

Glossary

acceptable performance. Performance that meets an employee's performance requirements or standards in the elements being assessed.

appraisal. The process by which performance is reviewed and evaluated.

appraisal cycle. A 1-year period (April 1 – March 31) established by the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program in which an employee's performance will normally be reviewed, and a rating of record will be assigned.

approved performance plan. A performance plan written, reviewed, and approved in accordance with DoD Component procedures, which communicates expectations and requirements of employee performance for the appraisal cycle.

critical element. A type of performance element in which a work assignment or responsibility is of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that the employee's overall performance is unacceptable. Critical elements are only used to measure individual performance.

detail. A temporary assignment to a different position or a set of duties for a specified period. The employee is expected to return to his or her permanent position of record at the end of the assignment.

element. A work assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that the employee's overall performance is unacceptable. Elements are only used to measure individual performance.

employee performance file. A record containing copies of employees' performance ratings of record, including the performance plans on which the ratings are based. It also includes all performance-related records, such as forms or other documents, maintained as a system of records within the meaning section 552a of title 5, U.S.C., also known as the "Privacy Act of 1974."

higher level review (HLR). A senior-level management official, normally above the level of a rating official.

matrixed employee. An employee hosted by an organization at a location apart from his or her permanent supervisor or organization of record and who is performing work

for his or her organization of record. The employee may receive taskings from the host organization but he or she remains under the authority, direction, and control of his or her organization of record.

minimum period of performance. The minimum appraisal cycle for the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program is 90 calendar days on an approved performance plan.

MyPerformance. The DoD automated appraisal tool authorized for use by both supervisors and employees to document the performance management process of the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program.

opportunity period to demonstrate acceptable performance. A reasonable period for the employee whose performance has been determined to be unacceptable in one or more elements to demonstrate acceptable performance in the element(s) at issue.

performance. Accomplishment of work assignments or responsibilities.

performance discussion. Joint communication between the supervisor and employee about the employee's work performance and its link to organizational effectiveness. The discussions may consist of verbal feedback sessions or formal performance discussions.

performance element rating. The written, or otherwise recorded, appraisal of performance compared to the performance standards for each element on which there has been an opportunity to perform for the minimum period of performance.

performance improvement officer. A senior-level organizational leader with responsibility to supervise agency performance management activities; advise agency leaders about measuring organizational performance; and assist with integrating performance information into an agency's employee performance appraisal process.

performance management. The integrated process by which an agency involves its employees in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of agency mission and strategic goals. Performance management consists of: performance planning, monitoring employee performance, evaluating employee performance, and recognizing and rewarding employee performance.

performance plan. All of the written, or otherwise recorded, performance elements and standards that set expected performance. A plan must include elements and their performance standards.

performance rating level (also known as “summary level”). An ordered category of performance from Level 1 through Level 5, with Level 1 as the lowest and Level 5 as the highest. Level 1 is “Unacceptable”; Level 3 is “Fully Successful”; and Level 5 is “Outstanding”.

performance standard. The management-approved expression of the performance threshold, requirement, and expectations that must be met to be appraised at a particular level of performance. A performance standard may include, but is not limited to, quality, quantity, timeliness, and manner of performance.

performance improvement plan (PIP). A strategy developed for an employee at any point in the appraisal cycle when performance becomes unacceptable in one or more elements. This plan affords an employee the opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance and is developed with specific guidance provided by the servicing human resources office.

performance discussion. A type of formal performance discussion in which the supervisor communicates with the employee about the employee’s performance compared to his or her performance standards. Supervisors are required to conduct at least one formal performance discussion during the appraisal cycle.

promotion. A change of an employee, while serving continuously within the same agency, either to a higher grade when both the old and the new positions are under the General Schedule or under the same type graded wage schedule, or to a position with a higher rate of pay when both the old and the new positions are under the same type of ungraded wage schedule, or are in different pay method categories.

quality step increase (QSI). An increase in an employee’s rate of basic pay from one step or rate of the grade of his or her position to the next higher step of that grade or next higher rate within the grade (as defined in section 531.403 of title 5, CFR. Only an employee who receives a rating of record of “Outstanding” or equivalent is eligible.

rating of record. The performance rating level assigned at the end of an appraisal cycle for performance of agency-assigned duties over the entire cycle.

rating official. The person responsible for informing the employee of the duties of his or her position, establishing performance standards, providing feedback, appraising performance, and assigning the performance rating. Normally, this is the employee’s immediate supervisor.

reassignment. The change of an employee, while serving continuously within the same agency, from one position to another without promotion or demotion.

reduction in grade. The involuntary assignment of an employee to a position at a lower classification or job grading level. A reduction in grade is also referred to as a demotion.

removal. The involuntary separation of an employee from federal service.

SMART. An acronym for criteria that can be used in writing and evaluating performance standards: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.

supervisor (Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA)). Position meets the definition of Supervisor in 5 U.S.C. 7103(a) (10), but does not meet the minimum requirements for application of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide.

unacceptable performance. Performance that fails to meet the established performance standards in one or more elements of an employee's position. It is referred to as a Level 1 rating under the DoD Performance Management and Appraisal Program.

within-grade increase (WGI). A periodic increase in an employee's rate of basic pay from one-step of the grade of his or her position to the next higher step within that grade. The employee's rating of record must be at the "Fully Successful" level to be eligible for a WGI.