

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Supervisory Employee Performance Appraisal Plan**

Employee Name:		Title/Series/Grade:	
Duty Station:	Appraisal Period:	From Date:	To Date:

Part A-1: Establishment of Performance Plan: Signatures certify that performance plan (Part E) was discussed with the employee.

Employee:	Rating Official:	Reviewing Official (if applicable):
Date:	Date:	Date:

Part A-2: Employee Input into Performance Plan Development: Signatures certify that the rating official solicited the employee's involvement in developing the performance plan.

Employee:	Date:	Rating Official:	Date:
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Part A-3: Employee Training: Signatures certify that the employee reviewed the "Understanding Performance Management" guidance or was otherwise provided training on the performance management policy.

Employee:	Date:	Rating Official:	Date:
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Part A-4: Individual Development Plan: Signatures certify that the employee's Individual Development Plan was created. (Required)

Employee:	Date:	Rating Official:	Date:
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Part B: Progress Review: Signatures certify that performance was discussed.

Employee:	Date:	Rating Official:	Date:
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Part C: Summary Rating Determination: Assign the numerical rating level that accurately reflects the employee's performance for each of the critical elements (Use only whole numbers: **Outstanding = 5 points; Exceeds Expectations = 4 points, Fully Successful = 3 points, and Unacceptable = 0 points.**) See next page for complete instructions.

Element Number	Numerical Rating
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
Total:	

Total Numerical Rating _____ ÷ Number of Elements _____ = Numeric Summary Rating _____

Part D: Summary Rating: Use conversion chart to determine rating. Check appropriate box:

Outstanding	4.6 – 5.00 AND No Critical Element rated lower than "Exceeds Expectations"	
Exceeds Expectations	3.6 – 4.59 AND No Critical Element rated "Unacceptable"	
Fully Successful	3.0 – 3.59 AND No Critical Element rated "Unacceptable"	
Unacceptable	One or more Critical Elements rated "Unacceptable"	
Employee:	Rating Official:	Reviewing Official (if applicable):
Date:	Date:	Date:

Check here if Interim Rating: _____

Performance Award: QSI _____

Cash: \$ _____ or _____% of pay

Time Off

Instructions for Completing the Supervisory Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (EPAP) Form

Establishing Critical Elements and Performance Standards

Critical elements (at least one, but not more than five) must be established for each employee at the start of the appraisal period. Through these elements, employees are held accountable for work assignments and responsibilities of their position. A critical element is an assignment or responsibility of such importance that Unacceptable performance in that element alone would result in the determination that the employee's overall performance is Unacceptable. **Performance plans for all supervisors and managers must include the Mandatory Supervisory/Managerial Critical Element #1 (one of the maximum five elements) that addresses the level of performance expected for carrying out supervisory/managerial duties.** Please see 370 DM 430 or the Performance Management Handbook for more detailed information.

Performance standards are management-approved expressions of the performance threshold(s), requirement(s), or expectation(s) that must be met to be appraised on a critical element at a particular level of performance. They must be focused on results and include credible measures such as quality, quantity, timeliness, cost effectiveness, etc. The attached Benchmark Standards describe general parameters of the standards. **Federal regulations require, at a minimum, that a specific performance standard be established for the Fully Successful level for each critical element. Rating officials are strongly encouraged to develop specific performance standards at additional levels to ensure that the employee has a clear understanding of the levels of performance expected.**

At least one, and preferably all, critical elements must show how the element is linked to the strategic goal(s) of the organization. These goals should be aligned throughout the organization (i.e., show how the strategic goal cascades from the senior executive level down to the lowest non-supervisory levels). The employee should be able to clearly understand how the results they are held responsible for are linked to the strategic and/or mission goals of the organization.

Employee Involvement: Employees must be provided an opportunity to participate in the development of their performance plans. Part A-2 of this form requires employee and rating official signatures certifying that employee input into the development of the plan was solicited.

Individual Development Plan (IDP): The IDP provides a connection between the employee's career interests and needs to the organizational mission and priorities. The employee and the rating official should develop goals together. **All supervisors are required to have an IDP that is updated annually.** Consistent with Personnel Bulletin 06-04: Supervisory Development (dated November 9, 2005), required training as well as individual training needs and development activities will be identified in the IDP.

Progress Reviews: A progress review discussion is required approximately midway through the appraisal period. Part B should be completed after the progress review. Any written feedback or recommended training can be noted on a separate sheet and attached to the EPAP form.

Assigning the Summary Rating: A specific rating is required for each critical element to reflect the level of performance demonstrated by the employee throughout the appraisal period. Only one numerical rating level is assigned for each critical element. Before the rating official assigns a summary rating, he/she should consider all interim appraisals received for the employee during the annual appraisal period. The summary rating is assigned as follows:

- A. Assess how the employee performed relative to the described performance standards.
- B. Document the employee's performance with a narrative that describes the achievements for the critical elements as compared to the performance standards. A narrative must be written for each critical element assigned a rating of Outstanding or Unacceptable to provide examples of the employee's performance that substantiate and explain how the performance falls within the level assigned. There is a block provided for the narrative for each critical element.
- C. In Part C of this form, assign one of the numerical rating levels that accurately reflects the employee's performance for each of the critical elements. Use only whole numbers: Outstanding = 5 points, Exceeds Expectations = 4 points, Fully Successful = 3 points, and Unacceptable = 0 points.
- D. Add up the numerical rating levels to get a total, and then divide the total by the number of critical elements that were rated to get an average. Elements that are not rated because an employee has not

had a chance to perform them during the appraisal period are not assigned any points and should not be used to determine the average.

- E. Assign a summary rating based on the table in Part D of this form. Employee and rating official sign the form certifying that the rating was discussed. *Summary ratings of Outstanding or Unacceptable must be reviewed and approved by the reviewing official prior to the rating official's discussion with the employee.*

Note: Whenever an employee is rated **Unacceptable** on one or more critical elements, the overall rating **must** be **Unacceptable** (regardless of total points). **The rating official should immediately contact the servicing Human Resources Office for guidance and assistance on addressing Unacceptable performance.**

Part E: Critical Elements and Performance Standards: List each of the employee’s critical elements (at least one, but not more than five) and their corresponding performance standards. If Benchmark Standards are used, indicate “Benchmark Standards are attached” in the space below, and ensure they are attached to this form. **At a minimum, measurable criteria must be identified at the Fully Successful level.** For at least one critical element, identify the strategic/mission goal that the critical element supports.

Performance plans for supervisors/managers must include the Mandatory Supervisory/Managerial Critical Element #1 below, which addresses the level of performance expected for carrying out supervisory duties. The critical element description for this element must not be modified. A sample Fully Successful performance standard is included below, which can be modified or further specified to the supervisory employee’s position.

<p>Critical Element 1 Title:</p> <p>Mandatory Supervisory/Managerial Element</p>	<p>Critical Element Description: Supervisory/managerial duties are effectively carried out in order to support the Department’s capacity to manage its programs in a results-oriented, customer-focused, and efficient manner. Performance of these duties will be carried out in accordance with statutory/regulatory requirements and Bureau/Office policies governing the following areas:</p> <p><u>Effective People Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Merit System Principles ▪ Strengthening diversity and inclusion ▪ Strategic planning of workforce requirements and effective use of recruitment, retention, and hiring tools ▪ Strengthening employee engagement ▪ Effective performance management <p><u>Protection of the Work Environment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anti-harassment, anti-discrimination and EEO obligations (including reasonable accommodation) ▪ Effective management of ethics, conduct, and discipline issues ▪ Safety and occupational health obligations ▪ Whistleblower and other protected disclosure responsibilities <p><u>Effective Resource/Program Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IT security, data protection and records management obligations ▪ Internal management policies and controls <hr/> <p>Strategic Goal Alignment: (List the goal or initiative with which the critical element aligns)</p>
Performance Standards	
<p>Outstanding</p>	
<p>Exceeds Expectations</p>	
<p>Fully Successful</p>	<p><u>Effective People Management</u></p> <p>The employee conducts human capital management responsibilities (such as staffing and recruitment, employee development, performance management, and employee conduct) consistent with the Merit Systems Principles, and other relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines. The employee assigns work in a fair and effective manner that ensures that direct reports maintain a full workload with a complexity commensurate with their grade levels.</p>

The employee generally considers the current and the reasonably anticipated future needs of the work unit before determining when and how to fill vacant positions; ensures that position descriptions, Fair Labor Standards Act determinations, and specialized experience requirements used to fill vacant positions are accurate; and conducts thorough interviews and reference checks to ensure sound hiring selections are made in a timely manner.

The employee fosters an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued. The employee treats employees fairly—handling similarly situated employees equitably, unless there are documented, business reasons to treat them differently. The employee utilizes the results of employee feedback surveys to develop/implement initiatives to promote work unit engagement and productivity.

The employee adheres to requirements of the Department’s performance management program; identifies and aligns unit goals with agency goals; seeks input of employees in the development of performance criteria; translates and communicates project or work unit goals into work assignments for staff; provides regular feedback and conducts reviews according to established timeframes; makes meaningful distinctions between levels of performance in ratings and supports those determinations with concrete examples or data; recognizes and rewards employee contributions in a fair and consistent manner; and takes steps to timely address performance deficiencies of direct reports.

Protection of the Work Environment

The employee consistently demonstrates commitment and adherence to equal employment opportunity laws, regulations and policy; responds to reasonable accommodation requests and reports of potential discrimination, harassing conduct, or retaliation timely and consistent with DOI policies and procedures; and addresses any findings of misconduct, taking steps to timely correct employee behavior.

The employee adheres to safety and occupational health practices and procedures in order to promote and maintain a safe and healthful work environment for all employees. The employee responds to reports of unsafe conditions timely and in accordance with Department and Bureau/Office procedures, taking appropriate action to mitigate and/or resolve conditions.

The employee models ethical behavior and ensures that both words and actions are consistent with the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Federal Employees, and other relevant Department and Bureau/Office ethics regulations and policies. The employee protects others from retaliation based on their exercise of any appeal, complaint, or grievance right granted by any law, regulation, or policy, including whistleblower protection laws, regulations, and guidelines. The employee responds constructively when employees make protected whistleblower disclosures, takes responsible actions to resolve protected disclosures, and fosters an environment in which employees feel comfortable making protected disclosures.

Effective Resource/Program Management

The employee oversees the timely initiation, execution, and accountability of budget, procurement, and contracting activities in a manner consistent with the Federal Acquisition Regulations, established Department and Bureau/Office policies and procedures, and other relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines. The employee conducts information technology and records management responsibilities consistent with established policies and procedures and other relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines; and makes effective use of technology to achieve results in an efficient manner while preventing duplicative systems across the Agency.

Unacceptable

Narrative Summary

Describe the employee’s performance for the critical element. A narrative summary must be written for each element assigned a rating of Outstanding or Unacceptable.

Rating for Critical Element 1:

Outstanding-5 Exceeds Expectations-4 Fully Successful-3 Unacceptable-0

Part E: Critical Elements and Performance Standards: *List each of the employee's critical elements (at least one, but not more than five) and their corresponding performance standards. If Benchmark Standards are used, indicate "Benchmark standards are attached" in the space below, and ensure they are attached to this form. At a minimum, measurable criteria must be identified at the Fully Successful level. For at least one critical element, identify the strategic/mission goal that the critical element supports.*

Critical Element 2 Title:	Critical Element Description: (Describe the results (e.g., product, service, duty) for which the employee is accountable and responsible)
	Strategic Goal Alignment: (List the goal or initiative with which the critical element aligns)

Performance Standards	
Outstanding	
Exceeds Expectations	
Fully Successful	The attached Benchmark Standards are further defined by the following measurable criteria:
Unacceptable	

Narrative Summary

Describe the employee's performance for the critical element. A narrative summary must be written for each element assigned a rating of Outstanding or Unacceptable.

Rating for Critical Element 2:

Outstanding-5 Exceeds Expectations-4 Fully Successful-3 Unacceptable-0

Part E: Critical Elements and Performance Standards: *List each of the employee's critical elements (at least one, but not more than five) and their corresponding performance standards. If Benchmark Standards are used, indicate "Benchmark Standards are attached" in the space below, and ensure they are attached to this form. At a minimum, measurable criteria must be identified at the Fully Successful level. For at least one critical element, identify the strategic/mission goal that the critical element supports.*

Critical Element 3 Title:	Critical Element Description: (Describe the results (e.g., product, service, duty) for which the employee is accountable and responsible)
	Strategic Goal Alignment: (List the goal or initiative with which the critical element aligns)

Performance Standards

Outstanding	
Exceeds Expectations	
Fully Successful	The attached Benchmark Standards are further defined by the following measurable criteria:
Unacceptable	

Narrative Summary

Describe the employee's performance for the critical element. A narrative summary must be written for each element assigned a rating of Outstanding or Unacceptable.

Rating for Critical Element 3:

Outstanding-5 Exceeds Expectations-4 Fully Successful-3 Unacceptable-0

Part E: Critical Elements and Performance Standards: *List each of the employee's critical elements (at least one, but not more than five) and their corresponding performance standards. If Benchmark Standards are used, indicate "Benchmark Standards are attached" in the space below, and ensure they are attached to this form. At a minimum, measurable criteria must be identified at the Fully Successful level. For at least one critical element, identify the strategic/mission goal that the critical element supports.*

Critical Element 4 Title:	Critical Element Description: (Describe the results (e.g., product, service, duty) for which the employee is accountable and responsible)
	Strategic Goal Alignment: (List the goal or initiative with which the critical element aligns)

Performance Standards	
Outstanding	
Exceeds Expectations	
Fully Successful	The attached Benchmark Standards are further defined by the following measurable criteria:
Unacceptable	

Narrative Summary

Describe the employee's performance for the critical element. A narrative summary must be written for each element assigned a rating of Outstanding or Unacceptable.

Rating for Critical Element 4:

Outstanding-5
 Exceeds Expectations-4
 Fully Successful-3
 Unacceptable-0

Part E: Critical Elements and Performance Standards: *List each of the employee's critical elements (at least one, but not more than five) and their corresponding performance standards. If Benchmark Standards are used, indicate "Benchmark Standards are attached" in the space below, and ensure they are attached to this form. At a minimum, measurable criteria must be identified at the Fully Successful level. For at least one critical element, identify the strategic/mission goal that the critical element supports.*

Critical Element 5 Title:	Critical Element Description: (Describe the results (e.g., product, service, duty) for which the employee is accountable and responsible)
	Strategic Goal Alignment: (List the goal or initiative with which the critical element aligns)

Performance Standards

Outstanding	
Exceeds Expectations	
Fully Successful	The attached Benchmark Standards are further defined by the following measurable criteria:
Unacceptable	

Narrative Summary

Describe the employee's performance for the critical element. A narrative summary must be written for each element assigned a rating of Outstanding or Unacceptable.

Rating for Critical Element 5:

Outstanding-5 Exceeds Expectations-4 Fully Successful-3 Unacceptable-0

Privacy Act Notice: Chapter 43 of Title 5, U.S.C., authorizes collection of this information. The primary use of this information is by management and your servicing human resources office to issue and record your performance rating. Additional disclosures of this information may be: To the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, U.S. Office of Special Counsel, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, U.S. Federal Labor Relations Authority, or an arbitrator in connection with administrative proceedings; to the U.S. Department of Justice or other Federal agency, courts, or party to litigation when the Government is a party to or has an interest in the judicial or administrative proceeding; to a congressional office in response to an inquiry made on behalf of an individual; to the appropriate Federal, State, or local government agency investigating potential violations of civil or criminal law or regulation; and to Federal, State, local and professional licensing boards in determining qualifications of individuals seeking to be licensed.

If your bureau/office used the information furnished on this form for purposes other than those indicated above, it may provide you with an additional statement reflecting those purposes.

Refusal to Sign: In cases where the employee refuses to sign the Supervisory Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (EPAP) form, the rating official has the authority to implement the performance plan and rating without employee agreement. Rating officials should identify in the employee's signature block that the "Employee refused to sign."

Benchmark Supervisory Employee Performance Standards

Outstanding:

With only rare exception, the employee demonstrates exceptional leadership skills and develops effective working relationships with others; immediately handles difficult situations with direct reports with professionalism and effectiveness, and demonstrates foresight in correcting situations that may cause future problems before they arise; encourages independence and calculated risk-taking among direct reports, yet takes responsibility for their actions; is open to and solicits the views of others; assigns work in a fair and effective manner; and promotes cooperation among peers and direct reports while guiding, motivating and inspiring positive responses.

The employee demonstrates a high level of commitment to the Merit System Principles, Standards of Ethical Conduct for Federal Employees, equal employment opportunity, whistleblower protection, and anti-discrimination and anti-harassment laws, regulations and policies. The employee has a significant positive impact on fostering an inclusive, safe and fair work environment; strengthening diversity and inclusion; improving employee engagement; and effectively managing and implementing recruitment, employee performance, employee development, employee conduct, and internal management policies.

The employee manages assigned programs and direct reports in a manner that is of such high quality that organizational goals have been achieved that would not have been otherwise; usually leads the completion of work by others ahead of deadlines without sacrificing quality; and leads staff to anticipate customer needs and take steps to meet those needs without prompting, as appropriate to each employee's grade level. The employee's leadership allows the organization to accomplish objectives even when faced with unanticipated challenges. The employee leads the development and implementation of new approaches, which significantly improve productivity, mission results, operational efficiency, or generate substantial savings of time or money without compromising quality. The employee systematically monitors quality, delivery, and customer satisfaction levels, making adjustments accordingly, and works with staff to proactively implement solutions to prevent problems and avoid gaps in customer expectations.

Indicators of performance at this level include outcomes/results that consistently exceed the Exceeds Expectations performance standard for the critical element.

Exceeds Expectations:

The employee demonstrates leadership skills that exceed expectations and establishes sound working relationships with others; almost always handles difficult situations with direct reports with professionalism and effectiveness; shows good judgment in dealing with others and considering their views; encourages high performance among direct reports; assigns work fairly; and has a strong sense of mission, seeking out responsibility.

The employee demonstrates a strong commitment to the Merit System Principles, Standards of Ethical Conduct for Federal Employees, equal employment opportunity, whistleblower protection, and anti-discrimination and anti-harassment laws, regulations, and policies. The employee has a positive impact on fostering an inclusive, safe and fair work environment; strengthening diversity and inclusion; improving employee engagement; and effectively managing and implementing recruitment, employee performance, employee development, employee conduct, and internal management policies.

The employee manages assigned programs and direct reports in a manner that exceeds expectations and exhibits a sustained support of organizational goals. Through the work of his/her direct reports, the employee improves the quality of management practices, operating procedures, and/or program activities; produces a high quantity of work, often ahead of established schedules; and leads the development and/or implementation of workable and cost-effective approaches to improving organizational operations/results. The employee normally anticipates customer needs and works with staff to resolve or prevent potential problems, resulting in high levels of customer service.

Indicators of performance at this level include outcomes/results that consistently exceed the Fully Successful performance standard for the critical element.

Fully Successful:

The employee is a capable leader who works successfully with others and listens to suggestions. The employee generally handles difficult situations with direct reports with professionalism and effectiveness. The employee also works well as a team member, supporting the group's efforts and showing an ability to handle a variety of interpersonal situations. The employee assigns work fairly and monitors and corrects performance among direct reports.

The employee's work with others demonstrates commitment to the Merit System Principles, Standards of Ethical Conduct for Federal Employees, equal employment opportunity, whistleblower protection, and anti-discrimination and anti-harassment laws, regulations and policies. The employee responds constructively when employees make protected whistleblower disclosures, takes responsible actions to resolve protected disclosures, and fosters an environment in which employees feel comfortable making protected disclosures. The employee fulfills management responsibilities to foster an inclusive, safe and fair work environment; strengthen diversity and inclusion; improve employee engagement; and effectively manage and implement recruitment, employee performance, employee development, employee conduct, and internal management policies.

The employee's leadership of direct reports ensures that the team contributes positively to organizational goals. The employee maintains contact with customers (internal and/or external), and is effective in understanding their needs and using feedback to address customer requirements. Through the management of assigned programs and/or direct reports, the employee provides timely, flexible, and responsive products and/or services, resulting in value to the mission. The employee solicits input from direct reports to improve work products and/or services and to develop employee skills.

Unacceptable:

The employee's performance is unacceptable. The quality and/or quantity of the employee's work and leadership are not adequate for the position. The employee's management of assigned programs and/or direct reports does not meet the requirements expected.

The employee fails to motivate direct reports and promote team spirit; often provides unclear assignments and performance requirements or insufficient instructions to direct reports; frequently fails to provide sufficient explanation of organizational goals to direct reports; generally fails to satisfy customer needs and/or meet customer service objectives; and/or frequently fails to meet production or mission goals in a timely and quality manner.

The employee's work with others fails to show an understanding of the Merit System Principles, Standards of Ethical Conduct for Federal Employees, equal employment opportunity, whistleblower protection, and/or anti-discrimination or anti-harassment laws, regulations, or policies. The employee fails to fulfill management responsibilities of fostering an inclusive, safe and fair workplace environment, strengthening diversity and inclusion, improving employee engagement, or effectively managing and implementing recruitment, employee performance, employee development, employee conduct, or internal management policies.

Appendix 1: Understanding Performance Management

Position Duties – Your rating official, normally your immediate supervisor, should provide you with a copy of the position description for your job. Your position description is the official record of your primary duties and responsibilities and is used in developing your performance plan. Take some time to read through your position description. Ask your rating official about anything that is not clear to you. Your rating official should review your position description with you at least once a year to ensure that it accurately reflects your main duties and responsibilities. Keep a copy of your position description and refer to it from time to time. You may want to make notes on your copy when your job changes, so that you can discuss the changes with your rating official.

Supervisory Employee Performance Appraisal Plan – The Supervisory Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (EPAP) form is the authorized form used by the Department to document the work performance of its supervisory employees under the four-level appraisal system. When used effectively, the EPAP form is a valuable communication tool for both employee development and organizational accomplishments.

Managers and supervisors are responsible for the following:

1. Complying with provisions of the U.S. Department of the Interior's Performance Management System policy (370 DM 430) and supplemental guidance provided in the Department's Performance Management Handbook;
2. Establishing critical elements and performance standards that are linked to organizational goals;
3. Monitoring employee performance, communicating with employees about their performance and addressing performance problems; and
4. Approving or reviewing ratings recommended by supervisors or rating officials.

The EPAP form has several important goals:

1. Clarifying how the employee's performance requirements link to the strategic goals of their organization;
2. Increasing individual productivity by giving employees the information they need to do their jobs effectively;
3. Improving individual/organizational productivity by promoting communication between employees and rating officials about job-related matters, so that better and more efficient methods of operation can be developed; and
4. Providing the basis for recognizing employees for good performance and their contributions to the organization.

Appraisal Period – The appraisal period begins October 1 and ends September 30 of each year, except where specific exceptions have been granted. The minimum period on which an appraisal may be based is 90 calendar days. During the appraisal period, your rating official may periodically discuss your work with you and let you know how you are doing. In addition, before the end of the appraisal period, the rating official will conduct one formal progress review with you. This progress review is another opportunity for you and your rating official to discuss your progress, review your performance plan, identify any training needs or improvements, or to revise your critical elements and performance standards.

Critical Elements and Performance Standards – Your rating official will explain your duties and responsibilities to you and discuss what is expected of you in order to achieve satisfactory performance. To further define your performance expectations, your rating official will establish critical elements and performance standards for your job. Employees must be afforded an opportunity to provide input into the development of the critical elements and performance standards. You are encouraged to participate in this process.

Critical elements tell you what work assignments and responsibilities need to be accomplished during the appraisal period. All employees must have at least one critical element that is linked to the strategic goals of the organization. Between one and five critical elements can be established for a position. These elements are considered critical because they are of such importance to the position that Unacceptable performance in one element alone would result in a determination that the employee's overall performance is Unacceptable. **Performance plans for all supervisors and managers must include the Mandatory Supervisory/Managerial Critical Element #1 (one of the maximum five elements) that addresses the level of performance expected for carrying out various supervisory/managerial duties.**

Performance standards tell employees how well critical elements must be accomplished by defining achievable rating levels for: Outstanding, Exceeds Expectations, Fully Successful, and Unacceptable. These four rating levels focus on results and include credible measures such as quality, quantity, timeliness, cost effectiveness, etc.

Your overall performance is evaluated by your rating official using these performance standards. A determination that an employee's overall performance is Unacceptable will result in remedial action and may be the basis for removal from Federal service or reduction in grade.

The Rating Process – At the end of the appraisal period, your rating official will carefully review the critical elements and performance standards for your position. Based on your actual performance, one of four rating levels may be assigned. The rating will be presented to you during the formal performance discussion between you and your rating official. The appraisal will be completed with your signature and a copy provided to you. This rating is documented on the EPAP form and is considered as your rating of record. Your rating of record is directly linked to your eligibility for certain types of pay increases and awards.

Rewarding Performance – Rewarding performance means recognizing good performance and providing incentives to employees for their work efforts and contributions to the organization. At the end of the appraisal period, your rating official may consider you for an award based on your performance and rating of record as follows:

- Outstanding – Must be considered for an individual cash award, a Quality Step Increase, Time-Off Award, or other appropriate equivalent recognition.
- Exceeds Expectations – Eligible for an individual cash award, Time-Off Award, or other appropriate equivalent recognition.
- Fully Successful – Eligible for an individual cash award, Time-Off Award, or other appropriate equivalent recognition.
- Unacceptable – Ineligible for any performance-based recognition.

The Department's performance-based award policy is explained in 370 DM 451.2. Bureaus/Offices may have additional guidance governing the distribution of performance-based awards.

How to Get the Most Out of the Performance Management Process

1. Ask for Feedback Throughout the Appraisal Period

How do you know if you are learning how to do your job and meeting your performance expectations? Talk to your rating official throughout the appraisal period. Your rating official wants you to succeed and is available to provide guidance to help you learn how to effectively do your job. Communicating regularly with your rating official gives you the opportunity to understand the job expectations. It also lets your rating official know what type of assistance or resources you need to perform your work, and it is a good way to get feedback.

Feedback is information that helps you know how well you are accomplishing the duties and responsibilities of your job. Employees who seek feedback from their rating officials learn their jobs more quickly and with fewer wrong turns than employees who shy away from feedback. Employees who seek feedback spend less time redoing work and turn in work with fewer mistakes. As a result, they improve their work performance.

Getting and using feedback is one of the most important keys to learning your job. As you do your work, ask for feedback from your rating official to see if you are on track. At first you may feel uncomfortable asking for feedback, but remember that your rating official wants you to succeed. As you master your job and get to know your rating official, you will soon feel more comfortable asking for and receiving feedback.

2. Preparation for the Appraisal Discussion

a. Before your rating official prepares your appraisal:

1. Prepare a list of key work accomplishments and give it to your rating official for consideration in preparing your rating.
2. If you have specific issues come prepared to discuss them. Give your rating official a "heads up" so that he/she can also prepare to discuss the issues.
3. Write down any key points and questions you may have.

b. During your performance discussion:

1. Don't be shy about asking for clarification, especially about your rating official's expectations.
2. Refer to your notes, so that you don't overlook any points that are important to you.
3. Tell your rating official how you feel things are progressing and if you need any additional information or materials.
4. Let your rating official know what your short/long-term career goals are.
5. Ask for feedback.

If you still have questions about the EPAP form, please consult with your rating official.

Appendix 2: Supervisor's Guide to Developing Individual Development Plans

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a valuable performance enhancement tool for all federal employees. The IDP can assist those who want to enhance their skills and strengths, learn more about issues relevant to the performance of the agency, and grow personally and professionally. Supervisory employees are required to have an IDP in place that is updated annually. Check with your Human Resources Office for the IDP or other appropriate form used by your Bureau/Office to document employee development needs.

The following is a brief outline of the goals, definition, and steps in creating an IDP.

Goals: The employee and the supervisor should develop goals together. The IDP should connect the employee's career interests with the organizational mission and priorities. The most common goals of an IDP are to:

- Learn new skills to improve current job performance
- Maximize performance in support of organizational requirements
- Increase interest level, challenge, and satisfaction in current position
- Establish a career path, identifying the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for professional growth

Definition: An IDP may identify a broad spectrum of developmental activities, including on-the-job training, distance learning, formal classroom training, details, shadow assignments and self-development. It balances the needs of the organization and of the employee beginning with a focus on maximizing employee performance in the current job.

An IDP is a guide to help employees reach individual career goals within the context of organizational objectives. It is a developmental action plan to grow employees from their current state by providing systematic steps to improve and build on strengths. An IDP is a partnership between the employee and the supervisor for personal and professional development. Preparing an IDP involves open feedback, clarification, and discussion about developmental needs, goals, and plans. Periodic communication between the supervisor and the employee is key to ensure currency and relevance of an IDP.

An IDP is not a:

- Performance appraisal. It is not used to determine pay, awards or other personnel actions based on performance.
- Contract for training. Final approval of training opportunities is made based on factors such as timing and budget availability.
- Position description. It is not used for clarifying discrepancies in the job duties.
- Guarantee of promotion or reassignment to another position. While the developmental activities in an IDP may include training that might qualify the employee for another position or grade, there is no guarantee of advancement.

Responsibilities: As in all aspects of the employee/supervisor relationship, direct and open communication is the key to the success of an IDP. The following responsibilities address the IDP process specifically.

The **employee** is responsible for:

- Assessing their own skills necessary for performing the current position
- Suggesting developmental experiences which would enhance the skills necessary for performing in the current position and to achieve desired career goals
- Identifying personal career goals
- Understanding what skills are necessary for meeting career goals
- Participating in open discussions with the supervisor concerning the elements of the IDP
- Completing the developmental experiences in the IDP as approved by the supervisor
- Alerting the supervisor when the IDP needs review and updating

The **supervisor** is responsible for:

- Providing constructive feedback to the employee about skills necessary to perform the duties of the current position
- Reviewing employee suggestions for developmental experiences and making additional suggestions which would enhance the skills necessary to perform in the current position
- Coaching the employee about stated career goals
- Identifying developmental experiences which would enhance the skills necessary for performing in subsequent positions aligned with the employee's career goals
- Participating in open discussions with the employee concerning the elements of the IDP, and periodically reviewing and updating the IDP

- Giving final approval for specific developmental experiences
- Monitoring the progress of the employee in completing training and the developmental experiences in the IDP

Appendix 3: Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Supervisory employees are required to have an IDP in place. Bureaus/Offices may require the use of a specific IDP form at their discretion. Check with your Human Resources Office for the IDP or other appropriate form to be used by your Bureau/Office for documenting employee developmental needs.

IDP Performance Year: _____

Employee's Name	Position Title/Grade	Office Phone	Office Fax	Email Address
Current Supervisor's Name	Supervisor's Title	Office Phone	Office Fax	Email Address
Goals for Successful Performance in Current Position	Short-term Career Goals (2-3 years)	Long-term Goals (3+ years)		
Developmental Objectives: What do you need to do this year to work towards your goals?	Developmental Activities (training, assignments, projects, details, etc.)	Proposed Dates	Estimated Costs	Date Completed
Notes:	Employee's Signature/Date			
	Supervisor's Signature/Date			

Instructions for Completing the IDP

Employee Development and Career Goals – The employee and supervisor work together to complete the goals for successful performance in the employee’s current position and the employee’s short- and long-term career goals.

Developmental Objectives – Describe what the employee needs to do this year to work toward his/her goals. Objectives describe what the employee needs to learn or achieve in order to reach his/her goals.

Method of Training and Time Frame – Determine what type of training or activity is needed to accomplish the employee’s developmental goals. It could be on-the-job training, a detail, a formal training course or a combination of methods. Identify the proposed dates for the training or activity in the “Proposed Dates” column. Enter the actual or estimated cost of the activity in the “Estimated Costs” column. This column can be used in preparing your office’s annual budget. Once the training is completed, write the date in the “Date Completed” column.

Methods of Training:

- On-the-Job Training – Can include coaching by a skilled individual or details into positions that will give the employee the skills and knowledge needed.
- Details – Temporary assignments to another location and/or position to gain specific knowledge and/or experience.
- Courses – Formal training courses, e.g., from your bureau/office, local universities, commercial vendors.
- Webcasts/Computer-Based/Online Learning – A variety of topics are available through your Bureau/Office via webcasts, software packages, and online training.

Discussing the Development Plan – Supervisors should discuss the IDP with the employee and make any necessary modifications. The supervisor and employee should sign and date the plan. The IDP should be completed within 45 days from the beginning of the performance year.

Review and Modifications – The IDP should be reviewed at each performance review and modified as situations or needs change.