

Performance Management Common Mistakes

- Confusing goals with competencies. **Goals** are the improvements employees should make to their work activities or the products they create that could help them make a better or larger contribution toward achieving the agency's purpose, while a **competency** is the combination of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for successful job performance. See the ELM-based Activity entitled *Goals vs. Competencies* for additional detail.
- Forgetting to provide specific examples of how each employee performed a given competency or goal rather than including comments such as "Good Employee" or "Does a good job."
- Providing ratings, but including no competencies, goals, or comments. All performance documents should have competencies, at least 3-5 goals, as well as related comments that help support the given ratings.
- Including comments that do not match the ratings. For example, a comment that indicates a specific goal was not met, but rated as "Exceeds Expectations" should not be included. Always make sure that your comments are reflective of your ratings.
- Focusing on the employee's performance during only the last part of the review period (called the Recency Effect). Creating the performance document or discussing goals with the employee near the end of the rating period is a common mistake that leads to the Recency Effect. Remember, ratings should be based upon the employee's performance throughout the entire review cycle, not just the last few weeks or months.
- Waiting until performance documents are due to create, rate, and finalize the review document. This rushes the process and is easily avoided by creating the document and entering goals at the beginning of the rating period.