g., quality, budget, quantity).

(c) Handles roadblocks or issues exceptionally well and makes a long-term difference in doing so.

(d) Is widely seen as an expert, valued role model, or mentor for this work.

(e) Exhibits the highest standards of professionalism.

(2) Level 3 – Fully Successful

(a) Effectively produces the specified outcomes, and sometimes exceeds them.

(b) Consistently achieves targeted metrics.
(c) Proactively informs supervisor of potential issues or roadblocks and offers suggestions to address or prevent them.

(d) Achieves goals with appropriate level of supervision.

(3) Level 1 – Unacceptable

(a) Does not meet expectations for quality of work; fails to meet many of the required results for the goal.

(b) Is unreliable; makes poor decisions; misses targeted metrics (e.g., commitments, deadlines, quality).

(c) Lacks or fails to use skills required for the job.

(d) Requires much more supervision than expected for an employee at this level.

c. Rating Employee Performance

(1) The supervisor will assign an individual performance element rating of either 5, 3, or 1 to each critical element. All performance element ratings are averaged to calculate the rating of record, which reflects the employee’s overall job performance during the appraisal cycle based on the rating criteria outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Rating Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Level</th>
<th>Rating Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 5 – Outstanding</td>
<td>The average score of all critical element performance ratings is 4.3 or greater, with no critical element being rated a ‘1’ (Unacceptable), resulting in a rating of record that is a ‘5’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 – Fully Successful</td>
<td>The average score of all critical element performance ratings is less than 4.3, with no critical element being rated a ‘1’ (Unacceptable), resulting in a rating of record that is a ‘3’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 – Unacceptable</td>
<td>Any critical element rated as ‘1’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) In accordance with section 430.208(c) of title 5, CFR, the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program does not establish a forced distribution of performance rating levels.
(3) A rating of record of “Unacceptable” (Level 1) must be reviewed and approved by a HLR.

(4) If an employee does not have an opportunity to perform work associated with a performance element for 90 calendar days during the appraisal cycle, no performance element rating will be assigned for that performance element. An un-ratable performance element cannot be used as a factor in deriving a rating of record.

(5) The rating of record or individual performance element rating assigned to a critical element for a disabled veteran will not be lowered because the veteran has been absent from work to seek medical treatment, as provided in section 430.208(f) of title 5, CFR.

d. Reconsideration of a Performance Appraisal.

Employees may seek reconsideration of issues related to the performance appraisal process (e.g., individual performance element ratings and ratings of record) through the administrative grievance system or, where applicable, negotiated grievance procedures. Employees may not challenge contents (e.g., performance elements or standards) of an employee performance plan and decisions to grant or not grant a performance award or quality step increase (QSI) through the administrative grievance system or, where applicable, negotiated grievance procedures.
Performance management is an ongoing process that consists of several steps and phases. There are specific activities that take place during each phase. In this lesson, we’re going to look at the Evaluating Phase.
Performance management is a process of evaluating performance in a summary fashion. Per DoDI 1400.25, V431, evaluating performance entails assessing performance against the elements and standards in the employee's approved performance plan and assigning a rating of record based on work performed during the appraisal cycle.
We briefly reviewed the Evaluating phase in Lesson 1:

- Employee Input
- Final Performance Appraisal Discussion
- Writing the Performance Narrative
- Employee Rating
- Appraisal Cycle – 01 April through 31 March
At the end of the appraisal cycle, an employee’s performance is rated by their supervisor. Employees play an important role in the rating process as they document what they’ve accomplished and discuss those accomplishments during performance discussions. Employee performance is rated on what they’ve accomplished. This is done by evaluating each element in an employee’s performance plan. The employee then receives a rating of “Fully Successful” or “Unacceptable” for each element.
The Performance Management and Appraisal Program includes an Evaluating Phase. Each employee receives an appraisal. The success of the performance appraisal process depends on the supervisor’s willingness to complete a constructive and objective appraisal and on the employee’s willingness to respond to constructive suggestions and to work with the supervisor to reach future goals.

Employees should:

- Prepare employee input: Employees’ input describes how their contributions enabled mission accomplishment. Another element of the employees’ input may be achievements or recognition during the performance year as well as completed training and developmental courses. It should serve as a reminder to supervisors of significant accomplishments of their employees and can provide an opportunity for further discussion between the employee and supervisor and about employee performance.

- Address each performance element in the employee input. Employees should make factual, objective statements about how they accomplished each element.

- Restate the understanding of performance elements. It never hurts to identify a difference in understanding of the performance elements before the rating is finalized!
Highlight all of the most significant achievements during the appraisal cycle by including those related directly and indirectly to the performance elements. Employees should remember that this is not bragging; this is spelling out how they met or even exceeded their supervisor’s expectations.

Make the connection between what was accomplished, what the result was, and how it impacted the organization. Again, employees should make it easy for their supervisor to connect the performance dots.

Note the challenges they faced, how they resolved them, and how they might approach similar issues in the future.

Supervisors must:

Request and consider employee input that is submitted. The supervisor has to provide a written assessment or summary that accurately details the employee’s significant performance achievements or results and observable behaviors relative to the performance elements and standards for the appraisal cycle. This summary gives the supervisor an opportunity to fully state the employee’s achievements and abilities or to address specific performance deficiencies. Collecting and considering the employee’s input contributes to the level of engagement from that employee, and serves as a useful data point for comparing the supervisor’s impression of the employee’s and his or her own performance.

Consider obstacles encountered and overcome by the employee. Sometimes, employees are unable to successfully complete a performance element through no fault of their own. Consideration of these performance obstacles can be included in the narrative statement, which is used to justify how the employee’s ratings are achieved.

Prepare a written narrative and a rating on each performance element on which the employee has had an opportunity to perform. Each performance element that is evaluated at the “Outstanding” or “Unacceptable” level must be accompanied by a narrative justification as to the employee’s accomplishment or lack of accomplishment. While a narrative statement is not required for elements rated
at the “Fully Successful” level, supervisors are highly encouraged to use the narrative statement as another means of providing feedback and a written record of the employee’s accomplishments as well as developing and motivating employees. Additionally, narrative statements may be utilized in local awards programs, thereby increasing their value as a mechanism for recognizing employee accomplishments.

- Make meaningful distinctions among employees based on performance, foster and reward excellent performance, and address performance issues. When feedback has been provided on an ongoing basis, the formal performance appraisal discussion session should be a culmination of discussions which have occurred throughout the appraisal cycle. As we’ve said before, **there should be no surprises at the end of the appraisal cycle.**

- Once the ratings have been approved and finalized, clearly communicate to the employee each performance element rating that has been assigned, the reasons behind each performance rating, and the overall rating of record. The supervisor should schedule a meeting and inform the employee of the meeting’s purpose, time, and location. There should be sufficient, uninterrupted time for each employee.

Supervisors and employees should discuss the following when communicating the performance appraisal:

- An employee’s input as it relates to the performance elements and standards
- The challenges the employee faced and how external factors may have impacted performance
- The performance plan and comparison of the employee’s accomplishments and contributions as they relate to organizational goals and mission
- Any needed developmental opportunities or training programs that may assist the employee with short- or long-term goals
Employee input captures employee performance against the performance standards. Employees are strongly encouraged to provide input as part of every performance discussion. Supervisors are also required to complete and communicate evaluations as part of every performance discussion, including the interim and end-of-cycle reviews. The supervisor’s evaluation should be more than simply a concurrence of what the employee submitted via the employee input. Although the approach to writing employee input is similar, it is important to understand the differences between the two documents.

**Employee Input**

- Written by employees about themselves.
- Compares performance during the year to performance elements and standards.
- Provides opportunity for employee to state accomplishments and impact.
- Focuses on employees’ perception of their strengths and improved performance.
- Emphasizes organizational impact of performance.
- Makes supportable distinctions in performance above Fully Successful level (if applicable).
- Includes awards, recognitions, and compliments received during the performance year.

**Evaluation**

- Written by supervisors about employee performance.
Lesson 6: Evaluating Performance

- Compares employee input, if completed, and performance elements and standards.
- Provides employees with meaningful and constructive feedback.
- Focuses on supervisors’ assessment of strengths, improvement notes, and areas for improvement.
- Emphasizes organizational impact of performance.
- Makes meaningful distinctions in performance and provides supporting documentation of the recommended rating (if applicable).
- Includes observations made by other managers, supervisors, customers, or peers.
Holding successful performance discussions requires preparation. For example, developing a comprehensive written narrative is required and can be extremely helpful when preparing for the face–to–face discussion. Supervisors may use the following steps to prepare for performance discussions:

- Gather the material
- Review and write
- Schedule the meeting

We’ll learn more about each of these steps in the following slides.
Supervisors should have all of the necessary tools close at hand before starting to write the performance discussion narrative, including:

- A copy of the employee's performance plan
- Notes of previous meetings
- Employee input documents
- Written or recorded feedback on employee performance from other sources
- Performance Management and Appraisal Program policy and handbook instructions that describe the performance discussion process and procedures
Supervisors should take the time to review the employee's elements and standards. The goal is to know how to measure employee performance based on the standards. Before completion, supervisors should review all the documentation. When writing the narrative, supervisors should consider these points:

**Responsibilities and duties:**

- Have the employee's work responsibilities changed? If so, how?
- Has the employee been assigned additional responsibilities which were not included in the performance plan? If so, consider acknowledging these additional responsibilities in the narrative and the performance interview.
  - Note that additional responsibilities/tasks that are unrelated to the performance plan should not be annotated on the performance documents. Accomplishments that are not related to the plan may be recognized (or corrected) via other means (incentive awards or discipline).

**Performance:**

Include performance data for the entire appraisal period, not just the most recent information. The narrative must address:

- How well the employee performed the assigned responsibilities and the quality and/or timeliness of the employee's accomplishments
- Whether and how well the employee met performance goals
- Areas of performance that improved over the performance period
- Areas of performance that might need improvement
Developmental needs:

- Did the employee accomplish the identified developmental activities? If not, why not?
- Were there external reasons why the developmental needs were not addressed?
- Did the supervisor support the employee in carving out the time required to accomplish the activities? Any developmental activities not completed should be reevaluated when the next performance plan is written.
It is important for the supervisor to write the performance narrative first, and only then assign a rating to each element. The performance rating assigned should reflect the level of the employee’s performance as compared to the standards established. Supervisors should not pick the rating and then write to that rating! Once a supervisor has written the rating, they should become familiar with the performance appraisal form.

The employee’s ratings are based on the performance narrative. Supervisors should review how to derive the summary rating (see DoDI 1400.25 V431, 3.5. Evaluating Performance, c. Rating Employee Performance). The narrative justifies an employee’s ratings and provides support for recognition and rewards (or any administrative or adverse action, if necessary). Supervisors are responsible for writing a performance narrative that addresses each performance element assigned in the performance plan on which the employee is rated as “Outstanding” or “Unacceptable.” Supervisors are strongly encouraged to write a narrative for elements rated “Fully Successful” as well.

The performance appraisal itself, along with these written narratives, must be documented in the MyPerformance appraisal tool.
Here are some examples of performance narratives that may be useful in writing the individual performance narrative for the employee. These samples are intended to be illustrative only, do not apply to all work situations, and must be tailored to each particular situation.

1) **Level 5 – Outstanding**
   - Produces exceptional results or exceeds expectations well beyond specified outcomes.
   - Sets targeted metrics high and far exceeds them (e.g., quality, budget, quantity).
   - Handles roadblocks or issues exceptionally well and makes a long-term difference in doing so.
   - Is widely seen as an expert, valued role model, or mentor for this work.
   - Exhibits the highest standards of professionalism.

2) **Level 3 – Fully Successful**
   - Effectively produces the specified outcomes, and sometimes exceeds them.
   - Consistently achieves targeted metrics.
   - Proactively informs supervisor of potential issues or roadblocks and offers suggestions to address or prevent them.
   - Achieves goals with appropriate level of supervision.

3) **Level 1 – Unacceptable**
   - Does not meet expectations for quality of work; fails to meet many of the required results for the goal.
   - Is unreliable; makes poor decisions; misses targeted metrics (e.g., commitments, deadlines, quality).
   - Lacks or fails to use skills required for the job.
   - Requires much more supervision than expected for an employee at this level.
The final preparation step is to set aside a time and a place to meet with the employee. When scheduling the performance discussion meeting, supervisors should set the date, time, and location of the meeting with the employee. The meeting should be held in an appropriate location that affords both privacy and uninterrupted time so that the supervisor and the employee can concentrate on the review.

When the supervisor takes time to prepare, conducting the performance discussion may be less complicated, less stressful, and more successful in providing the employee valuable feedback on performance.

Note that per DoDI 1400.25, volume 431, a rating record of “Unacceptable” must be reviewed and approved by a higher level reviewer. Supervisors should be sure to familiarize themselves with and follow local policy before they communicate the rating to an employee. Supervisors should contact their Employee Relations Specialist in Human Resources prior to rating an employee as “Unsuccessful.”
The End-of-Year Meeting video shows the end of the appraisal cycle. The purpose of this activity is to show you an example of a performance appraisal. Pay particular attention to the aspects of the meeting that you find positive or useful, or that stood out.

**Instructions:**

4. The instructor will play a brief video for you. The video will depict a performance appraisal. While you are watching the video, pay close attention to the effective aspects of the meeting.

5. Be prepared to discuss what you noticed with the rest of the class.

**Time:** 15 minutes.
Lesson 6: End-of-Year Meeting Video Script

Scene 1: A supervisor, LISA, is seated behind a desk reviewing papers. There is a whiteboard behind the desk with the heading “Objectives.” There are three objectives listed on the board:

Objective 1: Complete all assignments in a timeframe consistent with that assigned by the supervisor.

Objective 2: Ensure that all output matches quality and design standards put forth in the employee handbook.

Objective 3: Actively support coworkers and assist as needed.

LISA [Speaking into speakerphone] CECIL, do you have time to review your self-assessment?

CECIL [On speakerphone] I sure do, be right over.

Scene 2: Same setting as Scene 1, but now CECIL is seated at the desk across from the supervisor.

LISA So CECIL, I’ve reviewed your self-assessment and compared it to my notes. Before we get into that, is there anything you’d like to add regarding your performance over the past year?

CECIL I think I included most of it in my assessment, but I would like to reiterate that I accomplished each objective that we agreed on. Not only was the quality of my work adequate, but I received a special thanks from the client on that one report back in January.

LISA I saw that e-mail you included with your assessment. It was quite thoughtful of them to send that along to you. You must have really impressed them.

CECIL
It’s nice to be appreciated for the hard work I put into it. Regarding the third objective, while I know it’s impossible to measure, I think my coworkers would all say that I’ve been more of an asset than a hindrance.

LISA
You’re right, it is really hard to measure, but do you have any material to support your claim?

CECIL
In February, David ran into some severe creative problems with his project. He bounced ideas off me during lunch a few times. His final direction came about during those brainstorm sessions.

LISA
I thought you two were on to something when I saw you two together that week.

CECIL
I’m sure I can come up with other examples if you need them.

LISA
No, my own observations agree with what you said. I was just looking for an actual example. That one is good enough.

CECIL
Alright, let me know if that changes.

LISA
Of course, but I don’t think it will. Frankly, I think your self-assessment was pretty straightforward. You provided documentation for everything you claimed. I really appreciate your thoroughness. It makes my job that much easier.

CECIL
So, does that mean you agree with me?

LISA
[Chuckling] This discussion isn’t about agreement or not. I was just hoping to clarify some points you made, and you’ve now done that for me.

CECIL
I’m glad I could help. What does this mean for my rating this year?
LISA
Like I said, this discussion isn’t about agreement or ratings. I was hoping to clarify your point of view—which I have now done.

CECIL
So when do I find out how I was rated for this year if you won’t tell me?

LISA
I will submit my recommendations to the director for the review. Once I get them back, I will write my final assessment of your performance for the year and you and I will sit down and discuss your rating at that time.

CECIL
[Smiling] I see. Are you sure you can’t give me a little hint?

LISA
I really can’t. Once I get your final assessment finished, you’ll be notified. Again, thank you for your input today and all your hard work this year. We’ll have that sit-down soon.

CECIL
Thanks. Take care. [CECIL gets up and exits the office.]
The new Performance Management and Appraisal Program emphasizes more frequent and meaningful interactions between supervisors and employees, such as through the use of periodic performance discussions. These kinds of frequent performance discussions help to:

- Understand expectations toward goals
- Facilitate supervisor-employee engagement
- Increase the amount of feedback
- Contribute to a more complete, accurate, and documented appraisal
- Encourage supervisors to recognize and reward employees in a more timely manner

It is critical that the results of performance feedback discussions be documented to support decisions such as rewards and recognition, developmental assignments, and readiness for promotion.

It is also critical that sufficient uninterrupted time be given to each employee. Employees need to understand their ratings and how they can either continue to perform at high levels or improve their performance in the coming appraisal cycle.
An employee may not necessarily agree with the rating of record. Additionally, an employee’s acknowledgment or signature on the appraisal does not indicate agreement with the rating of record, and the rating of record is official even if the employee does not acknowledge it or sign it. If the employee does not sign the appraisal, the supervisor notes that "Employee refused to sign" in the system and submits the appraisal as if it were signed. The MyPerformance tool has the capability to document the employee’s refusal to sign the form.

When possible, the employee and supervisor should attempt to informally resolve any disagreements about the rating of record. If they cannot, employees may raise issues related to the performance appraisal process through either the administrative grievance system or, where applicable, the negotiated grievance procedure.

Employees may also have the right to appeal performance-based actions under Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §432 and §752 to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB).
The purpose of this exercise is to talk about what you saw during the End-of-Year Meeting video and compare your thoughts with others about what the employee and supervisor did right.

**Discussion Questions:**

- What did you observe about the supervisor’s actions and behaviors?
- What did you observe the employee doing in this meeting?
- Where were the Trust Behaviors?
- What happens if the discussion doesn’t go as smoothly as this example?
- If things don’t go as smoothly as expected, how does that make it harder for the employee to stay engaged?
Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

➢ Explain the Evaluating Phase
➢ Incorporate employee input to a final performance appraisal discussion
➢ Describe how continuous feedback benefits the final performance appraisal discussion
➢ Identify how shared understanding is the overall goal of performance discussions

You should now be able to:

• Explain the Evaluating Phase
• Incorporate employee input to a final performance appraisal discussion
• Describe how continuous feedback benefits the final performance appraisal discussion
• Identify how shared understanding is the overall goal of performance discussions
Here are some additional resources and learning tools.

- **DODI 1400.25, Volume 410, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Training, Education, and Professional Development.**
- **DODI 1400.25, Volume 431, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Performance Management and Appraisal Program.**
- **DODI 1400.25, Volume 451, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Awards.**

Additional resources are available on the DCPAS LERD web site at: https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Pages/Home1.aspx, including:

- Employee Input Fact Sheet
- Employee Input Tip Sheet Do’s and Don’ts
- Employee Input Appraisal Fact Sheet
- Employee Input Worksheet
- Writing Employee Input
- Performance Appraisal Discussion Checklist

Additional resources are available on the DCPAS LERD web site at: https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Pages/Home1.aspx.
What questions do you have about Lesson 6?
LESSON 7: RECOGNIZING AND REWARDING PERFORMANCE

The purpose of Lesson 7 of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program Training course is to describe the importance of recognizing and rewarding performance and employee success; identify types of recognition and reward related to performance management; and determine methods that can be utilized to recognize and reward employees.
Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe the importance of recognizing and rewarding performance
- Describe the importance of recognizing employee success
- Identify types of recognition and reward related to performance management
- Determine methods that can be utilized to recognize and reward employees

This lesson will take approximately two hours to complete.
REFERENCES:

- Valuing Employee Performance – a Guide for Supervisors


5 CFR § 451.104 (a)(3)(b) Awards-

(a) An agency may grant a cash, honorary, or informal recognition award, or grant time-off without charge to leave or loss of pay consistent with chapter 45 of title 5, United States Code, and this part to an employee, as an individual or member of a group, on the basis of—

... (3) Performance as reflected in the employee’s most recent rating of record (as defined in § 430.203 of this chapter), provided that the rating of record is at the fully successful level (or equivalent) or above, except that performance awards may be paid to SES members only under § 534.405 of this chapter and not on the basis of this subpart.

(b) A cash award under this subpart is a lump sum payment and is not basic pay for any purpose.

Excerpt from: DoDI 1400.25 V451 Current Version Nov 2013 (pg. 9-11)

2. ELIGIBILITY
   a. General
      (1) Civilian employees who meet the definition of “employee” in section 2105 of Reference (e) are eligible to receive awards in accordance with this volume.

3. AWARDS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS. The administration of DoD Component awards programs provides for:
   a. Reviewing award recommendations for which approval authority has not been delegated to officials at lower levels within the organization.
   b. Communicating the relevant parts of awards programs to personnel.
   c. Evaluating and assessing awards and awards programs to ensure that awards:
(1) Are used to motivate, recognize, and reward eligible personnel.

(2) Exhibit a close, demonstrable link to performance, accomplishment, or contribution to DoD Component goals and objectives.

(3) Are granted commensurate with the value of the employee’s contribution or accomplishment.

d. Documenting all cash and time-off awards in compliance with section 451.106(e) of Reference (d). This task includes:

   (1) Filing awards documents in compliance with the requirements of section 451.106(f) of Reference (d).

   (2) Reporting awards data to the Central Personnel Data File (CPDF) in compliance with section 451.106(g) of Reference (d).

   (3) Reporting awards data as required by OPM on an as needed basis.

(4) Following appropriate DoD financial management regulations on civilian pay policies in accordance with Volume 8 of DoD 7000.14-R (Reference (m)).

e. Granting quality step increases consistent with the provisions of subpart E of part 531 of Reference (d) and section 6 of this enclosure.

   f. Documenting justification for awards that are not based on a rating of record in accordance with section 451.103 of Reference (d).
As you’ll recall from our previous lessons, performance management is a continual process that consists of four ongoing phases.
The Performance Management and Appraisal Program allow flexibility to create recognition and reward programs at the Component level to suit the organizational differences across the Department.

The broad framework of recognition and rewards is found in DODI 1400.25, Volume 451, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Awards. This instruction indicates recognition and rewards may take the form of both monetary and non-monetary awards.

Some examples of awards and recognition are: a one-time cash award, a salary increase, a promotion, a time-off award, a token of appreciation such as a plaque, a public acknowledgement of an achievement at a staff meeting, challenge coins and medals, non-monetary recognition such as regular meetings for public recognition of achievements, and even a simple “thank you” for a job well done—any acknowledgement that reinforces that the employee’s recognized act was observed and desirable.

As always, we must stay under the ethical spending limit guidelines under 5 CFR 2635 and DoDI 1400.25, V451.
As employees share their accomplishments, they should be celebrated. Recognition types include: Informal, Monetary, Non-monetary, and Honorary. Award programs should provide supervisors and managers the tools they need to formally recognize and reward their employees for good performance.

The purpose of this exercise is to brainstorm different ways to celebrate accomplishments with awards.

Instructions:

6. Break out into small groups and appoint a spokesperson.
7. With your group, brainstorm as many different ways to celebrate accomplishments with awards.
8. Select the top three ideas from your brainstorm.
9. Be prepared to discuss your ideas with the rest of the class.

Time: 15 minutes
Examples of awards are below. What other kinds of awards are available to supervisors?

**Recognition methods** include:

- Monetary;
- Non-Monetary
- Honorary; and
- Informal.

**Informal methods** include:

- Supervisors should actively solicit employee input on issues, act on the input, and communicate those actions to employees. These actions show employees that agencies value their opinions and suggestions.
- Supervisors should verbally thank employees for jobs well done, provide informal recognition when warranted, and give positive feedback to employees on their performance as often as possible. These small gestures of appreciation can go a long way.
Various recognition methods are available to supervisors. These are:

1. Monetary,
2. Non-monetary,
3. Honorary, and
4. Informal.

Are you aware of other kinds of non-monetary or informal awards in your area?
No matter the method of recognizing performance, it is important that everyone clearly understands the criteria for the reward or recognition.

Both supervisors and employees should know what awards the agency grants, the criteria for each award, and the recipients of those awards. This is a way of building transparency into all steps of the process by communicating the clearly defined procedures and criteria for the available forms of recognition and reward.

In Corporate Leadership Council (CLC) study we talked about previously, *fairness* and *accuracy* are the two most important drivers of performance across 106 factors examined in the study. Being recognized and rewarded should be achievable by all employees—not just by the very top performers and not just for the most visible or critical contributions.

If all employees believe they are capable of receiving some type of recognition or reward, and the process is fair, credible, and transparent, the program will meet its goal of motivating performance.

Since this is so important, we should spend some time discussing ways to bring transparency to the performance management process.

The purpose of this exercise is to discover some actionable methods for making recognition and rewards fair, credible, and transparent.

**Instructions:**

1. Break out into small groups and appoint a spokesperson.
2. With your group, discuss methods of making recognition and rewards fair, credible, and transparent.
3. Select the top idea from your discussion.
4. Be prepared to report out your top method for a fair, credible, and transparent reward/recognition method.

**Time:** 20 minutes.
What are the best ideas you heard for making recognition and rewards fair, credible, and transparent?
Recognizing and rewarding are ongoing processes that should occur many times throughout the year. In order to keep things fresh, you should have a variety of options to recognize or reward high performance so you are not always falling back on the same one every time.

This exercise will have you create a list of non-monetary recognition and reward options that supervisors can reference throughout the appraisal period.

**Instructions:**

1. In the same small groups, work together to complete a list of at least 10 recognition and reward options.
2. Record your list on chart paper. Please make it as legible as possible, as others will be reading your lists.

**Time:** 30 minutes.
Create a list of both formal and informal reward and recognition options that supervisors can reference throughout the appraisal cycle.
Current DoD policy allows supervisors the flexibility and freedom to recognize employees using various forms of recognition and reward. But how many forms do you know about? Here’s your opportunity to compare a variety of methods for rewarding performance throughout the year and to select those methods that might have a positive impact at your workplace.

Continue creating a toolkit of formal and informal reward and recognition options by reviewing a wide variety of different ideas for recognition and rewards.

**Instructions:**

1. Take the next 15 minutes to review the other groups’ charts.
2. You each have 10 circle stickers you can use to identify your favorite methods. You can come up with 10 different ideas with one sticker per idea, or place more than one sticker on particularly good ideas. Circulate around the room and make sure you review all the reward ideas.
3. At the end of this exercise, the instructor will tally the ideas and create a top 10 list. The groups that created the ideas that got the 3 highest number of stickers will give an explanation of their ideas if necessary.

**Time:** 25 minutes.
Finish creating a toolkit of reward and recognition options by reviewing a wide variety of different ideas for recognition and rewards.
We know recognition and rewards can improve performance, but when does an incentive lose its ability to incentivize? If employees don’t believe recognition and rewards are based on performance, but instead are arbitrarily assigned — or worse, distributed based on favoritism — recognition and rewards will not improve performance.

As we have discussed, supervisors have the largest impact on employee engagement, and employee engagement serves as a force multiplier for the impact of recognition and rewards. Supervisors can influence employee engagement and strengthen performance by recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions. Employees who understand the connection between effort and outcomes are more likely to perform at a higher level than employees for whom the connection is unclear.

Supervisors must understand how to most effectively use the methods in the toolkit we just created. We’ve talked about using a mix of both monetary and non-monetary awards. Keep in mind that the Department routinely spends 80% of the funding for monetary awards on performance-based cash awards.

With that in mind, let’s watch a video explaining and illustrating how monetary rewards impact motivation and performance. This is a talk by author Dan Pink on how rewards do and sometimes don’t motivate people from his book, Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us.

**Instructions:**

1. The instructor will play the video for you.
2. While you are watching the video, keep your A to Z list of recognitions and rewards in mind as you listen to Dan Pink talk about motivation.
3. Be prepared to discuss what you noticed with the rest of the class. Do you want to change anything in your toolkit afterwards?

**Time:** 20 minutes.
You should now be able to:

- Describe the importance of recognizing and rewarding performance
- Describe the importance of recognizing employee success
- Identify types of recognition and reward related to performance management
- Determine methods that can be utilized to recognize and reward employees in your organization
Here are some additional resources and learning tools.

- Additional Guides and Resources, including *Valuing Employee Performance – A Guide for Supervisors,* are available on the DCPAS LERD web site at: https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Pages/Home1.aspx
What questions do you have about Lesson 7?
The purpose of Lesson 8 of the Performance Management and Appraisal Program Training course is to identify steps used to address and improve performance issues, including conducting formal counseling sessions and the process for writing a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).
Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify steps used to address and improve performance issues
- Identify steps used to conduct formal counseling sessions
- Explain the process used in writing a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
- Using exercises provided, practice performance improvement techniques

This lesson will take approximately 1 hour to complete.
REFERENCES:

- T3 L8 Improving Performance Case Study

Video: What Would You Do Parts 1, 2 & 3

Contact the local HR Specialist for information on local Collective Bargaining Agreement or other policy requirements.

This Lesson is not intended to replace HR Support.

5 CFR § 430.207. Monitoring Performance

(d) Unacceptable performance. An appraisal program shall provide for—

(1) Assisting employees in improving unacceptable performance at any time during the appraisal period that performance is determined to be unacceptable in one or more critical elements; and

(2) Taking action based on unacceptable performance.

5 CFR § 432.104. Addressing unacceptable performance. At any time during the performance appraisal cycle that an employee’s performance is determined to be unacceptable in one or more critical elements, the agency shall notify the employee of the critical element(s) for which performance is unacceptable and inform the employee of the performance requirement(s) or standard(s) that must be attained in order to demonstrate acceptable performance in his or her position. The agency should also inform the employee that unless his or her performance in the critical element(s) improves to and is sustained at an acceptable level, the employee may be reduced in grade or removed. For each critical element in which the employee’s performance is unacceptable, the agency shall afford the employee a reasonable opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance, commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the employee’s position. As part of the employee’s opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance, the agency shall offer assistance to the employee in improving unacceptable performance.

Excerpt from: DoDI 1400.25 V431. (pg. 16-17):

3.9. Identifying and Improving Unacceptable Performance. Supervisors who communicate their expectations and provide constructive, timely, and meaningful feedback to their employees on a regular basis about performance may more readily identify and reduce instances of performance deficiencies and prevent issues from becoming serious performance problems.

a. Addressing Performance Issues Early. At any point during the appraisal cycle, when a supervisor detects a decline in performance, early intervention is imperative. Assistance should be provided to the employees early on, whenever there is a need for
improvement or any time there is a decline in performance. The supervisor should take the following actions, as appropriate:

(1) Clearly communicate to the employee that current performance fails to meet the performance standards described in the performance plan; provide clear guidance as to what is needed in order for the employee to improve; and provide specific examples of what and how work has not met expectations, as well as examples of work that would meet expectations.

(2) Offer appropriate assistance.

(3) Provide ideas of where the employee may go to obtain additional assistance or training, if applicable.

(4) Provide closer supervision and feedback. This might include more frequent reporting, special assignments, or on-the-job training.

(5) If performance issues persist, use a more formal approach to help employees improve and seek assistance from the human resources office.

b. Addressing Unacceptable Performance. If the employee’s performance declines to less than “Fully Successful” in one or more performance elements, the supervisor, in consultation with the servicing human resources office to determine whether action is more appropriate under section 432.105 or part 752 of title 5, CFR, and must provide notice of the performance deficiencies. The supervisor must also provide assistance designed to help the employee improve his or her performance during an opportunity period to demonstrate acceptable performance. The procedures contained in sections 432.104 and 432.105 of title 5, CFR must be followed if action is being taken under section 432.105 of title 5, CFR. The procedures are:

(1) The supervisor must identify in writing (e.g., in a PIP):

(a) Element(s) in which performance is “Unacceptable” and a description of the unacceptable performance.

(b) What standards the employee must attain in order to demonstrate “Fully Successful” performance.

(c) The time allowed for the opportunity to improve. The time allowed must be reasonable, commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the position, typically 30-90 calendar days.

(d) Statement of the possible consequences of failure to raise performance to the “Fully Successful” level during the opportunity period.

(2) If the employee fails to demonstrate performance at the “Fully Successful” level despite the PIP, the employee may be reduced in grade or removed from
federal service pursuant to section 432.105 of title 5, CFR. The employee may also be subject to reassignment at the DoD Component’s discretion.
Steps that supervisors should follow when addressing and improving performance are:

1. Clearly identify unacceptable performance
2. Offer assistance
3. Provide an opportunity to approve.

Performance issues are bound to occur in every workplace. Supervisors need to understand the importance of addressing issues early in the process. Waiting to address these kinds of issues hurts morale and creates additional issues. Do not wait to address performance issues until they become unmanageable.
What Would You Do? Part 1. This is the first in a video series that shows an example of a performance issue.

The purpose of this activity is to get you thinking about how you would handle the situation in the video based on what you have learned in this course.

- Can you detect the difference between a conduct-based and performance-based problem?
- Can you explain how a behavior affects work and coworkers?
- Can you determine the proper questions to ask and steps to be taken?

Instructions:

1. The instructor will play a brief video for you. While you are watching the video, think about how you would handle the situation.
2. Use the Lesson 8 What Would You Do Part 1 Worksheet to record questions you would need to have answered or some steps you would need to take if you were the supervisor/manager in the video.

Discussion Questions:

- Is this problem conduct-based, performance-based, or both?
- How is the behavior affecting the work?
- How is the behavior affecting others?

What Would You Do? Part 1

Scene 1: Work cubicle in professional office setting. NIKKI is looking at her unadorned cubicle wall. HARRY, a coworker, is on the other side of the cubicle playing a game.
HARRY
[Talking out loud to his screen] Ouch! Oh! That’s what I’m talking about! You are so toast!

NIKKI
[Peers over the wall where HARRY is at a desk playing a game.] You’ve been playing since you got back from lunch — that was, like, an hour ago.

HARRY
I just gotta smoke this guy before — oh, crap! What a world! What a world! Who would have thought —

NIKKI
You’re such a tool! Hey, your boss is coming.

HARRY
[Hurries to close the game on his monitor. Stands and faces LUIS who is walking by.] Luis, I’ve got some ideas for how to represent that information graphically.

LUIS
[Humoring him but aware that he’s been playing a game] OK, let’s hear them.

HARRY
Well, I have the ideas ... but I haven’t done anything yet...maybe the best thing to do is to draw them. Can I send that to you tomorrow?

LUIS
Today would be better.
HARRY

I would love to get you that today but I’m still crunching the data for that report. It’s taking me longer than I thought it would.

LUIS

Fine, tomorrow. [Walks away]

HARRY

[Sits back at his desk, then says to NIKKI] Hey, my prom date from high school just friended me!
What Would You Do? (Part 1) Worksheet

Instructions: When challenged with the employee problem in the video, what are some questions you need to have answered and some steps you need to take?

Write these down in the space provided below.

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 
What Would You Do? Part 2. This is the second in a video series that shows an example of a performance issue.

In this second part of the video, Luis seeks help from Employee relations.

**Instructions:**

1. The instructor will play the second part of the video for you. While you are watching the video, think about how you would handle the situation.
2. Participate in an open discussion about the scenario.

**Discussion Questions:**

- In what way has Luis ineffectively managed the situation?
- If you were Luis’s peer, what advice would you give to him?
- What would you expect him to do next to address the situation?
What Would You Do? Part 2

**Scene 2:** LUIS is in an office speaking with ROBERTA, the Employee relations Practitioner.

ROBERTA
So, it sounds like he’s pretty distracted at work.

LUIS
Actually, I think it’s worse than before. Between the personal calls, the games, Facebook — all that — I bet he’s doing less than 5 hours of work a day.

ROBERTA
That’s a big problem, and as a probationary supervisor yourself, you’ve got to demonstrate that your team can get work done. If your primary analyst is only working at 60%, you won’t be able to do that.

LUIS
I’ve talked to him —

ROBERTA
Tell me exactly what you said and did.

LUIS
Well, when he came into my department 3 months ago, I flat out told him that he’ll be measured by certain performance criteria and he has to get his work done. That should be his big clue that I expect him to do his job.

ROBERTA
That doesn’t sound very explicit. You told him that he can’t surf the net at work? Or that he can only place personal calls at break times?
LUIS
I wasn’t that specific because it would open up a huge can of excuses and I don’t want to deal.

ROBERTA
Well, you’re going to need to take some sort of action to get his attention.

LUIS
Has it come to that? Cause he’s the best analyst I’ve seen and I —

ROBERTA
Yes, it has.
Although the vast majority of DoD employees work hard and do their jobs very well, there may be times when supervisors must counsel an employee whose job performance is unacceptable. Performance that deviates from an acceptable level must be immediately addressed. Supervisors should conduct counseling sessions with the employee as soon as they think there is a problem; do not wait until a scheduled performance discussion or when the end-of-year appraisal is due.

**Performance issues rarely correct themselves without action.**

General steps for supervisors when addressing performance issues are:

1. Provide scheduled performance discussions;
2. Identify and document performance deficiencies;
3. Counsel employee on performance deficiencies;
4. Provide time for improvement;
5. If performance remains unacceptable, consider use of a performance improvement plan (PIP) – be sure to consult your HR Professionals for assistance;
6. If performance remains unacceptable, personnel action may result; (personnel actions include reassignment, demotion, or termination)

The goal is to not go through all of these steps – the point here is to head off performance issues before it gets to the level that requires a personnel action.

Note that all employees should not only receive counseling at intervals required by the performance appraisal system but also whenever the employee does something well. Counseling and feedback are part of a supervisor’s responsibilities to all employees.
Effectively dealing with performers with performance issues, means recognizing employees’ training needs early, identifying deficiencies that can be corrected, and providing the most effective assistance to employees.

Note that PIPs can be given during the appraisal cycle (and not just at the end or after) if deficiencies have occurred AFTER the employee has been working under an approved performance plan.
Employees do take some proactive steps to help improve their performance. Employees should:

- Ask clarifying questions
- Ask for specific examples of “Fully Successful” performance
- Request additional job-related training or assistance
- Adhere to responsibilities outlined in the PIP document; actively seek assistance when needed

What other things can employees do to improve performance?
What Would You Do? Part 3. This is the third in a video series that shows an example of a performance issue.

In this third part, Luis discusses the planning of a counseling session.

**Instructions:**

1. The instructor will play the third part of the video for you. While you are watching the video, think about how you would handle the situation.
2. Participate in an open discussion about the scenario.

**Discussion Questions:**

- In your opinion, did Luis adequately prepare for a counseling session with Harry?
- What would you say if you were Harry’s supervisor?
What Would You Do? Part 3

Scene 3: LUIS is in an office speaking with ROBERTA, the Employee relations Practitioner. This is several weeks after Part 2.

LUIS
Since I last came to you about the problems with Harry, I’ve talked to him a number of times about his performance. But I still don’t feel like I’m getting through to him.

ROBERTA
But have you seen any improvement?

LUIS
A little. He would really commit himself for a day or two, but then it was right back to excuses and missed deadlines.

ROBERTA
Have you communicated any of this in writing?

LUIS
Yes. I explained this in a formal letter and he sent me an e-mail acknowledging he received it. I’ve also been keeping notes on our conversations.

ROBERTA
That’s good. I think your next step should be a counseling session.

LUIS
I agree and have started the planning process.

ROBERTA
That’s great. What do you have so far?
LUIS
I’d like to conduct the meeting a week from today, after lunch. I know Harry prefers afternoons. I’ll use my office, so the meeting is private.

ROBERTA
Good.

LUIS
I’m gathering all my documentation and am thinking of working on a rough script.

ROBERTA
I think that’s a good idea. You need to plan ahead and anticipate how Harry may respond to what you have to say. And also you will address any questions he has.

LUIS
(taking notes) Ok, good. I will definitely work on that.

ROBERTA
And what is your main objective with this session?

LUIS
(ticking the items off on his fingers) To find out why Harry is not completing his work, to get a solid commitment from him to do better, and to develop a performance improvement plan for doing so.

ROBERTA
And if he is not receptive to this?

LUIS
Then I am prepared to start disciplinary action. But I do think the counseling session is an important first step and that it will show Harry I am serious.
Communicating clearly is a critical part of improving performance.

No matter how hard you work or how good you are at your job, if you can’t connect with the people you work with, you will not be as successful as you could be. The key to connecting with people is communication. As you may have experienced in your life, communication is tricky. Messages never transmit 100% as intended. It is best to assume that there is going to be miscommunication. The sender often determines the form of delivery (email, face-to-face, phone, formal appraisal) as well as the time and the place of the message. Both the sender and receiver have their own expectations, experiences, assumptions, attitudes toward work, and ways of viewing the world. Some things are included in the message but are not always conscious, such as tone, body language, and facial expression.

Communication and clarification is one way to overcome this challenge. There are two steps: when someone communicates with you (by saying something or writing something), you should clarify what you heard. This can take many forms, from repeating back what you heard to asking questions to make sure you understood.

This goes for both supervisors and employees — anyone having a potentially difficult conversation. This kind of good communication practice is important for reducing the chances of being misunderstood and verifying that your point has been heard, and is the first step toward improving performance.
If it comes to a formal feedback, supervisors should start with a formal counseling session and ensure that everything is documented.

Formal feedback often comes in the form of meetings or counseling sessions with employees. The purpose of counseling is to let employees with performance issues know that their performance is not meeting expectations and to help them raise their performance to the expected level. Counseling aims to assist, not punish, the employee.

Here are four tips to help supervisors prepare for and conduct effective counseling sessions.

1. Clearly communicate what acceptable performance looks like. Make sure the employee knows what their behavior should look like. If you have adequately documented performance elements and standards, you can refer the employee to those measures.

2. Conduct the counseling session in an appropriate setting. Find a quiet setting where you and the employee can get some privacy to have a serious discussion about performance.

3. Plan for enough time and document the session. Do not hurry through this discussion. Set aside enough time to explain the performance issue, check to see if the employee understands it, answer any questions from the employee, and decide on next steps with the employee.
4. Make sure the employee understands performance expectations. Given the seriousness of formal counseling, it is critical that the employee understands what is expected of them.

There are four more tips on the next slide.
Here are the rest of the tips that supervisors can use to ensure effective counseling sessions with employees.

5. Focus on the performance issue. Do not add additional feedback at this point. Stick with the facts about the performance, and relate it back to the performance elements and standards.

6. Leave emotions out of the conversation. Do your best to keep emotion out of the discussion, which is not always easy to do. Do your best not to escalate the discussion, sticking with the facts about the performance issue.

7. Seek cooperation, NOT confrontation. Remember that you are on the same team as the employee. You are looking to help the employee meet their performance goals for the appraisal cycle.

8. The mutual goal is to improve the employee's performance. The point here is to help the employee.
So what happens if these steps do not improve an employee’s performance? The most formal feedback that can be given is in the form of a Performance Improvement Plan, or PIP. Supervisors should call Employee Relations as a first step to finding out the procedures for their organization. This will save time and ensure they are following the correct procedures and processes.

If the employee’s performance declines to less than “Fully Successful” in one or more performance elements, the supervisor, in consultation with the servicing human resources office, must determine whether action is more appropriate under section 432.105 or part 752 of title 5, CFR, and must provide notice of the performance deficiencies.

The supervisor must also provide assistance designed to help the employee improve his or her performance during an opportunity period to demonstrate acceptable performance. The procedures contained in sections 432.104 and 432.105 of title 5, CFR must be followed if action is being taken under section 432.105 of title 5, CFR.

**The supervisor must identify in writing (e.g., in a PIP):**

- Element(s) in which performance is “Unacceptable” and a description of the unacceptable performance
- What standards the employee must attain in order to demonstrate “Fully Successful” performance
- The time allowed for the opportunity to improve
- Statement of the possible consequences of failure to raise performance to the “Fully Successful” level during the opportunity period
- What assistance the Agency is offering the employee in improving unacceptable performance

If the employee fails to demonstrate performance at the “Fully Successful” level despite the PIP, the employee may be reduced in grade or removed from Federal service.

**CALL EMPLOYEE RELATIONS FOR GUIDANCE PRIOR TO INITIATING A PIP**

The supervisor must identify in writing (continued):
• The time allowed for the opportunity to improve; the time allowed must be reasonable and commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the position, typically 30 – 90 calendar days
• Statement of the possible consequences of failure to raise performance to the “Fully Successful” level during the opportunity period
• What assistance the Agency is offering the employee in improving unacceptable performance
• If the employee fails to demonstrate performance at the “Fully Successful” level despite the PIP, he or she may be reduced in grade or removed from Federal service pursuant to section 432.105 of title 5, CFR. The employee may also be subject to reassignment at the DoD Component’s discretion.
In this exercise, you will demonstrate how to immediately address performance that deviates from an acceptable level.

**Instructions:**

1. Break out into small groups, appointing a spokesperson.
2. Review the *Improving Performance Case Study* and discuss appropriate methods for immediately addressing the performance in each situation that deviates from an acceptable level.

**Time:** 20 minutes
Improving Performance Case Study

You are a supervisor with a team of eight employees. Four of your employees are demonstrating behavior that should be addressed immediately before it becomes a performance issue. Read over the facts and discuss with your group the performance improvements needed for each employee. Then come up with a strategy for addressing each employee’s performance.

Employee 1:

- GS-5 with 2 years of experience.
- Employee just had her first child.
- Employee hasn’t received training recently and is apprehensive about the new document managing systems.
- The last rating was fully acceptable, but the current supervisor thinks that rating was higher than it should be.
- The employee recently has demonstrated problems with tardiness and at times has shown a negative attitude toward her superiors.

Notes:
Employee 2:

- GS-9 with 15 years of service.
- Employee has attended all provided training.
- While the employee's performance in the past was good, the quality has consistently declined.
- The supervisor used to be able to rely on this employee. However, recently the supervisor believes that the employee is not as reliable (both in terms of quality of performance and timeliness in submitting assignments).
- The supervisor is finding it difficult to communicate her expectations to the employee.

Notes:

Employee 3:

- GS-9 who recently came over from a different Federal agency.
- Employee has had trouble adjusting to the culture at the new location.
- At the end of the last cycle, the employee missed one deadline, but still completed the work.
- The employee seems to think that she is on an island and has no support. Likewise, the employee does not support her coworkers.

Notes:

Employee 4:

- GS-7 who was just hired out of school.
- Employee has never before worked in an office setting.
- There have been complaints about the employee regarding unprofessional behavior.
- The work the employee submitted has been satisfactory, but could be better.

Notes:
Practice the communication and clarification required for improving performance in the workplace.

This exercise shows an effective interaction between a supervisor and an employee with performance issues.

**Instructions:**

1. As a class, we will go through the scenario on the slides and discuss each step.

**Time:** 10 minutes.
Exercise: Improving Performance Scenario.

Taking immediate action, the supervisor notes that the employee’s performance plan includes a standard that work be performed in a timely manner.

The employee has been on the performance plan for more than 90 days.

Discussion Question:

- How can the supervisor use communication and clarification in this case?
Exercise: Improving Performance Scenario.
What does the supervisor do next?
Following a meeting, the supervisor waits until everyone else has left and reminds the employee that a particular item is past due.

Discussion Question:
- How can the supervisor use communication and clarification in this case?
Exercise: Improving Performance Scenario.

The supervisor meets with the employee privately and discusses the missed deadlines, the performance plan’s requirement, and the employee’s unacceptable performance.

Discussion Question:

• How can the supervisor use communication and clarification in this case?
Exercise: Improving Performance Scenario.

Next, the supervisor needs to document the conversation. As a follow-up, the supervisor sends the employee an email summarizing (and documenting) their informal conversation.

Discussion Question:

- How can the supervisor use communication and clarification in this case?
Exercise: Improving Performance Scenario.

Unfortunately, the employee continues to miss deadlines. The supervisor provides the employee with additional feedback: a formal memorandum of counseling, specifically referencing the deadlines that have been missed. The supervisor attaches the message assigning the work and its deadline as well as the employee's dated message with the final work product. The employee's dated message is proof that the work product is late.

Discussion Question:

- How can the supervisor use communication and clarification in this case?
Exercise: Improving Performance Scenario.

Discussion Question:

- What should the supervisor do if the employee still continues to miss deadlines?
This exercise shows an effective interaction between a supervisor and an employee with performance issues.
You should now be able to:

- Identify steps used to address and improve performance issues
- Identify steps used to conduct formal counseling sessions
- Explain the process used in writing a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
- Using exercises provided, practice performance improvement techniques
Here are some additional resources and learning tools.

- **DODI 1400.25, Volume 410, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Training, Education, and Professional Development.**
- **DODI 1400.25, Volume 431, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Performance Management and Appraisal Program.**
- **DODI 1400.25, Volume 451, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Awards.**

Additional resources are available on the DCPAS LERD web site at: [https://dodhrinfo.cpmis.osd.mil/](https://dodhrinfo.cpmis.osd.mil/)
What questions do you have about Lesson 8?
GLOSSARY

acceptable performance. Performance that meets an employee’s performance requirements or standards in the elements being assessed.

appraisal. The process by which performance is reviewed and evaluated.

appraisal cycle. A 1-year period (April 1 – March 31) established by the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program in which an employee’s performance will normally be reviewed, and a rating of record will be assigned.

approved performance plan. A performance plan written, reviewed, and approved in accordance with DoD Component procedures, which communicates expectations and requirements of employee performance for the appraisal cycle.

critical element. A work assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that the employee’s overall performance is unacceptable. Elements are only used to measure individual performance.

detail. A temporary assignment to a different position or a set of duties for a specified period. The employee is expected to return to his or her permanent position of record at the end of the assignment.

element. A work assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that the employee’s overall performance is unacceptable. Elements are only used to measure individual performance.

employee performance file. A record containing copies of employees’ performance ratings of record, including the performance plans on which the ratings are based. It also includes all performance-related records, such as forms or other documents, maintained as a system of records within the meaning section 552a of title 5, U.S.C., also known as the “Privacy Act of 1974.”

higher level review (HLR). A senior-level management official, normally above the level of a rating official.

matrixed employee. An employee hosted by an organization at a location apart from his or her permanent supervisor or organization of record and who is performing work for his or her organization of record. The employee may receive taskings from the host organization but he or she remains under the authority, direction, and control of his or her organization of record.
minimum period of performance. The minimum appraisal cycle for the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program is 90 calendar days on an approved performance plan.

MyPerformance. The DoD automated appraisal tool authorized for use by both supervisors and employees to document the performance management process of the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program.

opportunity period to demonstrate acceptable performance. A reasonable period for the employee whose performance has been determined to be unacceptable in one or more elements to demonstrate acceptable performance in the element(s) at issue.

performance. Accomplishment of work assignments or responsibilities.

performance discussion. Joint communication between the supervisor and employee about the employee’s work performance and its link to organizational effectiveness. The discussions may consist of verbal feedback sessions or formal progress reviews.

performance element rating. The written, or otherwise recorded, appraisal of performance compared to the performance standards for each element on which there has been an opportunity to perform for the minimum period of performance.

performance improvement officer. A senior-level organizational leader with responsibility to supervise agency performance management activities; advise agency leaders about measuring organizational performance; and assist with integrating performance information into an agency’s employee performance appraisal process.


performance plan. All of the written, or otherwise recorded, performance elements and standards that set expected performance. A plan must include critical elements and their performance standards.

performance rating level (also known as “summary level”). An ordered category of performance from Level 1 through Level 5, with Level 1 as the lowest and Level 5 as the highest. Level 1 is “Unacceptable”; Level 3 is “Fully Successful”; and Level 5 is “Outstanding”.

performance standard. The management-approved expression of the performance threshold, requirement, and expectations that must be met to be appraised at a
particular level of performance. A performance standard may include, but is not limited to, quality, quantity, timeliness, and manner of performance.

**performance improvement plan (PIP).** A strategy developed for an employee at any point in the appraisal cycle when performance becomes unacceptable in one or more elements. This plan affords an employee the opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance and is developed with specific guidance provided by the servicing human resources office.

**progress review.** A type of formal performance discussion in which the supervisor communicates with the employee about the employee’s performance compared to his or her performance standards. Supervisors are required to conduct at least one formal progress review during the appraisal cycle.

**promotion.** A change of an employee, while serving continuously within the same agency, either to a higher grade when both the old and the new positions are under the General Schedule or under the same type graded wage schedule, or to a position with a higher rate of pay when both the old and the new positions are under the same type of ungraded wage schedule, or are in different pay method categories.

**quality step increase (QSI).** An increase in an employee’s rate of basic pay from one step or rate of the grade of his or her position to the next higher step of that grade or next higher rate within the grade (as defined in section 531.403 of title 5, CFR. Only an employee who receives a rating of record of “Outstanding” or equivalent is eligible.

**rating of record.** The performance rating level assigned at the end of an appraisal cycle for performance of agency-assigned duties over the entire cycle.

**rating official.** The person responsible for informing the employee of the duties of his or her position, establishing performance standards, providing feedback, appraising performance, and assigning the performance rating. Normally, this is the employee’s immediate supervisor.

**reassignment.** The change of an employee, while serving continuously within the same agency, from one position to another without promotion or demotion.

**reduction in grade.** The involuntary assignment of an employee to a position at a lower classification or job grading level. A reduction in grade is also referred to as a demotion.

**removal.** The involuntary separation of an employee from federal service.

**SMART.** An acronym for criteria that can be used in writing and evaluating performance standards: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.
supervisor (Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA)). Position meets the definition of Supervisor in 5 U.S.C. 7103(a)(10), but does not meet the minimum requirements for application of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide.

unacceptable performance. Performance that fails to meet the established performance standards in one or more elements of an employee’s position. It is referred to as a Level 1 rating under the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program.

within-grade increase (WGI). A periodic increase in an employee’s rate of basic pay from one-step of the grade of his or her position to the next higher step within that grade. The employee’s rating of record must be at the “Fully Successful” level to be eligible for a WGI.