



# Effective Performance Evaluation

Participant Training Manual

Comprehensive Public Training Program



Revised 5/11/2016

# Effective Performance Evaluation

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers all aspects of performance evaluation. Subjects include timeliness for performance evaluations, writing clear performance expectations, conducting planning sessions, providing feedback to the employee, making accurate assessments of employee performance, conducting rating sessions, and proper completion of performance evaluation forms.

## JOB/LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ⇒ Recognize and understand the timeliness associated with the performance evaluation system
- ⇒ Write performance expectations in order to identify responsibilities, priorities, and measurable goals; clarify performance expectations so that there is no misinterpretation about what is expected from the employee
- ⇒ Recognize and understand the importance of providing feedback to employees
- ⇒ Conduct productive employee performance rating sessions which clearly identify areas that need improvement as well as reinforce strengths
- ⇒ Recognize the important factors to consider the performance ratings to help ensure that ratings are being rendered in an unbiased manner

## INSIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

# Effective Performance Evaluation

## PURPOSE OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

As a supervisor, it is your responsibility to develop your employees. If you plan and review the work of your employees using the steps established in the Performance Evaluation System process (PES) you will do just that. Your effectiveness and contribution to the agency also improves through the PES process, if it is implemented properly. Planning and reviewing the work of your employees will enable you to make sure that your staff is doing their part to carry out all of the goals and the mission of your agency. It is your responsibility, as a supervisor, to communicate with your employees regarding what their roles are in the mission of the unit as well as the agency as a whole.

A major purpose of a performance evaluation system is to provide a process to improve two-way communication and feedback between supervisors and their employees. This improved communication builds accountability—making sure that what is supposed to be accomplished by employees is really accomplished.



### Steps in PES Process

- Performance Planning
- Continual observation, documentation, and feedback
- Performance Rating

### **Timing Requirements of the PES Process**

**Everything concerning PES revolves around the focused date of July 1<sup>st</sup> each year.**

The required time frames for each step of the process can be found below:

#### **Planning**

For all current employees, planning sessions shall be completed between July 1<sup>st</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup> each year. (3 calendar months)

For newly-hired employees, planning sessions must be completed within 3 calendar months of their date of hire.

#### **Continual observation, documentation, and feedback**

Supervisors shall communicate with their employees all throughout the year regarding their performance

#### **Rating**

For all employees, ratings shall be conducted between July 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup> each year (2 calendar months)

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## EXERCISE #1: PES TIMELINE

### Scenario 1: James Wilson was hired on August 3rd

1) What is the deadline date to conduct his first planning session?

ANSWER:

2) What is the range of dates that you must conduct his first rating session?

ANSWER:

3) What is the range of dates that you must conduct his next planning session?

ANSWER:

### Scenario 2: Susan Thompson was hired on January 8th

1) What is the deadline date to conduct her first planning session?

ANSWER:

2) What is the range of dates that you must conduct her first rating session?

ANSWER:

3) What is the range of dates that you must conduct her next planning session?

ANSWER:

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## STEP 1: PERFORMANCE PLANNING

### Tips for Effective Performance Planning:



Review the employee's position description, agency policies, strategic plan or other pertinent documents. Think of the things you would like this employee to change, accomplish, enhance or learn during the next year. Develop a list of these items to go over with your employee.

Look at the position description (SF-3) and make sure it is up-to-date. If not, this is an excellent time to revise this important document.

Planning expectations must be job-related. Discuss the job duties. Then, brainstorm a list of things you want the employee to do during the rating period.

This planning session is an opportunity for you and your employee to talk about work. The more ownership your employee has in this process, the more productive the session is likely to be.

Expectations should be based on the individual employee's performance, unless this is a new employee with whose work you are not familiar.

Expectations are written to do two things—to reinforce positive performance, and to change or improve performance that is less than acceptable; that is, to encourage the employee to continue to do well or even better, what he is already doing well. Also, to point out how you wish the employee to improve in those areas he needs to improve.

Often, in a planning session, employees will press a supervisor for examples of what performance or behavior would need to be achieved in order to earn a higher rating. Do not feel forced to do this. You can certainly give examples of what you would consider to warrant a higher rating if you wish, but make it clear to the employee that he will be rated on the whole job, not just the specific things that have been mentioned in the planning document.

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## STEP 1: PERFORMANCE PLANNING

The planning document is only one document that adds to what the employee already knows about doing the job. He has been given many other things that make it clear what is expected of him in the job. It is possible the employee will meet or exceed all the expectations that appear on the planning document, but still receive low ratings if the normal requirements of the job have not been met. Make it clear in the planning session he will be held accountable for all parts of his job, not just the written expectations in the planning document.

Expectations should not be written for perfection unless perfection is the only thing that is acceptable, as in the case of a nurse administering medicine. Make it clear to your employee that the expectations are written at the “Successful” level.

Ask yourself if the expectation will be just as clear at rating time as it is now, to both you and the employee. If not, maybe you need to be more clear.

Different people doing the same job may have different expectations. For example, a Corrections Lieutenant on death row will not have the same expectations as a Corrections Lieutenant at the horse stable. A Human Resources Manager responsible for the performance evaluation program at an agency will have different expectations than the Human Resources Manager in the cubicle next door who is responsible for recruiting and hiring activities at that same agency.

**A good system to follow when developing written expectations is the SMART Method:**

Is it .....*S*pecific?

Is it..... *M*easurable?

Is it..... *A*ttainable?

Is it..... *R*elevant?

Is it..... *T*imed?

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## STEP 1: PERFORMANCE PLANNING

The planning session may require more time for a new employee, because he or she will have a lot more to learn about the job. For a new employee, it is possible the planning expectations will be more generic than they would be for an employee with whose performance—whose strengths and weaknesses-- you are familiar.

If you supervise a large staff or have a lot of turnover, you may wish to develop a generic planning document that you use for all new employees. Then, at the next planning session, you can prepare a planning document that focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of the particular employee, with whose performance you will then be familiar.

You don't have to write down everything you expect from your employee. For example, if one employee knows that work begins at 8:00 a.m. and is always there on time, it would be unnecessary to write that down as an expectation. However, an employee who has problems with tardiness would probably need a written expectation to be at work at 8:00 a.m. as a clear written requirement that they will be rated on at the end of the period.

For many employees, there should be a very clear link between the employee's expectations and the strategic plan for the agency. How can the organization accomplish its mission if the employee is not contributing to it? We recommend you get a copy of your agency's strategic plan. Identify how and where your employee's job and performance fit into the plan. Share this information with the employee; point out how his performance is crucial to the mission of the department. This further validates for the employee that he is important to the organization. Then, write expectations that support this.

Often, agencies will require that you include “core” or “required” expectations for your employees. They may require that, for all employees in certain job classifications or even in the entire agency, you include an expectation that has already been written for you, for one or more performance factors. There is nothing wrong with this; many agencies have sound reasons for doing so. However, remember that expectations are also written based on the strengths and weaknesses of the individual employee and how well he is doing the job. Be sure to add employee-specific expectations that address the individual employee.



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## EXERCISE #2: WRITING PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

### POSITION # 1: MAINTENANCE REPAIRER

(New Employee)



### SCENARIO:

Will Fixxitt was just hired into a Maintenance Repairer position at your agency and you are his direct supervisor. You are getting ready to conduct Will's first PES planning session and have to develop written performance expectations for that planning session. Develop Will's performance expectations based on the information provided below.

### Will's Job Description and Hours:

Make minor repairs to the interior and exterior of buildings

Make minor repairs to office furniture

Make minor repairs to small lawn mowers, chainsaws, and other lawn equipment

Clean and replace filters on air conditioners in buildings

Start, operate and check for safety on all equipment once repaired

Work hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

Work with other staff to help them with repairs when needed

Learn the maintenance information and be able to repair new equipment as it comes in

Repair equipment in a timely manner and notify supervisor as soon as equipment is ready

Prioritize repair projects to ensure efficiency throughout the work day

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## EXERCISE #2: WRITING PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Please write performance expectations. Develop the content of the performance expectations from the information that is provided in the scenario.

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## EXERCISE #2: WRITING PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

### POSITION # 1: MAINTENANCE REPAIRER

(Same employee after 1st PES rating) (1 year under your supervision)



### SCENARIO:

Will Fixxitt has been working for your agency in a Maintenance Repairer position for one year and has been under your supervision for that entire time period. You have already conducted Will's first PES rating session and you are getting ready to conduct Will's PES planning session for his next rating period and have to develop written performance expectations for that planning session. Develop Will's performance expectations based on the information provided below.

### Will's performance through his first year:

Will has made the necessary repairs to buildings, furniture, and equipment as needed and has done a neat and thorough job. However, Will works rather slowly and takes longer to repair items than the other Maintenance Repairers on staff.

Will usually arrives to work on time, but has been about five to ten minutes tardy an average of once every two weeks.

Will has been friendly, but has been reluctant to help other co-workers when he is finished his own work.

Will has been great with learning the maintenance information of new equipment as it comes in. However, he sometimes complains about the frequency, at which, new equipment is coming in.

Will has kept you updated as to the progress of his projects and has notified you when he is finished with a project. However, he has not communicated with co-workers to share tips on better ways to repair things as he discovers them.

Will usually prioritizes projects well, but tends to work on the projects that he likes to work on first, sometimes resulting in a delay of the completion of more important projects.

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## EXERCISE #2: WRITING PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

**POSITION # 2: ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

(New Employee)



### SCENARIO:

Iva Gottitt was just hired into an Administrative Assistant position in your agency and you are her direct supervisor. You are getting ready to conduct Iva's first PES planning session and have to develop written performance expectations for that planning session. Develop Iva's performance expectations based on the information provided below.

### Iva's Job Description and Hours:

Screen all telephone calls, visitors, and incoming correspondence.

Compose and type routine correspondence independently.

Schedule appointments without prior clearance.

Perform administrative functions such as payroll preparation, travel reports, supply requisitions, etc.

Work hours are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday.

Work with staff members to arrange conferences, meetings and prepare background materials as needed.

Use Microsoft Word and Excel.

Greet and serve all customers with a smile and a courtesy title. Ask how you may assist each.

Respond to requests for information concerning office procedures and determine to whom they should be directed.

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## EXERCISE #2: WRITING PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

### POSITION # 2: ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

(Same employee after 1st PES rating) (1 year under your supervision)



### SCENARIO:

Iva Gottitt has been working for your agency in an Administrative Assistant position for one year and has been under your supervision for that entire time period. You have already conducted Iva's first PES rating session and you are getting ready to conduct Iva's planning session for her next rating period and have to develop written performance expectations based on the information provided below.

### Iva's performance through her first year:

Iva has screened phone calls, visitors and all incoming correspondence in a timely manner. However in her haste to work quickly, Iva sometimes routes the call, individual or correspondence to the wrong staff.

Iva has always been on time for work and there has not been a leave problem. However, she does tend to take long lunch breaks. On three occasions, her long lunches have resulted in visitors having to wait to be served.

Iva, for the most part, has been friendly to other employees and walk-in customers, but she tends to be a little rude when there is a line waiting on her for assistance.

Iva has become proficient in her use of Microsoft Word and serves as a resource for others with this, but she has not taken the initiative to learn Excel.

On several occasions Iva has forgotten to communicate information you gave for her to share with the other clerical staff. This prompts duplication of effort on your part in answering questions.

Iva usually uses good judgment in determining to whom and when to route request for information. However, she sometimes tends to want to give information herself when she is not the most knowledgeable and appropriate person to do so.

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## STEP 2: CONTINUAL OBSERVATION, DOCUMENTATION, AND FEEDBACK

Observation, documentation, and feedback of an employee's performance are very important aspects of a supervisor's job when it pertains to proper performance evaluation. Below, are a few important points regarding these matters:

Keep a supervisory folder for all of your employees

Document year-round

Document for all of your employees

Document both good and bad things

Encourage your employees to keep their own folders regarding their accomplishments

Communicate with employees about their performance throughout the entire rating period

You decide how you want to document performance. Just do it and be sure to provide your employee with continuous feedback. Communication is vitally important! Document that communication took place. In many cases, it will be important to document not only the employee's performance, but also the fact that you discussed the performance with the employee. In other words, make a note that communication did occur. There is no requirement that you provide a copy of your note to your employee, though many supervisors do.

**NOTE: If proper feedback has been given to an employee by a supervisor throughout the year, an employee should never be surprised by the PES rating that they receive.**



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## STEP 3: PERFORMANCE RATING

Step 3 of the performance evaluation process is performance rating. As you review your employee's performance for the entire rating period, consider what rating he/she has earned overall.



Exceptional	Successful	Needs Improvement/ Unsuccessful
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Things to consider regarding PES Ratings:

Most employees do not perform in the same way in every area of work. Most people are better in some areas than in others. Rating people high or low overall because of good or poor performance on one or a few areas is a very common rating error. It is called the halo effect.

Each person must be rated as an individual on his or her actual behavior and performance that you observe. You cannot rate people higher if they are like you and lower if they are different from you.

Rating consistency has to begin at the first-line supervisor level. A first-line supervisor has to ensure that he is not committing any rating errors and that he/she has employed all the tools available when rating employees. Then, the second level supervisor must evaluate how well each supervisor under them is rating the employees. If he/she sees problems, such as inconsistencies in rating, failure to rate fairly and equitably, then that supervisor must address it at this level. This careful evaluation and system of checks and balances at each level within the hierarchy of an agency can contribute to a sound and equitable performance evaluation program.

In the "Comments" spaces provided on the PES form, provide well-written comments that describe the performance over the last year. You may wish to provide examples or descriptions of the employee's behavior to illustrate the rating you assigned, and possibly make reference to the fact that the performance has been discussed at times in the last year.

# Effective Performance Evaluation

## EXERCISE #: PES RATINGS

PLEASE RATE THE INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED BELOW BASED ON THE INFORMATION PROVIDED.



Exceptional	Successful	Needs Improvement/ Unsuccessful
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**1. Expectation:**

Help members of the team when needed. Work at a rate that is similar to teammates so teamwork goes smoothly.

**Performance:**

Victor is part of a team of clerks who enter data under your supervision. He doesn't help members of the team at all. You also notice that Victor works much more slowly than the rest of the team. His teammates frequently have to do extra work to cover for him because he cannot finish his assignments before the end of his shift.

**2. Expectation:**

Attend scheduled meetings and arrive for them on time. Complete projects by their deadlines except when factors beyond your control stop you from doing so. Notify me when you will miss a deadline.

**Performance:**

Rachel has attended all scheduled meetings and arrived on time or a few minutes early. She finished most of her projects a day or two early. When obstacles came up, she found creative ways to overcome them. On one project, it became impossible to meet her deadlines due to circumstances beyond her control. She explained the situation to you in a memo and suggested another deadline.

**3. Expectation:**

Examine the functions of your work unit and start to think about ways to possibly improve efficiency of your work unit.

**Performance:**

Sally is a supervisor in your department. This year, she broke down the jobs she and each of her subordinates performed into identifiable tasks. She then found several ways to restructure the jobs to make the entire group more efficient, and accepted subordinates' suggestions for improving efficiency. She clearly explained to employees how they would each carry out their job from now on. As a result, her group has improved efficiency by nearly 40%, and her subordinates.

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## EXERCISE #: PES RATINGS

Exceptional	Successful	Needs Improvement/ Unsuccessful
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**4. Expectation:**

Clearly explain to clients how to properly and completely fill out their disability claim forms. Make sure clients understand the steps involved in the claim process before they leave your workstation.

**Performance:**

Darlene reviews the form with the client, explains what each item means, and puts an "X" next to the items that the client needs to fill in. She then tells them what to do when they finish the form. She speaks loudly enough to be heard and slowly enough to be understood. When clients return the form to her she reviews it for completeness. Before the client leaves her workstation, Darlene makes sure they understand where they go next.

**5. Expectation:**

Calmly search for solutions when frustrated with the computer, rather than pounding the keyboard and making loud noises. Use "Help Windows" and consult the software manual. When unable to solve the problem yourself, ask coworkers for their suggestions. Try all possible solutions you can think of before you give up.

**Performance:**

Tom took improving his computer skills as a personal goal this year. He attended all the computer classes available to him that were relevant to his job. He learned to solve computer problems on his own and where to look for helpful information. He stopped getting angry when he felt frustrated. In the past, he often asked coworkers for advice, but now he is seen as a helpful resource. One month after a new software program was installed on all the computers used by his group, he passed out a list of answers to frequently asked questions to help others learn how to get the software to do what they wanted.

**6. Expectation:**

Learn to use Excel, to send and receive e-mail, and to use new software programs as they are installed on your computer. Make an effort to avoid wasting paper from the printer or from the copy machine.

**Performance:**

Susan did not even try to learn Excel or the e-mail system. She did not take the classes that were offered to learn the new software. Last month, Susan made 500 copies of a document before she found a grammatical error and threw them all away.



# Effective Performance Evaluation

## EXERCISE #: PES RATINGS

Exceptional	Successful	Needs Improvement/ Unsuccessful
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**7. Expectation:**

Learn and apply 6 new skills in order to maintain the plumbing and appliances for the housing district.

**Performance:**

Tina has just completed her first year working on the housing authority maintenance team. She came in with some skills, but quickly learned new ones on the job to perform her job well. She always took advantage of an opportunity to learn how to fix something. You estimate that she learned and applied more than 8 techniques for maintaining the plumbing and more than 9 for repairing appliances. A few times, you observed her teaching these to others.

**8. Expectation:**

Arrive to the prison in time to begin your shift when scheduled. Patrol your assigned cellblock at least once per hour. Remain in your assigned area unless an emergency occurs.

**Performance:**

Chris arrives at work 5 to 10 minutes late about 50% of the time. He doesn't patrol his cellblock as expected. He has left his guard station without telling her coworkers where he was going or when he would return approximately 5 times in the past year.

**9. Expectation:**

Respond promptly to the requests of hospital personnel. Work with other members of the cleaning staff to make sure all tasks are completed at the end of your shift.

**Performance:**

Shawn is a member of the cleaning staff you supervise at a hospital. He responds promptly to oral instructions from hospital personnel. He helps his co-workers on a regular basis.



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## PES TIPS

### Tips on Conducting an Effective Performance Rating Session:

Schedule the session with advanced notice.

Make sure you have a private place to meet as well as enough time.

Open the meeting in a positive way, be friendly and sincere.

Explain the purpose of the meeting clearly.

Focus on the job rather than the individual.

Stress areas of strength and areas that need improvement.

Be honest about problems; nothing is accomplished by avoiding the issues.

Discuss your employee's responsibilities and clear up any misunderstanding about those responsibilities.

Talk about behaviors and performance, not attitudes and personality.

Let the employee talk; actively listen to the employee.

Ask the employee before telling the answer.

Do not finish the employee's statement or answer the question for the employee.

Allow periods of silence while the employee is thinking or trying to put thoughts together.

Listen carefully if the employee has complaints or requests.

Ask the employee if there are resources he or she needs or obstacles keeping them from performing as well as possible, especially, if they are performing below the level you had expected.

Stay in control of the meeting.

Guide the discussion back to the matter at hand if one or both of you stray off the topic.

Do not become emotional even if the employee does become emotional.

Be aware of your own weaknesses and remember that you are only human.

Try not to be positively or negatively influenced by your personal feelings about the employee.

Admit it when you have made a mistake.

Have realistic expectations and do not try to accomplish too much in one session.

Use follow up discussions when necessary.

Realize that some employees will leave the session unhappy or defensive no matter how hard you try to make the session go well.



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## PES TIPS

### **Rating Supervisor opportunities to get the maximum benefit from the PES process:**



Attach a copy of position description to the planning form.

Explain to the employee that he'll be held responsible for all aspects of his job when you rate—not just the planning expectations. (i.e. Position description, Policies and Procedures manual, training manual, all verbal and written communications regarding job duties.) A lot of employees don't understand this!

Have the employee keep his/her own "Kudos" file.

Conduct planning updates throughout the rating year when necessary.

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate throughout the year.

Document that communication took place.

Remember that the employee is being rated for the entire rating period. Don't lose sight of this and only consider the performance of the past few months prior to rating time.

Do not wait until the last minute to rate an employee.

### **Employee opportunities to get the maximum benefit from the PES Process:**

Keep your own "Kudos" file and give it to your supervisor before rating time.

If your Rating Supervisor has asked you to remind him that your planning or rating deadline is due, he/she really wants you to!

Have an understanding of the Performance Ratings; understand that *not* receiving an "Exceptional" does not mean you're not doing a good job. A "Successful" rating means just that you have met the expectations set for you by your supervisor--your performance has not been "deficient."

Request informal feedback throughout the year from your supervisor, especially if there are areas in which you personally are trying to improve.