

Eight Steps for Managing Personnel Performance  
A Guide for Managers and Supervisors from  
The Ohio Department of Administrative Services  
December 2007

Step One: EXAMINE YOUR AGENCY'S CURRENT PUBLIC PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTS

- Review the organizational goals, objectives and performance measures already available to stakeholders and the public
- Determine which goals, objective and measures the employee's work unit can impact.
- Eliminate ones that the work unit cannot affect directly or indirectly.

Step Two: EXAMINE YOUR WORK UNITS ACCOMPLISHMENTS<sup>1</sup> USING ANY OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS, AS APPROPRIATE

- The Cascading Method: cascade the agency's goals to the work unit level; determine the work unit's accomplishments that directly impact the organization's goals
- The Customer-Focused Method: determine the products, services that the work unit delivers to its customers
- The Work Flow Charting Method: develop a workflow chart for the work unit, establish key steps in the work process

Step Three: DETERMINE INDIVIDUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS THAT SUPPORT WORK UNIT GOALS

- Set up a role-results matrix. List major work unit accomplishments, individually across the top of your matrix; list each employee in the work unit down the left side of your matrix. In each resulting cell, list the accomplishments (i.e. performance elements) that the employee must produce or perform to support the work unit accomplishments
- Only list performance elements that can be quantifiable or verifiable through observation.

Step Four: CONVERT EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS INTO PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS, INDICATING TYPE AND PRIORITY

- Make sure each employee has at least one **critical performance element** for which he/she can be held individually responsible. Also

---

<sup>1</sup> Try the exercise on the next page to test your understanding of the distinction.

include non-critical performance elements and additional performance elements as appropriate.<sup>2</sup>

- Distinguish between non-critical and additional elements of performance if you wish to hold the employee responsible for work unit performance or team performance where separating effort may not be possible or you wish to encourage collaboration.

#### Step Five: DETERMINE WORK UNIT AND INDIVIDUAL MEASURES

- For each performance element, determine which general measures (s) (e.g., outcome, efficiency, output, comparable standard, cost effectiveness, quality, quantity, timeliness) are important. Determine how to measure the attribute or result. If the accomplishment can be measured with numbers, determine the unit of measurement to be used. If performance can only be described or observed to verify, specify who would appraise the work and what factors they would look for.

#### Step Six: DEVELOP WORK UNIT AND INDIVIDUAL STANDARDS

- A *fully successful* or equivalent standard must be established for each critical element. If the measure is numeric, determine a range of values that would represent *fully successful* performance. Determine at or below what values an worker's contribution would be judged unacceptable. If the measure of the performance element is descriptive, specify what the appraiser would have to see or report that would verify that the performance is *fully successful*. Determine what *exceeds expectations* would look like. Describe what that would look like.

#### Step Seven: DETERMINE HOW TO MONITOR PERFORMANCE

- Determine what data to collect for each performance element, where the data should come from, and whether to collect all the data or just to sample it. Determine when to collect the data, who should collect it, and who should receive it. Review existing work unit or agency reports to ascertain if any may be used as feedback reports. Establish baselines if appropriate to use to measure improvement, progress, improvement. Try to construct feedback

---

<sup>2</sup> A critical performance element is one work assignment or responsibility of such importance that the unacceptable performance of it would result in a determination that the employee's overall performance is unacceptable. Ask the following questions to determine if the element is critical: is it a major component of the employee's work? Does it address individual effort only? If the employee performed the element unacceptably would there be serious consequences to completing the work of the organization? Does the element require a significant amount of the employee's time?

tables, reports or graphs where appropriate to use as monitoring tools.

**Step Eight: CHECK YOUR PERFORMANCE PLANS USING THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES**

- Are the critical elements you have specified truly critical. Does failure on each critical performance element mean employee's overall performance is unacceptable?
- Is the range of acceptable performance clear? Are all performance expectations quantifiable, observable and/or verifiable?
- Are all standards attainable? Are expectations reasonable?
- Are all standards challenging? Does the work unit or employee need to exert a reasonable amount of effort to reach a fully successful performance level?
- Are the standards fair? Are they comparable to expectations for other employees in similar positions? Do they allow for some margin of error?
- Are the standards applicable? Can the appraiser use the standards to appraise performance? Can the appraiser manage the data collected through the measurement process?
- Will work unit and employees understand what is required?
- Are the elements and standards flexible? Can they be adapted readily to changes in resources and/or objectives?