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WHAT IS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT?

Performance management is really about good people management. Technically it is defined as a systematic and ongoing process of communication and collaboration between a supervisor and an employee that occurs throughout the year, in support of accomplishing strategic goals and objectives of the unit, division, department, and the County. It begins on an employee’s first day on the job. The communication process involves the supervisor and employee working together to clarify expectations, set objectives, identify goals, provide feedback and coaching, and evaluate results. Performance management helps to focus employees on contributing directly to the strategic priorities of the County as well as to their personal growth and development. When it is effective it is a key process to regularly let employees know that their contributions are recognized and appreciated.

An effective performance management process also ensures that both the County and its employees are protected against illegal discrimination through proper notification, documentation, and supportive communication if/when problems arise.
Managing performance and providing feedback and coaching is not an isolated event that takes place just during an annual performance evaluation. The performance management process is an annual cycle with informal and formal one-on-one discussions held throughout the year to provide feedback, work through issues, and modify goals if needed. Receiving ongoing feedback and coaching is how employees understand how they contribute to the organization and how they can learn to continuously increase the value of that contribution. Providing ongoing, value-added feedback, and coaching is a key part of performance management.
The successful performance of the County of San Mateo as an organization is made possible by organizational alignment. When employees are clear about the direction and priorities of their units and departments they can see how their efforts contribute to the achievement of the overall County goals. As a result, the County organization can move more quickly and effectively toward successful achievement of its top priorities. All employees need concrete goals to focus on along with an understanding of what is expected of them. When managers and supervisors communicate clear expectations to their employees, and provide on-going feedback and coaching, it helps to ensure employees’ success.

**Effective performance management involves the alignment of the following roles:**

- **The County**
  - The County, under the leadership of the Board of Supervisors and the County Manager, sets the Mission, Vision, and Strategic Priorities for departments to follow in order to support a sustainable San Mateo County.

- **Departments**
  - Departments use the Outcome-Based Management (OBM) process to set goals, outcomes and strategies to support and align with the County’s Strategic Priorities. Many of the departmental priorities also incorporate community goals. Departments establish performance standards and expectations for their respective divisions, programs, functions and job classifications.

- **The Supervisor**
  - The Supervisor sets unit goals and objectives to support the department/division’s priorities. Supervisors also establish specific performance standards and expectations for the job classifications assigned to their unit. They then work with the employees who report to them to understand how the County’s Performance Factors relate to their jobs and to set their specific performance and development goals and objectives.

- **Employee**
  - Each County employee works with his or her supervisor to understand the performance expectations for his or her position and to set specific performance and development goals. Employees are empowered to manage their action plans to accomplish their goals and to monitor and communicate the results. Employees will receive ongoing feedback and coaching in order to let them know how they’re doing, and to ensure they are working as effectively as possible.
PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND GOAL SETTING

Performance Planning and Goal Setting occurs at the beginning of the Performance Management Cycle, which is the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1). Performance Planning serves as the foundation for the Performance Management Cycle and includes setting clear goals to be accomplished during the year along with clarifying the performance factors that are most important for job success. Discussing and agreeing to priorities and expectations at the beginning of the evaluation period provides a clear, consistent structure and plan for monitoring and evaluating performance. This plan serves as a point of reference throughout the process, and may be modified as needed. The plan can be documented and monitored in the County’s Learning Management System (LMS) Performance Management Module. The time spent clarifying priorities and expectations at the outset of the process ensures an understanding that allows both supervisor and employee to move forward with confidence and clarity.
The following should be reviewed prior to conducting the Performance Planning and Goal Setting meeting:

**Previous year’s Performance Plan**
- Review past goals and/or objectives and employee’s performance. Did he or she accomplish them successfully? If not, why?
- Are the performance goals and/or objectives and expectations still meaningful? Are they related to the position description, work plan, department priorities, or the department’s issues?
- Are they ongoing or have they been completed?

**Employee’s Classification Specification**
- Has the employee’s job changed? Are there job functions or responsibilities that could or should be added or eliminated?
- Should an updated classification specification be developed? (If so, contact the Human Resources Department.)

**Departmental outcomes for the upcoming FY**
- What are the department’s goals and priorities and how does the employee support them?

**Unit or group level goals**
- What are the program and/or unit goals and priorities and how does the employee support them?
- Consider the contributions the work unit and the employee are expected to make.

**Performance Factors**
- How does each of the Performance Factors apply to the individual expectations for the employee?
- Which areas should be emphasized and clarified?
CONDUCTING THE PERFORMANCE PLANNING SESSION

Establishing performance goals and expectations is a collaborative process between the supervisor and the employee. Schedule sufficient time; along with a location that is convenient for both of you and conducive to dialog. (See the “Performance Planning How-To Guide.”)

PERFORMANCE FACTORS AND CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION

At the planning session, the specific role that the individual employee plays within his or her functional area and job classification should be discussed. The supervisor and employee should work together to determine what competencies and levels of proficiency and performance are essential for success. The job description along with each performance factor and the specific standards, expectations and competencies associated with each one, should be reviewed with the employee so that he or she understands how they apply in achieving successful performance in his or her position. (See the Performance Factor Descriptions and “Performance Factor How-To Guide.”)

Consider the following:

- What function does the position need to perform and why?
- What tasks and results is the employee accountable for?
- How can you help the employee accomplish these tasks and results?
- How will you and the employee work to overcome any barriers?
- How will you and the employee communicate during the year about job tasks to prevent problems and keep current?
- What level of authority or discretion does the employee have with respect to job tasks?

The Performance Factors include:

- Individual Contribution
- Professionalism
- Problem Solving and Judgment
- Interpersonal Skills
- Job Specific Contribution
- Managing Employee Performance (for Managers and Supervisors)
GOAL SETTING

There are two categories of goals that should be established for every employee during the Performance Planning and Goal Setting phase – Performance Goals and Development Goals. Each year the County and the various departments set strategic goals that are meant to cascade to all parts of the organization. Cascading goals means breaking down the higher-level organizational goals into a series of smaller goals that describe what each department, program or unit needs to achieve. These goals are then broken down further so each individual in the unit has his or her own performance goals. In this way, progress throughout the organization is aligned and measurable. The LMS performance management module enables managers and supervisors to specify the relevant higher-level goals to which individual goals are to be aligned.

Successful goal-setting entails everyone knowing what they need to do, understanding why it is important, and being clear about what results are expected.

**Performance Goals**
- **Performance Goals** are appropriate to the level of position and are directly related to the major components, key job responsibilities, tasks, deliverables and associated activities. Individual performance goals should be linked to unit, program, department and County goals where possible. Some goals may be ongoing and reflect expectations that are important for this position year after year. Other goals may be time-limited, such as special projects occurring in a given year.
- **In setting Performance Goals, consider the following:**
  - What are the employee’s major responsibilities for the year?
  - What result and/or accomplishment do you want the employee to attain?
  - How will you know whether the employee is succeeding?

**Development Goals**
- **Development Goals** are training, professional growth or other learning-oriented goals that support an increase in an employee’s knowledge, skill and/or ability to excel in their current job performance and improve their career prospects.
- **In setting Development Goals, consider the following:**
  - Which skill areas will most impact the employee’s ability to help the unit, program, department or County succeed?
  - What does the employee need to develop (i.e. new skills/abilities) to achieve their results?
  - What areas could the employee develop in order to grow and be better prepared to accept new and/or expanded responsibilities?
PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT GOALS

There is another category of goals that support the improvement of an employee’s performance up to an acceptable or competent level. These goals are Performance Improvement Goals and would be part of a “special review” and incorporated in a Performance Improvement Plan that is consistent with current Employee Relations policy.

SMART GOALS

All goals, whether performance or development goals, should be set using the SMART method. The objective is to create clear goals that are measurable, easy to understand, and linked to specific observable behaviors, actions and results. When a goal is clear, specific, and results-oriented with a definite time set for completion, employees and supervisors can more easily agree on what successful performance looks like, thus reducing misunderstandings or surprises during the performance management cycle. This also makes it easier to monitor and support progress along the way. Both the supervisor and the employee know what’s expected, and the specific results can be a source of future motivation. (See a “Guide to Setting SMART Goals.”)
Here are some questions to consider in following the SMART Goal Setting method:

**Specific**
- What will be accomplished?
- What are you going to do? What action(s) will you take?

**Measurable**
- How will the goal be measured?
- How much? How many? How well?
- How will you gather and track the information (evidence) to measure progress and achievement?
- What will be the result when this goal is achieved?

**Achievable**
- Is this goal do-able? What tools/resources are needed?
- Do you have all the necessary skills and capabilities or do you need training or other assistance?
- How much of a stretch is this goal?

**Relevant**
- Why have you selected the goal? What is the purpose? Why is it important?
- Is this goal relevant to the job/unit/department/County mission and goals?
- Will the results of achieving this goal help the organization and/or residents?
- Does the goal support professional growth and development?

**Time-Sensitive**
- When are you going to take action?
- What is the time frame or deadline for achieving this goal?
At the conclusion of the Performance Planning and Goal Setting the following objectives should be met:

- The employee has a thorough understanding of the work involved – the critical functions, key job responsibilities, tasks, deliverables and activities.

- Both the supervisor and the employee have reviewed the job description to ensure that information is accurate and up to date.

- The employee understands what constitutes “successful performance” and how the performance factors relate to his or her specific job.

- The employee is aware how the results of his or her efforts will contribute to achieving County, department, division, program, and/or unit goals and objectives.

- The employee understands how he or she can manage and improve his or her own professional growth and development and the supervisor understands his or her role in supporting this development.

- Both the supervisor and the employee know what information, resources, tools, training and supervision is needed to enable the employee’s success.
PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK AND COACHING

Providing Performance Feedback and Coaching are two critical skills needed by 21st century managers and supervisors. In our current work environments where conditions change quickly, employees need to continuously learn. Success requires that we all have ways of measuring how we are doing, of reinforcing successful performance, and of correcting where improvement is needed.

Performance Feedback and Coaching is an ongoing process to track, reinforce and adjust performance execution and promote professional growth that involves observing, documenting and providing feedback, direction, instruction, and training.

Ongoing informal reviews allow time to make course corrections that may be required due to shifting priorities or changes in performance (improvement or decline). These reviews could take place as part of a one-on-one meeting. The objective is for supervisors to support and encourage employees and address any challenges they may be encountering. Ongoing feedback provides employees with opportunities to understand how they are doing, feel valued for their performance and contributions (recognition), and learn ways to improve their performance (development).

Interim progress meetings should be conducted and documented to review and discuss the employee’s progress toward meeting his or her goals and to consider any developmental needs or performance improvement required. Supervisors should plan two such interim progress meetings during the course of the annual performance cycle (roughly every four months.) The employee should complete an Interim Status Update and submit it to his or her supervisor for review prior to the interim progress meeting. Any changes or updates to the performance and/or development goals can also be recorded at the conclusion of the meeting.
OBSERVATION

Management By Walking Around (MBWA) is a way to build relationships and be in a better position to understand who your employees are and what is going on with each person’s performance. Watch and listen and you will have a better idea of how to work with them and help them stay motivated. It works best if you practice it regularly.

DOCUMENTATION

The LMS includes a feature called “My Team” which can be used to record meeting notes and observations and to save documents related to the employee’s performance and behavior. Supervisors should record any significant events that resulted in giving constructive feedback (positive and negative). Make sure that all notes have been verbally communicated to that person. This documentation will be useful when conducting interim reviews and completing the formal performance evaluation at the end of the cycle. Use other tracking tools like a significant events list.

PROVIDING FEEDBACK

The purpose of feedback is to encourage effective future behavior. Feedback should add value to the employee’s understanding of what he or she is doing well and how performance can be improved. The focus is not on correcting the past, because we can’t alter what happened. The focus is on highlighting past behavior to communicate what actions should continue (positive) or change (negative) in order to perform more effectively in the future.

Supervisors are often fearful of delivering negative feedback. Some common excuses are:

“Don’t want to hurt her feelings.”

“I don’t want to hurt her feelings.”

“If I tell him, he won’t like me.”

“He’s not going to change no matter what I say.”

“She’ll go ballistic if I mention this.”

“He should know better. I shouldn’t have to tell him.”

Experience shows that when delivered regularly, effectively and with positive intent, there is typically less discomfort after sharing the truth and being constructive. Delivering both positive and negative feedback is not always easy. However it is the responsibility of supervisors and is an important part of being a professional within the organization.
Value-added feedback is information-specific, issue-focused, and based on observations. There is a difference between value-added feedback and praise and criticism. Praise and criticism can be personal judgments that are general and based on subjective opinions and feelings.

Value-added feedback is most valuable when it is constructive (both positive and negative), specific and timely. Value-added feedback should cover both work performance and output as well as observed job-related behavior.

**Guidelines to keep in mind:**

- Be clear, straightforward and get to the point.
- Be sincere and show that you care. Mean what you say and avoid giving mixed messages.
- In positive situations—express gratitude and appreciation.
- In negative situations – express concern in both your language and tone.
- Give the feedback in-person, not through the use of technology.
MODEL FOR GIVING VALUE-ADDED FEEDBACK

STEP 1. – ASK IF THE TIME IS RIGHT

Since value-added feedback is about encouraging another person’s behavior, it is not worth taking the time to deliver it (positive or negative) if the other person is not ready to hear it.

It is important to pause and wait for the employee’s response. If the employee says no, you should find another time to go back and ask again. However, if you determine that the behavior represents a performance problem that needs to be corrected immediately, choose a time when your emotions are under control and you are prepared to discuss the consequences if the performance problem does not improve. Follow the County’s Employee Relations guidelines.

STEP 2. – STATE THE BEHAVIOR

Behavior takes the following forms:

- Verbal communication (the words we say and how we say them)
- Non-verbal communication (facial expressions and body language)
- Work product (quality, completeness and accuracy)

Before providing feedback, identify and note the specific behavior that you observed, considering these forms. When delivering negative feedback, don’t discuss “attitude.” Describe what you observed. Even though we may feel we are experiencing someone’s attitude, it is in fact a conclusion or judgment we make after observing his or her behavior. If the feedback is about characterizing attitude it will likely generate defensiveness and can be interpreted as a personal attack, which should not be the purpose of feedback.
**STEP 3. - STATE THE IMPACT**

This step involves describing the effect of the behavior you described in Step 2 on you and/or others. These could be consequences, conclusions, results, etc. You can also describe what the desired results or behavior is if that is not clear to the employee.

Be clear, straightforward and get to the point.

This step begins with a statement that clearly describes the impact:

- “It causes this…”
- “It makes me feel…”
- “Here’s what happens…”
- “The benefit is…”
- “I have to…”

**STEP 4. – PAUSE**

Allow time for the person to offer additional information and/or a solution. This is typically useful when feedback is negative.

**STEP 5. – ASK FOR ALTERNATIVES OR CHANGE**

In many cases employees will know what has to change, or continue, after you complete Step 3 (State the Impact). In those circumstances it is not necessary to go to Step 5 (Ask for Change). Validate their solution and move on.

Ask meaningful, open-ended questions to guide the employee toward understanding what behavior he or she needs to change and how to go about it.

However, if change is required, and the employee doesn’t present an acceptable solution on his or her own, ask a form of the following questions:

- “How can you do that differently?”
- “What would be a more effective way of handling that situation?”
- “What ideas do you have for improving your performance in this area?”

**STEP 6. – OFFER SUPPORT**

Ask the employee what specific support and/or direction he or she may need from you to change his or her behavior. If the employee doesn’t present an acceptable solution, work collaboratively to develop one to achieve the desired outcome.
VALUE-ADDED FEEDBACK

Supervisors who take a strength-based approach help employees identify strengths and align their talents with their work. These supervisors don't ignore employee weaknesses, but fixing them isn't their only focus. Instead, supervisors should focus more on catching their employees doing things right than on doing things that are incorrect, or not quite right. Don't wait for the big successes. Celebrate the small ones too. It is more effective to have employees be aware of what they are good at and how their strengths can be leveraged to the benefit of the team and organization.

Ideally, feedback will be short and specific, without skipping any of the steps described above. It is most important that all feedback be delivered sincerely with the focus on the individual. Negative feedback doesn’t have to have an edge. It can be delivered quickly and casually and still achieve the desired effect. By being more regular and routine, feedback, especially negative feedback, will be easier to deliver and easier to receive because it will feel less awkward or painful.

DEALING WITH PUSH BACK

If the employee argues or acts defensive after you deliver feedback, close out the conversation quickly and walk away. Since the purpose of feedback is to encourage effective future behavior, it is not useful to argue. As the supervisor you still have the ability to manage performance. However, in this case, it is better to avoid conflict and instead follow-up later if you are still not getting the desired performance results.

Example of Value-Added Negative Feedback

• “Hey John can I give you some feedback? When you're late turning in your daily reports it affects our ability to stay on schedule. What can you do differently? Is there anything I can do to help?”
• “Mary, can I give you some feedback? When you interrupt people in staff meetings it makes me feel like you are not really interested in what other people are saying.”

Example of Value-Added Positive Feedback

• “Joan, can I give you some feedback? When you took care of that client issue that Bob e-mailed to me, it freed me up to attend that training. Thanks for doing that.”
• “Sam can I give you some feedback? What you said in that meeting about lead time really made sense. You really helped to make it productive. I just wanted you to know that.”
COACHING APPROACH

Effective coaching is informal in nature and involves building and maintaining a trusting relationship. When the supervisor stays connected to his or her employees, he or she can work collaboratively with them to share information about work progress, potential barriers and problems, possible solutions to problems, and how the supervisor can help the employee to learn and succeed. Scheduled one-on-one meetings are typically a good time to work on issues in a focused, uninterrupted way.

Coaching should occur on a regular basis throughout the year and may be initiated by either the supervisor or the employee. The supervisor (and the employee) should document these discussions, if appropriate, to reinforce what is being shared as well as to record agreed upon plans. This documentation can also be used at the end of the performance cycle to provide specific example of progress and accomplishment as part of the performance review and evaluation.

Coaching includes a variety of activities, such as:

- Observing performance (MBWA)
- Providing instruction and examples
- Jointly solving problems
- Delegating meaningful assignments
- Guiding employee’s efforts
- Asking open-ended questions
- Providing encouragement
- Correcting poor performance
- Recognizing excellent performance
- Listening to employee concerns and ideas
- Removing barriers to performance

The following questions should be considered as you plan your coaching meeting:

- What is the purpose and objectives?
- What do you need to do, or have, to be prepared?
- What does your employee need to do, or have, to be prepared?
- What can you do to encourage dialogue and participation?
- How are things going with respect to job responsibilities?
- What is going well?
- What is not going so well?
- Is the employee on track toward achieving goals or objectives and meeting performance standards?
- If things are not on track, what needs to change to get things on track?
- How can you lend a hand to support improvement (even if everything is on track)?
- Has anything changed that might affect the employee’s job tasks, goals, objectives or priorities?
- If so, what changes should be made to the employee’s job tasks and goals or objectives?
- What are potential follow-up actions?
Here are general guidelines to keep in mind when coaching an employee:

- Allow sufficient time for coaching. Even on informal basis, it takes time to do it well.
- Don’t be distracted by interruptions.
- Keep in mind the employee’s preferred communication style (i.e. direct, indirect, etc.).
- Ask how you can be of help to the employee.
- Solicit ideas and suggestions from the employee for improving work processes.
- Work with the employee to remove barriers to success and identify strategies to minimize barriers.
- Don’t assume the employee knows what you are thinking.
- Discuss the employee’s learning and professional development needs.
- Solicit employee feedback on coaching effectiveness.
- Write down what you and the employee each agree to do.
- Talk about follow up. Will you meet again to discuss any issues? When?
- Provide ongoing performance feedback to prevent problems from arising and to recognize positive performance.
- Don’t end on a threatening or negative note. Re-state your support and willingness to help the employee be successful.

PERFORMANCE ISSUES

During the annual performance cycle it may become clear that performance does not meet expectations. When training and coaching efforts have not resulted in the desired change of behavior necessary for satisfactory job performance, the supervisor must address it by developing a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). In such instances, supervisors should consult with the Human Resources Department for assistance.
PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND EVALUATION

The purpose of the formal Performance Review and Evaluation phase is to ensure open communication and clear understanding of expectations between the supervisor and employee. Supervisors are expected to regularly communicate informally during the year through scheduled one-on-one meetings and by on-the-spot discussion regarding the status of a particular project or assignment. The formal process at this stage should reflect prior feedback and discussion and be a summation of what has or hasn’t occurred over the course of the review period. When effective performance planning occurs in the beginning, and is followed by timely and effective feedback and coaching throughout the cycle, there should be no surprises for the employee when it comes time to complete the cycle with this phase. Reviewing and evaluating an employee’s performance provides a basis to recognize his or her accomplishment and support and develop his or her ability to meet individual and organizational needs.

TIMING

Performance Reviews and Evaluations are to be completed annually in May.

Probationary employees are to be evaluated at least once during their probationary period. This typically occurs 30 days prior to the end of their probationary period.
WHAT'S INVOLVED IN THIS PROCESS?

1. **Supervisor Preparation**
2. **Employee Self-Review**
3. **Performance Review and Evaluation Meeting**
4. **Completion of Performance Evaluation Form**
5. **Finalization/Approvals of Performance Evaluation**
6. **Establishing Timeline for new cycle of Performance Planning and Goal Setting**

### 1. SUPERVISOR PREPARATION

- Give the employee at least two weeks’ notice before the Performance Review and Evaluation Meeting.
- Ask the employee to come to the meeting prepared for the discussion with his or her own work product examples and list of achievements, related to his or her specific performance and development goals and performance factors, along with ideas for areas he or she would like to develop.
- Check to see that the employee is completing a Self-Review prior to the meeting.
- Schedule a private time and space for the meeting
- Be sure to allow for at least a one-hour meeting with the employee.
- Organize your examples of the employee’s progress.
- Go over past performance information. Review significant-events list, calendars, notes, interim reviews, and other documentation that will help you remember all of the employee’s relevant performance, not just the last couple of months.
- Review and determine how well an employee is performing in terms of his or her assigned tasks and expectations.
- Gather input from others associated with the work of the employee – peers, customers, etc.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the employee in observable behavioral terms (not attitudes) and clearly designate areas where improvement is required.
- Review the employee’s Self-Review.
- Prepare a draft performance evaluation with initial ratings for the employee’s goals and performance factors for discussion with the employee during the Performance Review and Evaluation meeting.
2. **EMPLOYEE SELF-REVIEW**

   - The Employee Self-Review gives the employee an opportunity to respond to a series of questions designed to help him or her evaluate his or her performance during the Performance Review and Evaluation period and identify areas for future support and growth. This self-review informs the conversation between an employee and the supervisor during the Performance Review and Evaluation meeting.

3. **PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND EVALUATION MEETING**

   **STARTING THE MEETING**

   - Put the employee at ease. Move to a table or sit in a chair next to the employee. Do not sit behind a table or desk.
   - Start the meeting by talking about the purpose and benefits of the Performance Management process and how this review is a good opportunity for both of you to discuss successes and positive events from the prior year, areas for improvement, and to plan for next year.
   - Ask the employee for input first. Discuss the Self-Review and encourage participation. This meeting should be a dialogue, not a monologue.

   **DISCUSS PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

   - Review goals and discuss accomplishments and strengths first.
   - Discuss the specific extent to which the results for each goal met expectations.
   - Ask if the employee has any questions or has anything to add (i.e. information, reactions, etc.)

   **DISCUSS PERFORMANCE FACTORS**

   - Review each Performance Factor and your assessment of each.
   - Restate the expectations from the beginning of the cycle and provide examples of the employee’s performance and to what extent performance exceeded, met, or did not meet expectations.
   - Ask if the employee has any questions or has anything to add (i.e. information, reactions, etc.)

   **LISTEN ACTIVELY**

   - Allow the employee to speak freely before responding to his or her comments.
   - Ask questions to gain understanding.
   - Ask the employee for suggestions on what he or she might do differently the next time.
   - Discuss areas for improvement in a way that shows the employee where changes should be made to meet expectations or could be made to achieve even greater results.
• Ask the employee what he or she could start doing, stop doing and continue doing to improve or maintain his or her performance.
• Focus on development and coach the employee on how improvements can be made.
• Keep the discussion positive and future-oriented to the extent possible.

**ENDING THE MEETING**

• Summarize your discussion, including agreements regarding any changes to ratings or next steps, and reasons for the overall rating.
• If appropriate, encourage the employee to take steps to improve job performance.
• Ask the employee for final thoughts and reactions.
• Explain the next steps in finalizing the evaluation.
• Thank the employee for participation during the process.
• End on a positive note, stressing the employee’s overall contribution to the unit/department/County.

**4. COMPLETION OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION FORM**

After the Performance Review and Evaluation meeting, review your notes and consider the discussion and the comments made by the employee.

**Complete the following steps:**

1. Review, revise and finalize the ratings in each section based upon the discussion with the employee.
2. Add comments or narrative in each section to support the rating decision. The purpose of comments is to explain and justify the rating as well as to communicate to the employee how he or she can maintain or improve the rating on a particular performance factor or goal.
3. Comments should focus on facts, which are events, behaviors or results. Note examples of performance, both positive and negative, including the context in which they occurred, the behavior (what they did or didn’t do), and the outcome or consequence.
4. Indicate the date of the Performance Review and Evaluation meeting on the form.
5. Submit the completed form to your manager for review.
6. Any employee receiving a “needs improvement” on any performance factor will have a developmental objective identified and/or be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan in accordance with current Employee Relations procedures.
The following rating levels are to be used for evaluating the employee’s overall performance:

**Performance and Development Goals:**

- **Exceptional:** Results exceeded all expectations regarding this goal.
- **Exceeded Expectations:** Results exceeded most expectations regarding this goal.
- **Fully Achieved:** Results met all expectations regarding this goal.
- **Partially Achieved:** Results met some, but not all, expectations regarding this goal.
- **Did Not Achieve Results:** Results did not meet expectations regarding this goal.
- **Inactive:** Goal was determined to be no longer relevant or appropriate during review period.

**Performance Factors:**

- **Exceptional:** Performance in this area exceeded all standards, expectations and objectives and was consistently at an extraordinary level. Contributions to the department and/or the County organization were exceptional during this cycle and reflect a rare level of performance.
- **Exceeds Expectations:** Performance in this area exceeded most standards, expectations, objectives and desired results.
- **Competent and Effective:** Performance in this area met all standards, expectations, and objectives. Desired results were at the expected level.
- **Needs Improvement:** Met some, but not all standards, expectations and objectives in this area and/or performance was inconsistent and below the expected level. Improvement is needed in one or more important areas.
- **Unsatisfactory:** Did not meet most standards, expectations and objectives in this area and/or did not demonstrate performance at the expected level. Significant improvement is needed in one or more important areas.
OVERALL RATING

The following rating levels are to be used for evaluating the employee’s overall performance:

**Exceptional**
- Overall performance far exceeded expectations due to exceptionally high quality of work performed in all essential areas of responsibility, resulting in an overall quality of work that was superior; and either 1) included the completion of a major goal or project, or 2) made an exceptional or unique contribution in support of unit, department, or County objectives. This rating is achievable by any employee though given infrequently.

**Exceeds Expectations**
- Overall performance consistently exceeded expectations in all essential areas of responsibility, and the quality of work overall was excellent. Annual goals were met.

**Competent and Effective**
- Overall performance consistently met expectations in all essential areas of responsibility, at times possibly exceeding expectations, and the quality of work overall was very good. The most critical annual goals were met.

**Needs Improvement**
- Overall performance did not consistently meet expectations – performance failed to meet expectations in one or more essential areas of responsibility, and/or one or more of the most critical goals were not met. A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), including timelines, will be outlined and monitored to measure progress.

**Unsatisfactory**
- Overall performance was consistently below expectations in most essential areas of responsibility, and/or reasonable progress toward critical goals was not made. Significant improvement is needed in one or more important areas. A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), including timelines, will be outlined and monitored to measure progress.
Suggested Guidelines for Rating:

- An “Exceptional” rating should be used sparingly and only to acknowledge truly exceptional performance. Employee performance rated at this level stands as a model for other staff and represents such a unique and exemplary accomplishment and contribution to the organization that it typically occurs among only a small number of employees.

- A rating should not be based on a few isolated performance incidents. When this is done, the rating is unfairly influenced by non-typical instances of favorable or unfavorable performances. Consider the entire evaluation period.

- Avoid the "Halo" Effect which occurs when one factor influences ratings on all factors.

- Avoid judgments made purely on the basis of personality traits.

5. FINALIZATION/APPROVALS OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The indirect manager is accountable for the performance reviews conducted by the supervisors in his or her unit. The indirect manager will review nearly completed performance evaluations and discuss any comments or questions with the supervisor. Once the evaluation has been finalized, the indirect manager will approve it and it will be sent to the employee.

When the employee receives the approved performance evaluation he or she will have the opportunity to add comments, including any disagreements, before signing.

The supervisor will send a copy of the completed and signed performance evaluation to the employee; keep one in the supervisor file. In addition, a copy will be sent to HR for filing in the civil service/personnel file.
Employees and supervisors have many tools at their disposal to support their use of the Collaborative Performance Management System including the LMS performance management module and other online resources.

**LMS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MODULE**

The LMS performance management module provides an easy-to-use tool to:

- Notify the employee and supervisor of CPMS deadlines and facilitate communication about roles and responsibilities
- Document the goals and performance factors agreed to during performance planning
- Align individual goals to higher-level goals for the work unit, department or County
- Create action plans (specific tasks with dates) to support the accomplishment of each goal
- Report and track progress on action plans and results
- Capture performance feedback from coaching discussions between the employee and supervisor to help make interim progress reviews and year-end evaluations more constructive and meaningful
- Develop and finalize the performance evaluation
- Find helpful resources, such as videos and “how-to” guides

**OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES**

The following helpful online resources can also be found on the LMS “Resources Tab” and on the HR CPMS Intranet page:

- Performance Planning “How-To” Guide
- Performance Factor “How-To” Guide
- Performance Factor List and Descriptions
- SMART Goal-Setting “How-To” Guide
- Individual Performance Plan Template (for temporary use until LMS performance planning module is available)
- Performance Review “How-To” Guide
- Employee Self-Review Form
- Frequently Asked Questions