

Performance Management: GETTING TO THE HEART OF IT!

COMMENTARY ON PERFORMANCE EVALUATION POLICY

Presented by

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THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM:

I. BENEFITS

- For the Employee
- For the Supervisor/Rater
- For the Agency

II. SUPERVISOR/RATER

- Prior to the Evaluation Interview
- Related to Motivational Aspects
- Available "People" Resources
- Interview Timing

III. SHOULD'S AND SHOULD NOT'S of the Evaluation Interview

- Should's vs. Should Not's!
- Remember the Rules
- Employee Performance Interview and the Law

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION LEADER

V. OBTAINING INPUT AND FEEDBACK

VI. PLANNING, COACHING and EVALUATION

- Coaching for Improvement
- Managing Unsatisfactory Performance
- Tips Through the Counseling Process
- Corrective Action Flowchart

VII. CHECKLIST & QUESTIONS FOR SUPERVISORS/RATERS



I.

BENEFITS of the Performance Evaluation Interview

Benefits for the Employee

1. To discuss work tasks (specifically and generally).
2. To understand the supervisor's/rater's viewpoint of employee's tasks, responsibilities/accomplishments.
3. To understand how to work more effectively.
4. To identify specific goals for improvement.
5. To express needs and concerns with the supervisor/rater.

Benefits for the Supervisor/Rater

1. To review performance over the entire rating period.
2. To discuss/resolve areas where the employee has confusion/frustration/concern.
3. To understand the employee's viewpoint of the supervisor's/rater's task and people responsibilities.
4. To set/establish/encourage employee growth patterns.
5. To stimulate the employee's motivation.
6. To exhibit positive leadership.
7. To create and discuss action plans.
8. To improve employee performance.

Benefits for the Agency

1. To emphasize priorities.
2. To identify training needs necessary to meet goals.
3. To develop closer working relationships between staff and management.

II.

SUPERVISOR/RATER PREPARATION

Prior to the Performance Evaluation Interview

1. Check your attitude at the door.
2. Review employee's file of past activities for overall performance.
3. Review Standards/Expectations: Fully understand the definition of each level.
4. Obtain information showing past performance. (Back up with facts and examples. Share understanding about the degree or lack of performance, needed improvement, or excelled performance.)
5. Compare findings in the standards/expectations to the level of actual performance achievement (or lack of).
6. Clearly define the performance standards/expectations desired of the employee.
7. For those who are not performing adequately, set up a corrective action plan (include mini-goals in the form of periodic accomplishments toward the final goal/objective).

Related to Motivational Aspects

Even though the “personal” should be kept out of the performance evaluation interview, many people have difficulty separating the “business from the personal”. Make sure the personality factors do not affect the employee’s performance evaluation unless such factors influence the performance of the required duties.

1. Employees often take what the supervisor/rater says and relate to it on a “personal” basis rather than directly relating the comments to the performance behavior. They may move from the standard evaluation, extending to the “self” – an evaluation of their worth.
2. Clearly define (in written note format) any “personal” expectations desired of the employee and relate these expectations directly to required performance. (example: customer service factors, personal phone restrictions, voice tone, etc.)
3. Remember, this is not a session for inclusion of Disciplinary discussion or action. I.E., absenteeism, insubordination, sleeping on the job, drugs, alcohol, etc. Disciplinary issues need to be dealt with in a separate forum.

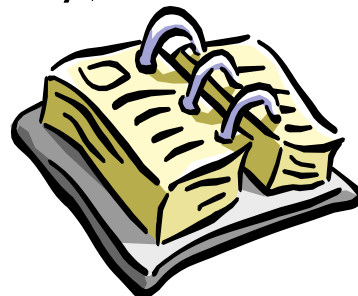


Use Available “People” Resources

1. Objective feedback regarding the employee’s performance from other supervisors familiar with and impacted by the employee’s work.
2. Consider obtaining objective feedback regarding the employee’s performance from co-workers whose performance is impacted by the employee being evaluated.

Timing of the Performance Evaluation Interview

1. Do not wait until the end of the rating period to conduct the evaluation interview.
2. Offer the employee two or three time alternatives available for the interview.
3. Notify the employee of the time/date/place of the interview.
4. Start the interview on time.
5. Allow at least one hour for the interview. (May be longer than one hour depending on its complexity.)



III.

SHOULD'S and SHOULD NOT'S of the Performance Evaluation Interview

The Interview Should Not Be!

1. A one-way oration.
2. An assassination attempt.
3. A controlling contrivance.
4. A personality rule of moral conduct.
5. A written communication or form placed on the employee's desk.
6. A three-month memory of recent good deeds.

The Interview Should Be!

1. A review of the entire rating period.
2. A two-way effort for understanding and relating to job performance.
3. A time to get potential problems out into the open.
4. Goal-setting.
5. Developing a more positive working relationship.

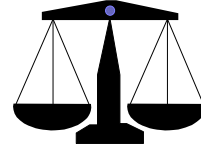
REMEMBER RULE #1 The rater's professional reputation is at stake in every single interview.

REMEMBER RULE #2 The tone of the interview sets the employee's willingness to accept supervision for the upcoming year.

REMEMBER RULE #3 The most successful interview is part of a comprehensive on-going program, day-in, day-out, not just once during the evaluation period.

REMEMBER RULE #4 Discuss work performance -- not the person.

REMEMBER RULE #5 Don't talk - listen (actively)!



Performance Evaluation and the LAW!

What's the Score?

To be lawful, an employee performance evaluation system should:

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|------------|
| 1. | Be based upon thorough job analysis. | True__X__ | False_____ |
| 2. | Be administered by the approved rater. | True__X__ | False_____ |
| 3. | Be monitored by someone higher in the agency than the immediate rater to ensure consistency across the group. | True__X__ | False_____ |
| 4. | Allow for collection of data and scoring under standardized conditions. | True__X__ | False_____ |
| 5. | Be void of racial, sexual, age, etc. biases. | True__X__ | False_____ |
| 6. | Be objective, not subjective. | True__X__ | False_____ |
| 7. | Measure results. | True__X__ | False_____ |
| 8. | Treat older and younger workers equally. | True__X__ | False_____ |
| 9. | Treat male and female workers equally. | True__X__ | False_____ |
| 10. | Include the monitoring of results. | True__X__ | False_____ |

IV.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION LEADER

The following characteristics are essential to effective performance discussion. This scale will help you identify strengths and determine areas where improvement would be beneficial. Circle the number that best reflects where you fall on the scale. The higher the number, the more you are like the characteristic. When you have finished, total the numbers circled in the space provided.

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. I let the employee do most of the talking. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. I make an intense effort to listen to the employee. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. I am prepared to suggest solutions to problems and developmental needs but let employee contribute. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. My statements about performance are descriptive, not judgmental. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 5. I reinforce the positive in performance as well as seeking ways to eliminate the negatives. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 6. I try to support the employee's ideas rather than force my own. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 7. I invite alternatives rather than assume there is only one way to approach on issue. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 8. I use open-ended, reflective and directive questions to stimulate discussion. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 9. I am specific and descriptive when I express a concern about performance. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 10. My employees know I want them to succeed. | 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |

Total:_____

A score between 90 and 100 indicates you should be leading successful discussions; 70 and 89 indicates significant strengths plus a few improvement needs; 50 and 69 reflects some strengths, but a significant number of problem areas as well; below 50 calls for a serious effort to improve in several categories. Make a special effort to grow in any area where you circled 6 or less regardless of your total score.

V.

PREPARING the EMPLOYEE by OBTAINING INPUT and FEEDBACK Prior to the Performance Evaluation Interview

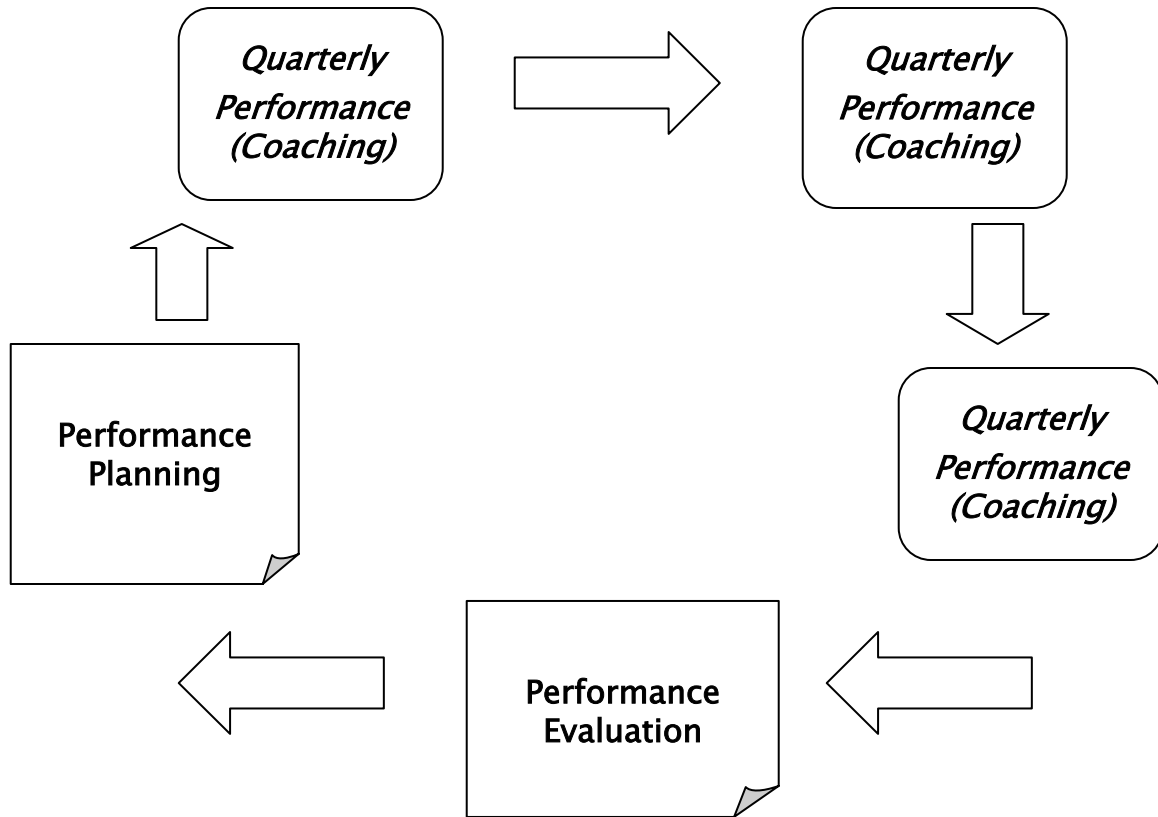
Prior to the interview, ask employee to consider the following for improving shared understanding:

1. Complete his/her own performance evaluation and give you a copy one week before the scheduled interview. Ask them to include three expectations for the interview and three performance goals for the upcoming evaluation period.
2. Set up a “Monthly Accomplishment Program”. This will identify as least one new or improved accomplishment each month for the upcoming evaluation period.
3. Write one statement (using examples) concerning his/her performance on each standard/expectation the employee should be accountable for.
4. Have employee indicate where improvement is necessary since the last performance interview or where improvement has occurred.
5. Request employee to identify obstacles which may interfere with satisfactory performance of duties or where he/she needs assistance.
6. Ask employee to identify at least three accomplishments over the evaluation period in which they feel they are “above and beyond the call of duty.”
7. Have employee identify three performance-related goals he/she would like to set for themselves for the coming evaluation period.
8. Ask in what aspects of the job they feel they need more experience and/or training.



VI.

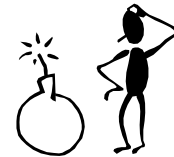
The PERFORMANCE PLANNING, COACHING and EVALUATION PROCESS



Coaching for Improvement

1. Observe the employee's performance to form a valid opinion. Take notes, if possible. Do not act on hearsay, but don't create a "secret file".
2. Choose an appropriate time and private place to coach an employee.
3. Establish an environment of open communication.

4. Listen to the employee.
5. Communicate clearly with the employee. Do not display emotion, anger, or sarcasm.
6. Stick to an evaluation of the performance, not employee's personality. Talk about employee's results.
7. Suggest ways to improve. Have employee suggest improvements.
8. Make sure the employee understands what he/she has to do to improve.
9. Give encouragement to the employee. Let the employee know you have confidence in his or her ability to achieve results.
10. Check in often with the employee to provide feedback about progress and needed improvements.
11. Make an appointment for next coaching session.



Managing Unsatisfactory Performance

- I. Define the Problem – What specifically is the employee doing incorrectly?

Do:

- + Have first-hand knowledge
- + Observe for yourself
- + Know the specific areas of weakness
- + Know how extensive the problem is

Don't:

- Talk in generalities
- Pick isolated incidents
- Rely on hearsay
- Become emotional

- II. Determine the Cause – Once you have defined the problem, ask yourself these questions:

- A. Does the employee know what is expected of him/her?
 1. Have I adequately defined the job?
 2. Have I adequately defined the standards/elements of performance?
 3. Is the employee aware of the proper emphasis and priorities?
- B. When did the employee's unsatisfactory performance become apparent?
 1. Was it gradual or sudden?
 2. Could the poor performance have been brought on by an incident or event?

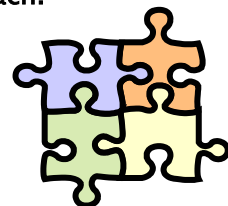
3. Has the job changed over a period of time?
 4. Have MY standards changed during this period?
- C. Was the employee adequately trained?
1. Did the employee know what was expected of him/her during the training period?
 2. Was the training period long enough?
 3. Was the instruction appropriate and of good quality?
- D. Does the employee have the proper support to do the job?
1. Does the employee have all the necessary tools, reports, material, etc.?
 2. Is the employee getting the necessary support from others?
 3. Have I provided adequate feedback or coaching when needed?
- E. Are there any external influences affecting the employee's performance?
1. Is there a personality clash with someone?
 2. Is a problem outside of the unit worrying the employee?
- F. Is the employee in the right job?

Once the problem has been defined and the cause has been determined after asking questions of ourselves and the employee, it then becomes time to develop an effective performance development plan to bring the employee back into productivity.

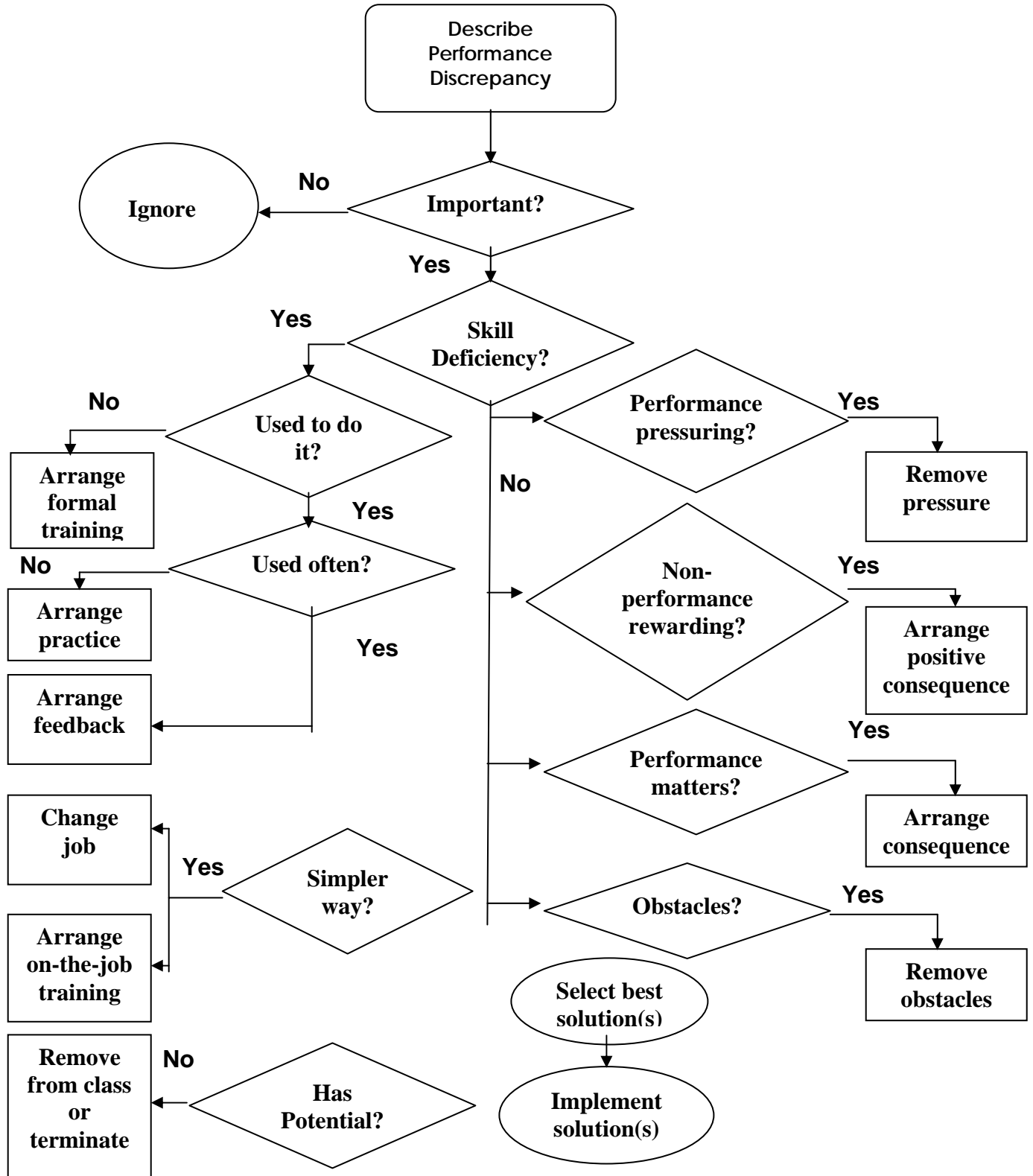
TIPS AS YOU ARE GOING THROUGH THE COUNSELING PROCESS

Ideas for keeping your performance evaluations up-to-date and out of court

1. Make sure the deficiencies exist in more than your own mind. Courts look to actual occurrences and procedures.
2. Be on the lookout for performance standards that are unclear, subjective, or not communicated to everyone. Make sure they are observable, not personal traits; job-related measurements, not individual feelings.
3. Avoid misunderstandings over what must occur. Does "not satisfactory" mean "subject to discharge?" Does it place time limits for improvement. Solidify your evaluation with a specific next-step approach.



CORRECTIVE ACTION FLOWCHART



VII.

CHECKLIST AND QUESTIONS FOR SUPERVISORS/RATERS

The following checklist is designed to guide the reviewer in preparing, conducting and following through on employee performance evaluation discussions.

1. PERSONAL PREPARATION

- I have reviewed mutually understood standards/expectations with respect to job duties, projects, goals, and any other pre-determined performance factors pertinent to this evaluation discussion.

- I have observed job performance measured against mutually understood standards/expectations. In so doing, I have done my best to avoid pitfalls as:
 - _____Bias/prejudice
 - _____Vague memory
 - _____Over-attention to some aspects of the job at the expense of others
 - _____Being overly influenced by my own experience
 - _____Trait review rather than performance measurement

- I have determined the employee's performance strengths and areas in need of improvement and in so doing have:
 - _____Accumulated specific, unbiased documentation that can help communicate my position
 - _____Limited myself to those critical points that are the most important
 - _____Prepared a development plan, in case the employee needs assistance in certain areas. I will follow the employee to give input on this plan as well.

- I have identified areas for concentration in setting goals and standards/expectations for the next evaluation period.

- I have given the employee advance notice of when the discussion will be held so that he/she can prepare.

- I have set aside an adequate block of uninterrupted time to permit a full and complete discussion.

2. CONDUCTING THE EVALUATION DISCUSSION

- I plan to begin the discussion by creating a sincere, but open atmosphere. This includes:
 - _____Reviewing the purpose of the discussion
 - _____Making it clear that it is a joint discussion for the purpose of mutual problem-solving and goal-setting
 - _____Striving to put the employee at ease.

- In the body of the discussion I intend to keep the focus on job performance and related factors. This includes:
 - _____Employee bringing up areas of concern, and obtaining employee solutions
 - _____Discussing positive performance, employee strengths, accomplishments
 - _____Discussing improvement needs and results of performance against standards set during previous evaluations and discussions
 - _____Being prepared to cite observations for each point I want to discuss
 - _____Encouraging the employee to review his/her own performance
 - _____Using open, reflective and directive questions to promote thought, understanding and problem solving.

- I will encourage the employee to outline his/her personal plans for self-development before suggesting ideas of my own. In the process, I will:
 - _____Try to get the employee to set personal growth and improvement targets
 - _____Strive to reach agreement on appropriate development plans which detail what the employee intends to do, a timetable, and support I am prepared to give.

- I am prepared to discuss work assignments, projects and goals for the next evaluation period and will ask the employee to come prepared with suggestions.

3. CLOSING THE DISCUSSION

- I will be prepared to make notes during the discussion for the purpose of summarizing agreements and follow-up. In closing, I will:
 - _____Summarize what has been discussed
 - _____Show genuine enthusiasm for plans that have been made
 - _____Give the employee an opportunity to make additional suggestions

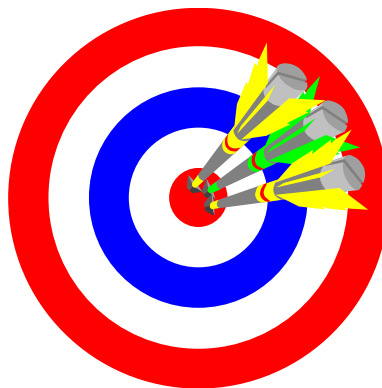
4. POST EVALUATION FOLLOW-UP

- ❑ As soon as the discussion is over, I will record the plans made, points requiring follow-up, the commitments I made, and provide a copy for the employee.
- ❑ I will also consider how I handled the discussion
 - _____What I did well
 - _____What I could have done better
 - _____What I learned about the employee and his/her job
 - _____What I learned about myself and my job

The supervisor's/rater's prime responsibility is to coach and collaborate in an individual's development. Major forces in an employee's development must be given full consideration to achieve maximum results:

- C.
 - A. Supervisors/raters must communicate job standards and other expectations to employees before the evaluation period begins. By doing so, employees know what constitutes good performance and the supervisor can then more objectively assess performance.
 - B. The employee must recognize and understand the responsibility of his/her immediate supervisor as that of an active partner and coach in providing career and job-related assistance.
 - C. The supervisor/rater must recognize and be concerned with the employee's personal aspirations, motivation and career growth needs.

*** BE A COACH! ***



Key Questions to Answer	Probe Questions	Answer
1. When did the employee's unsatisfactory performance become apparent?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Was it gradual or sudden? ➤ Could the poor performance have been brought on by an incident or event? ➤ Has the job changed over a period of time? ➤ Have the standards changed during this period? 	
2. He/she isn't doing what they should be doing. <i>I think I've got a training problem.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Was the employee adequately trained? ✓ What is the performance discrepancy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Did the employee know what was expected of him/her during the training period? ➤ Was the training period long enough? ➤ Was the instruction appropriate and of good quality? ➤ Why do I think there is a training problem? ➤ What is the difference between what is being done and what is supposed to be done? ➤ What is the event that causes me to say that things aren't right? ➤ Why am I dissatisfied? 	
3. Is the discrepancy a skill deficiency?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Could he/she do it if they really had to? ➤ Are his/her present skills adequate for the desired performance? ➤ Could doing something to resolve the discrepancy have any worthwhile result? 	
4. Yes. It is a skill deficiency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Could he/she do it in the past? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Did he/she once know how to perform as desired? ➤ Has he/she forgotten how to do what I want them to do? 	
5. Is the skill used often?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How often is the skill or performance used? ➤ Does he/she get feedback on what they are doing? ➤ How does he/she find out how well they are doing? 	
6. Is there a simpler solution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can I chance the job by providing some job aid? ➤ Can I store the needed information some way (written instructions, checklists) other than in memory? Can I "show" rather than "train"? 	
7. It is not a skill deficiency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Does the employee have the proper support to do the job? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Could he/she learn the job? ➤ Does he/she have the physical and mental potential to perform as desired? ➤ Is he/she over-qualified for the job? ➤ Does he/she have all the necessary tools, reports, material, etc.? ➤ Is the employee getting the necessary support from others? ➤ Have I provided adequate feedback/coaching when needed? 	

Key Questions to Answer	Probe Questions	Answer
8. Is non-performance rewarding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is the result of doing it their way instead of mine? ➤ What does he/she get out of the present performance in the way of reward, prestige, status? ➤ Does he/she get more attention for misconduct? ➤ Is he/she physically unable, so that they get less tired if they do less? 	
9. Does performing really matter?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does performing as desired matter to the performer? ➤ Is there a favorable outcome for performing? ➤ Is there an undesirable outcome for NOT performing? ➤ Is he/she able to take pride in their performance, as an individual or as a member of a group? ➤ Does he/she get satisfaction of needs from the job? 	
10. Is the employee in the right job?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does the employee have the necessary skill, background, education, etc.? ➤ Did I do an effective selection process when I hired the employee? 	
11. Are there obstacles to performing ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What prevents him/her from performing? ➤ Does he/she know <i>what</i> is expected of them? ➤ Does he/she know <i>when</i> to do what is expected? ➤ Are there conflicting demands on his/her time? ➤ Does he/she lack the authority? Time? Tools? ➤ Is he/she restricted by policies or by a "right way of doing it" or "way we've always done it" that ought to be changed: ➤ Can I reduce interference by improving lighting? ...increasing comfort? ...modifying the position? ...reducing visual or auditory distractions? 	
12. Are there any external influences affecting the employee's performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is there a personality clash with someone? ➤ Is a problem outside of the unit worrying the employee? 	
13. What should I do now? Which solution is best?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Are any solutions inappropriate or impossible to implement? ➤ Are any solutions plainly beyond our resources? ➤ What would it "cost" to go ahead with the solution? ➤ What would be the added "value" if I did? ➤ Based on this information, is it "worth" doing? ➤ Which remedy would give the most result? ➤ Which are we the best equipped to try? 	