

Lesson 6: Evaluating Performance

PURPOSE

The purpose of Lesson 6 is to explain the Evaluating Phase; show how and why an employee should provide input to a final performance appraisal discussion; describe the benefits of continuous feedback throughout the entire performance appraisal cycle.; and show how shared understanding is the overall goal of performance discussions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

When participants have completed Lesson 6, they will be able to:

1. Recognize important facets of the Evaluating Phase.
2. Describe how employees' inputs benefit the final performance appraisal discussion.
3. Explain how to prepare for the performance discussion.

TOPICAL OUTLINE

- A. Important facets of the Evaluating Phase.
 - (1) Employee Ratings
 - (2) Assessing accomplishments against the performance plan
 - (3) Level of Success
- B. Employees' inputs
 - (1) Roles and Responsibilities
 - (2) Employee Input and Evaluation
- C. Preparing for the performance discussion
 - (1) Performance Discussions
 - (2) Performance Narratives
 - (3) Resolving Differences

TIME

The following is a suggested time plan for this lesson. The instructor(s) may adapt it as needed. Note this table does not reflect breaks – use your judgement to determine the timing of breaks for participants.

| SESSION | TIME |
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| LESSON 6 - EVALUATING PERFORMANCE | 45 MINUTES WITHOUT BREAK |

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| <p>Lesson 6: Evaluating Performance</p> <p>SAY</p> <p>Welcome back. This is the start of Lesson 6: Evaluating Performance.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 1</p> |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>These words represent the key messages that embody what is most important about New Beginnings—performance, mission, communication, excellence, etc.</p> <p>DO</p> <p>Display this New Beginnings slide at the beginning of each instructional day and during breaks.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 2</p> |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Before we begin, let’s review the learning objectives for this lesson.</p> <p>Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize important facets of the Evaluating Phase. Explain how to prepare for the performance discussion. Describe how employees’ inputs benefit the final performance appraisal discussion. <p>DO</p> <p>Leave this slide up while you discuss the topics that will be covered in this module. Paraphrase the learning outcomes; it is not</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 3</p> |

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| <p>necessary to read them verbatim.</p> <p>If the lesson is being presented as a stand-alone lesson, show all slides. If not, then consider hiding slides as appropriate.</p> <p>Additional Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L6 Employee Input Fact Sheet • L6 Employee Input Tip Sheet Do's and Don'ts • L6 Employee Input vs. Appraisal Fact Sheet • L6 Employee Input Worksheet • L6 Writing Employee Input • L6 Performance Appraisal Discussion Checklist <p>Resources listed above are located at: https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/Directorates/HROPS/Labor-and-Employee-Relations/Performance-Management/Pages/PM-Guides-TipSheets-Checklists.aspx</p> <p>Video: <i>Lesson 6- End of Year Meeting video</i></p> | |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>As you'll recall from our previous lessons, performance management is ongoing process and consists of several steps and phases.</p> <p>In this lesson, we're going to look at the Evaluating Phase.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 4</p> |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Performance management is a process of evaluating performance</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 5</p> |

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| <p>in a summary fashion.</p> <p>Evaluating performance entails assessing performance against the elements and standards in the employee’s approved performance plan and assigning a rating of record based on work performed during the performance appraisal cycle.</p> <p>DO</p> <p>Do not read this slide. Instead talk over it while the participants read it.</p> | |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>We will cover much of this in the next few slides, so just take a look for now.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 6</p> |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>At the end of the performance appraisal cycle, an employee’s performance is rated by their supervisor.</p> <p>Employees play an important role in the rating process as they document what they’ve accomplished and discuss those accomplishments during performance discussions.</p> <p>Employee performance is rated on what they’ve accomplished. This is done by evaluating each element in an employee’s performance plan. The employee then receives a rating of Outstanding, Fully Successful, or Unacceptable for each element.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 7</p> |

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| <p>SAY</p> <p>DODI 1400.25, Volume 431 provides some sample narratives based on rating being considered.</p> <p>DO</p> <p>Give participant time to review and generate group discussion.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 8</p> |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>As we mentioned previously, the goal of the Evaluating Phase is to have a final rating that comes as no surprise to either the employee or the supervisor.</p> <p><i>Employees should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide employee input: Employees’ input describes how their contributions enabled mission accomplishment. Another element of the employees’ input may be achievements or recognition during the appraisal cycle as well as completed training and developmental courses. It should serve as a reminder to supervisors of significant accomplishments of their employees and can provide an opportunity for further discussion between the employee and supervisor and about employee performance. • Address each performance element in the employee input. Employees should make factual, objective statements about how they accomplished each element. <p><i>Ask:</i> How do performance elements relate to performance</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 9</p> |

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| <p>standards?</p> <p><i>Answer:</i> Performance elements define what an employee <i>does</i>, performance standards tell an employee how their performance will be <i>measured</i>. Be sure wherever possible that your narrative about how the performance elements were met uses similar language to the standard. That will help your supervisor connect the performance dots.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restate the understanding of performance elements. It never hurts to identify a difference in understanding of the performance elements <i>before</i> the rating is finalized! • Highlight all of the most significant achievements during the performance appraisal cycle by including those related directly and indirectly to the performance elements. Employees should remember that this is not bragging; this is spelling out how they met or even exceeded their supervisor’s expectations. • Make the connection between what was accomplished, what the result was, and how it impacted the organization. Again, employees should make it easy for their supervisor to connect the performance dots. • Note the challenges they faced, how they resolved them, and how they might approach similar issues in the future. <p><i>Supervisors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request and consider employee input that is submitted. The supervisor provides a written narrative that accurately details the employee’s significant performance achievements or results and observable behaviors relative to the performance elements and standards for the performance appraisal cycle. This summary gives the supervisor an opportunity to fully state the employee’s achievements and abilities or to address specific performance deficiencies. | |

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| <p>Collecting and considering the employee’s input contributes to the level of engagement from that employee, and serves as a useful data point for comparing the supervisor’s impression of the employee’s and his or her own performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider obstacles encountered and overcome by the employee. Sometimes, employees are unable to successfully complete a performance element through no fault of their own. Consideration of these performance obstacles can be included in the narrative statement, which is used to justify how the employee’s ratings are achieved. • Prepare a written narrative and a rating on each performance element on which the employee has had an opportunity to perform. Each performance element that is evaluated at the “Outstanding” or “Unacceptable” level must be accompanied by a narrative justification as to the employee’s accomplishment or lack of accomplishment. While a narrative statement is not required for elements rated at the “Fully Successful” level, supervisors are highly encouraged to use the narrative statement as another means of providing feedback and a written record of the employee’s accomplishments as well as developing and motivating employees. • Make meaningful distinctions among employees based on performance, foster and reward excellent performance, and address performance issues. When feedback has been provided on an ongoing basis, the final performance appraisal discussion session should be a culmination of discussions which have occurred throughout the performance appraisal cycle. As we’ve said before, there should be no surprises at the end of the performance appraisal cycle. • Once the ratings have been approved and finalized, clearly communicate to the employee each performance element rating that has been assigned, including elements not rated, | |

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| <p>the reasons behind each performance rating, and the overall rating of record. The supervisor should schedule a meeting and inform the employee of the meeting’s purpose, time, and location. There should be sufficient, uninterrupted time for each employee.</p> <p><i>Ask:</i> Are there any questions about these responsibilities?</p> | |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Employee input captures the employees’ perspective of his/her performance against the standards and they are encouraged to provide input as part of every performance discussion.</p> <p>Supervisors also complete and communicate evaluations as part of every performance discussion, including the progress review and final performance appraisal discussion. The supervisor’s evaluation should be more than simply a concurrence of what the employee submitted via the employee input.</p> <p>Although the approach to writing employee input is similar, it is important to understand the differences between the two documents. The table on the slide highlights the differences.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 10</p> |

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| <p>SAY</p> <p>How can employees and supervisors prepare for employee performance discussions?</p> <p>Conducting successful performance discussions requires preparation. Supervisors may use the following steps to prepare for performance discussions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather the material 2. Review and write 3. Schedule the meeting <p>We'll learn more about each of these steps in the following slides.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 11</p> |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Have all of the necessary tools close at hand before starting to write the performance discussion narrative, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the employee's performance plan; • Notes of previous meetings with the employee and discussions, including performance discussions • Employee input documents, which could include a list of completed projects and accomplishments prepared by the employee • Written or recorded feedback on employee performance from other sources (letters of appreciation, customer feedback, etc.) • DPMAP policy and handbook instructions that describe the performance discussion process and procedures | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 12</p> |

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| <p>SAY</p> <p>The second step is to review and write.</p> <p>Supervisors should take the time to review the employee's elements and standards, knowing which and how to measure employee performance based on the standard. Before completion, supervisors should review all the documentation. When writing the narrative, supervisors should consider these points:</p> <p><i>Responsibilities and duties:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure evaluation is not based on additional responsibilities that were NOT included in the original performance plan <p><i>Performance:</i></p> <p>Include performance data for the entire performance appraisal cycle, not just the most recent information. The narrative must address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well the employee performed the assigned responsibilities and the quality and/or timeliness of the employee's accomplishments • Whether and how well the employee met performance goals • Areas of performance that improved over the performance period • Areas of performance that might need improvement | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 13</p> |

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| <p><i>Developmental needs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the employee accomplish the identified developmental activities? If not, why not? • Were there external reasons why the developmental needs were not addressed? • Did the supervisor support the employee in carving out the time required to accomplish the activities? Any developmental activities not completed should be reevaluated when the next performance plan is written. • | |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Once the supervisor has gathered the materials and thought about the performance and accomplishments the employee, it's time to write the performance appraisal.</p> <p>It is important to write the performance narrative first, then assign a rating to each element. Supervisors should not pick the rating and then write to that rating! Once they've written the rating, they should become familiar with the performance appraisal form (DD 2906).</p> <p>Once they've written the rating, they should become familiar with the performance appraisal form (DD 2906). The employee's ratings are based on the performance narrative. Supervisors should review how to derive the summary rating (e.g., numerical formula, percentages). The narrative justifies an employee's ratings and provides support for recognition and rewards (or any administrative or adverse action, if necessary). Supervisors are responsible for writing a performance narrative that talks to each performance element assigned in the performance plan on which the employee is rated as "Outstanding" or "Unacceptable." Supervisors are</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 14</p> |

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| <p>strongly encouraged to write a narrative for elements rated "Fully Successful" as well.</p> <p>The performance appraisal itself, along with these written narratives, must be documented in the MyPerformance tool.</p> <p>Instructor Notes: The <i>Descriptions of Performance Ratings Tip Sheet</i> handout contains examples of performance narrative descriptions of each appraisal rating level.</p> | |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Lastly, supervisors schedule a time to meet.</p> <p>The final preparation step is to set aside a time and a place to meet with the employee. When scheduling the performance discussion meeting, supervisors set the date, time, and location of the meeting with the employee. The meeting should be held in an appropriate location that affords privacy and uninterrupted time so that the supervisor and the employee can concentrate on the review.</p> <p>When the supervisor takes time to prepare, conducting the performance discussion may be less complicated, less stressful, and more successful in providing the employee valuable feedback on performance.</p> <p>Note that per DODI 1400.25, volume 431, a rating record of "Unacceptable" must be reviewed and approved by a higher level reviewer. Supervisors should be sure to familiarize themselves with and follow local policy before they communicate the rating to an employee. Supervisors should contact their Employee Relations Specialist in Human Resources prior to rating an employee as "Unacceptable."</p> <p>Instructor Note: Approval of ratings of record is a significant area in which Components can develop additional approval levels.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 15</p> |

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| <p>Supervisors should make sure they know the specifics of their Component-specific guidance.</p> | |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Let’s now watch a video that depicts a good performance discussion near the end of the performance appraisal cycle but not the actual final performance appraisal discussion.</p> <p>DO</p> <p>Lead an Exercise:</p> <p>Objective: Observe a good meeting near the end of the performance appraisal cycle</p> <p>Instructor Notes: Before playing the video, make class aware of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The video is a good example of an employee/supervisor meeting however is a bit dated and some of the terms/verbiage in the video may not correspond to terms/verbiage in the DPMAP training and clarification will be needed (e.g., objectives vs. standards) 2) The meeting actually reflects a meeting NEAR the end of the performance appraisal cycle 3) Supervisor indicates a process of submitting her recommendations to the Director for review, then will write final assessment of employee performance. This is not a recognized process. <p>Instructions: Play the video for the class. Have the participants pay attention to the aspects of the meeting that they found positive or useful, or that stood out.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 16</p> |

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| <p>Instructor Notes:</p> <p>Make class aware that some of the verbiage in the video may not correspond to verbiage in the training and you will need to clarify upon conclusion of the video</p> <p>Required Materials: <i>End-of-Year Meeting video (2:22); L6 End-of-Year Meeting Video Script.docx</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the participants pay attention to the aspects of the meeting that they found positive and useful. • Summarize the points that the participants made and what they saw in the video. • Emphasize the aspects of the video that displayed the characteristics that made the meeting good. | |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Now that you've seen an example of a good performance discussion, let's discuss. The video shows how it's supposed to work, but we know this doesn't always happen.</p> <p>DO</p> <p>Lead Exercise Debrief:</p> <p>Discussion Questions:</p> <p><i>Ask:</i> What did you observe about the supervisor's actions and behaviors?</p> <p><i>Answers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She has the 3 performance elements on display in her office • Prior to the meeting, she reviewed the employee's input and | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 17</p> |

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| <p>compared it to her notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She listens and asks appropriate, related questions • She pays attention to the employee throughout his work (“I thought you two were on to something when I saw you together last week.”) <p><i>Ask:</i> What did you observe the employee doing in this meeting?</p> <p><i>Answers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to the meeting, he wrote his employee input and provided it to his supervisor in an organized manner • He provides documentation for all the claims made in his employee input • He offers additional examples of his claims in the meeting • He asks questions about next steps and what this meeting means <p><i>Ask:</i> Where were the Trust Behaviors?</p> <p>Trust Behaviors were covered in Lesson 3: Continuous Feedback</p> <p><i>Answers</i> (note this is not an exhaustive list):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supervisor encouraged employee engagement with co-workers through teaming • The employee provided a summary of accomplishments and results • The supervisor explained all aspects of the performance appraisal process • The employee tried his best to meet expectations <p>Instructor Notes: Summarize the points that the participants</p> | |

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| <p>made and what they saw in the video. Emphasize the aspects of the video that displayed the characteristics that made the meeting a productive discussion.</p> <p>Discussion Questions:</p> <p><i>Ask:</i> What happens if the discussion doesn't go as smoothly as this example? For instance, it's very common that, when a supervisor provides constructive feedback to an employee that is negative in nature, the employee usually reacts with either making a personal attack against the supervisor or against his or her supervisory skills.</p> <p>Guide the discussion to the point that a seasoned supervisor will remain focused while a new supervisor will get distracted and attack back.</p> <p>Another example is when a supervisor is rating someone but does not show evidence/examples to support it.</p> <p>Supervisor: "You received this rating because you are always late."</p> <p>Employee: "What are you talking about? When am I late?"</p> <p>Supervisor: "Well, I don't know, but you are always late."</p> <p><i>Ask:</i> How does this approach make it harder for the employee to stay engaged?</p> <p>Main teaching point: Full transparency leads to greater employee engagement and builds organizational and employee/supervisor trust.</p> <p>SAY</p> <p>To recap, DPMAP requires three formal, documented performance discussions and as you recall from previous lessons, they are:</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 18</p> |

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| <p>1) Initial Performance Planning Meeting</p> <p>2) Progress Review</p> <p>3) Final Performance Appraisal Discussion.</p> <p>In addition to those three, more frequent and meaningful periodic discussions between supervisors and employees are HIGHLY encouraged.</p> <p>These kinds of frequent performance discussions help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand expectations toward goals • Facilitate supervisor-employee engagement • Increase the amount of feedback • Contribute to a more complete and accurately documented performance appraisal • Encourage supervisors to recognize and reward deserving employees in a timely manner <p>All performance discussions should be given sufficient, uninterrupted time, in a suitable private location, and results documented</p> | |

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| <p>SAY</p> <p>So, what happens if an employee doesn't agree with his or her rating of record?</p> <p>An employee may not necessarily agree with the rating of record. Additionally, an employee's acknowledgment or signature on the performance appraisal does not indicate agreement with the rating of record, and the rating of record is official even if the employee does not acknowledge it or sign it. If the employee does not sign the performance appraisal, the supervisor notes that "Employee refused to sign" in the system and submits the performance appraisal as if it were signed. The MyPerformance tool has the capability to document the employee's refusal to sign the form.</p> <p>When possible, the employee and supervisor should attempt to informally resolve any disagreements about the rating of record. If they cannot non bargaining unit employees may raise issues related to the performance appraisal process through the administrative grievance procedure. Bargaining unit employee must use the negotiated grievance procedure unless performance appraisals are excluded from the negotiated grievance procedure. Employees may also have the right to appeal performance based actions under Title 5, code of Federal Regulation (CFR) §432 and §752 to the Merit Systems Protection Board. Bargaining unit employees may use either the statutory appeal procedures or the negotiated grievance procedure, but not both.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 19</p> |

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| <p>SAY</p> <p>Let's review the learning objectives for this lesson.</p> <p>DO</p> <p>Summarize the learning objectives.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 20</p> |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Before we break, are there any questions?</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 21</p> |
| <p>SAY</p> <p>Here are some additional resources and learning tools.</p> <p>DO</p> <p>Collect any Parking Lot questions. You are now ready for Lesson 7.</p> | <p>SHOW SLIDE: 22</p> |