

# Performance Management Implementation Project

## Abstract:

This guide presents an eight-step process for developing employee performance plans that are aligned with and support company goals. It provides guidelines for writing performance elements and standards that meet regulatory requirements but also maximize the capability that performance plans have for focusing employee efforts on achieving organizational and group goals. The methods presented here are designed to develop elements and standards that measure employees and work unit accomplishments rather than develop other measures that are often used in appraising performance, such as behaviors or competencies. The main focus is to measure accomplishments.

## Overview Key Points

- ◆ **Planning** work and setting expectations
- ◆ Continually **monitoring** performance
- ◆ **Developing** the capacity to perform
- ◆ Periodically **rating** performance in a summary fashion and
- ◆ **Rewarding** good performance

## Planning

In an effective organization, work is planned out in advance. Setting performance expectations and goals for groups and individuals in order to channel their efforts toward achieving organizational objectives is critical. Getting employees involved in the planning process will help them understand the goals of the organization, what needs to be done, why it needs to be done and how well it should be done.

## Monitoring

In an effective organization, assignments and projects are monitored continually. Monitoring well means consistently measuring performance and providing ongoing feedback to employees and work groups on their progress toward reaching their goals.

## Developing

In an effective organization, employee developmental needs are evaluated and addressed. Developing means increasing the capacity to perform through training, giving assignments that introduce new skills or higher levels of responsibility, improving work processes or other methods. Providing training and developmental opportunities encourages performance, strengthens job-related skills and competencies and helps employees keep abreast of the

continuing change of technology. It also is an excellent opportunity for supervisors to identify developmental needs.

### Rating

From time to time, organizations find it useful to summarize employee performance. This helps with comparing performance over time across a set of employees. This is directly related to productivity and of course the bottom line of revenue production. Within this context of formal performance appraisals, rating means evaluating employee and group performance against elements and standards and employee's performance plan.

### Rewards

Also in an effective organization, rewards are used well. Rewarding means recognizing employees both individually and as contributing members of groups in line with the overall mission of the company. Recognition should be an on-going natural day to day experience in the form of informal rewards such as saying "Thank you", as well as the use of formal rewards in the form of within grade pay increases, addition retention service credits and bonuses.

All five of these components working in concert and supporting each other achieve a natural, effective performance management structure.

## Elements of Assessment

Performance elements allow employees what they have to do and the standards to tell them how well they have to do it. Elements should be understandable, measurable, attainable, fair and challenging to the individual and to the group. These are identified as critical, non-critical elements and additional performance elements.

### Critical Elements

A critical element is an assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable performance in that element would result in a determination that the overall performance of that employee is unacceptable. Between three and seven critical elements are appropriate for most work situations.

Critical elements are the cornerstone of individual accountability in employee performance management. Unacceptable performance is a failure on one or more critical elements, which can result in the employee's reassignment, removal or reduction in grade. Critical element must describe work assignments and responsibilities that are within the employee's control. For most employees this means that critical elements cannot describe a group's performance. However, a supervisor or manager can and should be held accountable for seeing that results measured at the group or team level are achieved. Critical elements assessing group performance may be appropriate to include in the performance plan of a supervisor, manager, or team leader who can reasonably be expected to command the production and resources necessary to achieve the results (i.e., be held individually accountable).

### Non-critical

A non-critical element is a dimension or aspect of individual, team or organizational performance, exclusive of a critical element, that is used in assigning a summary level. Important aspects of non-critical elements include:

- ◆ No Performance-based Actions. Failure on a non-critical element cannot be used as the basis for a performance-based adverse action, such as a demotion or removal. Only critical elements may be used that way.
- ◆ Group Performance. Non-critical elements are the only way a company can include the groups or the team's performance as an element in the performance plan so that it counts in the summary level. In a team-structured organization, the use of a non-critical element to plan, track, and appraise the team in achieving its goals. Each team member's performance plan would include the "team" element (i.e. a non-critical element) and the

rating for the team on that element would be counted in the summary level of each team member.

**Additional Performance Elements**

And additional performance element is a dimension or aspect of individual, team or organizational performance that is not a critical element and is not used in assigning a summary rating level

**New Work Assignments.** Managers and employees may want to establish goals track and measure performance, and develop skills for an aspect of work that they do not believe should count in the summary level. For example, if an employee volunteered to work on a new project that requires new skills, an additional performance element describing the new assignment provides a non-threatening vehicle for planning, measuring and giving feedback on the employee’s performance without counting it in the summary level.

**Group Performance.** In a two-level appraisal program additional performance elements are the only way to include a discussion of group performance in appraisal process. Even though the element assessment does not count when determining the summary level, managers and employee could use it to manage the group’s performance.

**Awards.** Additional performance elements can be used to establish criteria for determining awards eligibility, especially in a two-level program that no longer bases awards solely on a summary level.

	<i>Required in Employee Performance Plans</i>	<i>Credited in the Summary Level</i>	<i>Can Describe a Group’s Performance</i>
<b>Critical Elements</b>	Yes	Yes	No*
<b>Non-critical Elements</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Additional Performance Elements</b>	No	No	Yes

\*Except when written for a supervisor or manager who has individual management control over a group’s production and resources.

## The Beekeeper Fable:

Once upon a time, there were two beekeepers that each had a beehive. The beekeepers worked for a company called **Bees Inc. Org.** The company's customers love its honey and wanted the business to produce more honey than it had the previous year. As a result, each beekeeper was told to produce more honey at the same quality. With different ideas about how to do this, the beekeepers designed different approaches to improve the performance of their hives.

The first beekeeper established a bee performance management approach that measured how many flowers each bee visited. At considerable cost to the beekeeper, an extensive measurement system was created to count the flowers each bee visited. The beekeeper provided feedback to each bee at midseason on his individual performance, but the bees were never told about the hive's goals to produce more honey so that the company could increase honey sales. The beekeeper created special awards for the bees that visited the most flowers.

The second beekeeper also established a bee performance management approach but this approach communicated to each bee the goal of the hive – to produce more honey. The beekeeper and his bees measured two aspects of their performance: the amount of nectar each bee brought back to the hive and the amounts of honey the hive produced. The performance of each bee and the hive's overall performance were charted and posted on the hive's bulletin board for all bees to see. The beekeeper created a few awards for the bees that gathered the most nectar, but he also established a hive incentive program that rewarded each bee in the hive based on the hive's production of honey – the more honey produced the more recognition each bee would receive.

At the end of the season, the beekeepers evaluated their approaches. The first beekeeper found that his hive had indeed increased the number of flowers visited, but the amount of honey produced by the hive dropped. The Queen bee reported that because the bees were so busy trying to visit as many flowers as possible, they limited the amount of nectar they would carry so they could fly faster, so she had them summarily executed. No. That's another story. Also, because the bees felt they were competing against each other for awards (since only the top performers were recognized) they would not share valuable information with each other (like the location of the flower-filled fields they had spotted on the way back to the hive) they could have helped improve the performance of all the bees. (After all was said and done, one of the high-performing bees told the beekeeper that if he'd been told that the real goal was to make more honey rather than to visit more flowers, he would have done his work completely differently. This bee quit and went to work for Microsoft but was later killed in a freak windshield accident.) As the beekeeper handed out the

awards to individual bees and announced that the next **Bee Inc. Org** sales conference was to be held at the Sheraton in Columbus Ohio, unhappy buzzing was heard in the background.

The second beekeeper, however, had very different results. Because each bee in his hive was focused on the hive's goal of producing more honey the bees had concentrated their efforts on gathering more nectar in order to produce more honey than ever before. The bees worked together to determine the highest nectar-yielding flowers and to create quicker processes for depositing the nectar they had gathered. The Queen Bee of this hive reported that the poor performers either improved their performance or were transferred to Sales. Because the hive had reached its goal, the beekeeper awarded each bee his or her portion of the hive incentive payment. And there was much rejoicing. The beekeeper was also surprised to hear a loud happy buzz through the smoke and dim lighting at the company Christmas party after his first set as well as a jubilant flapping of wings as he rewarded the individual high performing bees with the company's special recognition award; a bronze paper bag. Fin.

The moral of the story is:

Measuring and recognizing accomplishments rather than activities – and giving feedback to the worker bees – often improves the results of the hive.

Source:

[Hawthorne experiments](#)

The Hawthorne studies (1924-33), initially undertaken to investigate the relationship between workplace conditions and worker productivity at Western Electric's Hawthorne Works, near Chicago, introduced a wide range of topics to the field of management study. Investigators found no strong relationship between workplace conditions and productivity but reached several conclusions: individual work behaviour is driven by a complex set of factors; work groups develop norms which mediate between the needs of the individual and institution; employees should not be considered appendages of machinery; awareness of employee sentiments and participation can reduce resistance to change; the workplace is an interlocking social system, not simply a production system; social structure is maintained through symbols of prestige and power. These findings opened the door to the study of client-centred therapy, small group behaviour, organization theory and research methodology.

**Measuring and recognizing accomplishments rather than activities – and giving feedback to the workers often improves the results of the organization.**

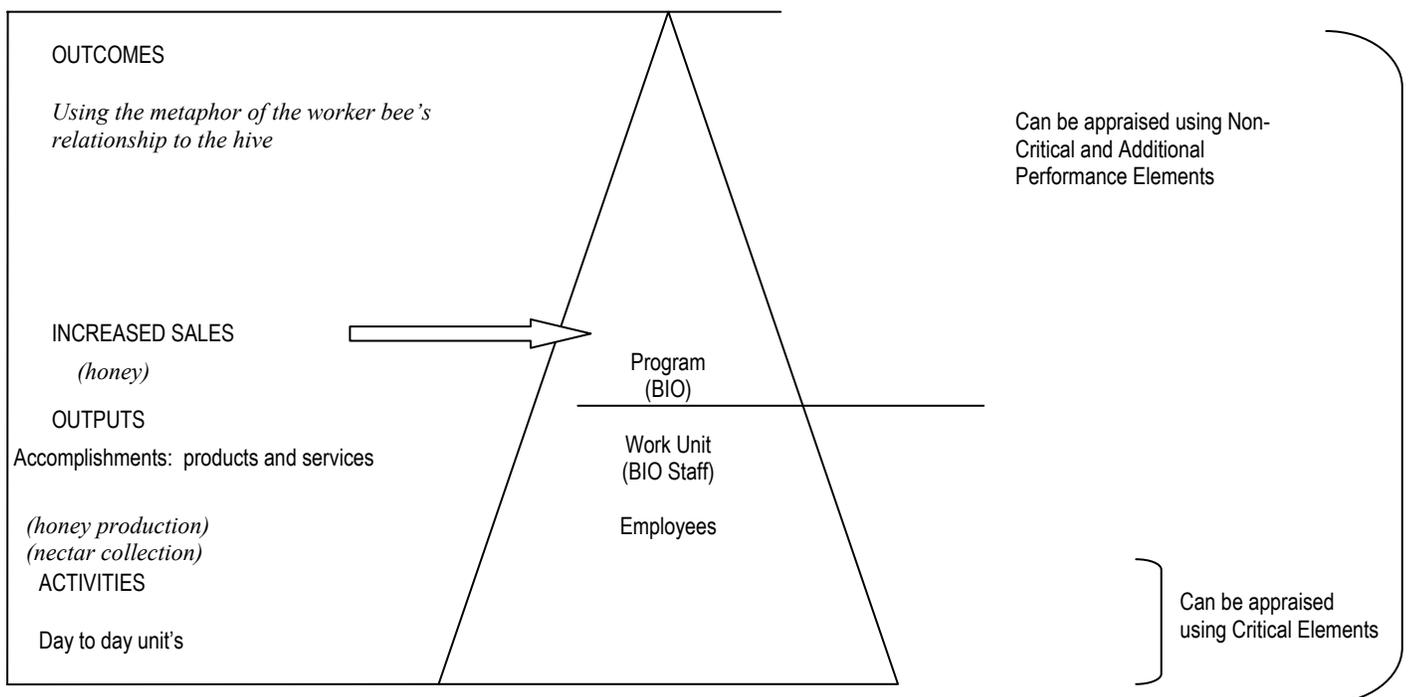
Although it may simplify performance management, the story of the beekeeper illustrates the importance of measuring and recognizing accomplishments (the amount of honey production per hive) rather than activities (visiting flowers). The chart below page depicts the type of measurement that should occur at each organizational level and uses the beehive metaphor

Activities are actions taken to produce results and are generally described using verbs. In the beekeeper fable, the activity being measured was visiting flowers. Other examples of activities include:

- ◆ *file* documents;
- ◆ *develop* software programs;
- ◆ *answer* customer questions; and
- ◆ *write* reports

Accomplishments (or outputs) are the products or services (the results) of employee and work unit activities and are generally described using nouns. The examples of outputs used in the fable include the amount of nectar each bee collected and the honey production from the hive. Other examples include:

- ◆ *files* that are orderly and complete;
- ◆ a *software* program that works;
- ◆ accurate *guidance* to customers; and
- ◆ a *report* that is complete and accurate.



Source: OPM: Measuring Employee Performance p.13 JCN 8/16/99

Outcomes are the final results of an agency's products and services (and other outside factors that may affect performance); The example of an outcome used in the beekeeper story was increased sales of honey for Bees, In. Other examples of outcomes could include:

- ◆ Reduce the number of transportation-related deaths;
- ◆ Improved fish hatcheries;
- ◆ a decrease in the rate of teenage alcoholism; and
- ◆ clean air.

If supervisors, team leaders, and employee want to develop performance plans that support the achievement of organizational outcomes, they might try the second beekeeper's approach of sharing organizational goals with the hive, measuring and rewarding accomplishments rather than activities, and providing feedback on performance.

#### Using a Balanced Scorecard Approach to Measure Performance

By balancing internal and process measures with results and financials Measures, manager will have a more complete picture and will know where to make improvements.

Robert S. Kaplan and David P. Norton of the United States Office of Personnel Management have developed a set of measures that they refer to as "a balanced scorecard" or a balanced set of measure s that provides valuable information on performance in several areas simultaneously

- ◆ The customer's perspective. Managers must know if their organization is satisfying customer needs. They must determine the answer to the question: How do customers see us?
- ◆ The internal business perspective. Managers need to focus on those critical internal operations that enable them to satisfy customer needs. They must answer the question: What must we excel at?
- ◆ The innovation and learning perspective. An organization's ability to innovate, improve, and learn ties directly to its value as an organization. Managers must answer the question: Can we continue to create and improve the value of our services?
- ◆ The financial perspective. In the private sector, these measures have typically focused on profit and market share. For the public sector, financial measures could include the results-oriented measures required by many

companies. Managers must answer the question: How do we look to the President, other stakeholders?

Tie-In to Employee Performance. The balanced scorecard philosophy need not apply only at the organizational level. A balanced approach to employee performance appraisal is an effective way of getting a complete look at an employee's work performance, not just a partial view. Too often, employee performance plan with their elements and standards measure behaviors, actions, or processes without also measuring the result of employee's work. By measuring only behavior or action in employee performance plans an organization might find that most of its employee are appraised as Outstanding when the organization as a whole has failed meet its objectives.

By using balanced measures at the organizational level, and by sharing the results with supervisors, teams, and employee, manager are providing the Information needed to align employee performance plans with organizational goals. By balancing the measures used in employee performance plans, the performance picture becomes complete.

### Categories of Work

Categories are classifications of work types often used to organize performance elements and standards. If, for example, the first beekeeper in our fable had used categories of work for his elements, he might have used the broad category of "making honey" as the element and then included a grouping that described all the activities the bees did to make the honey, such as gather nectar, report to the drones, etc. Other examples of categories of work and the types of activities that are often described under these categories include:

Customer service (greet customers with a smile, answers the phone promptly);  
Teamwork (cooperates with other, shares information); and  
Office duties (files papers, types reports).

The chart on this page gives an example of categorizing work-related activities.

	<i>Accomplishment</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Category</i>
<i>Trains employee</i>		*	
<i>Supervision</i>			*
<i>A completed case</i>	*		
<i>Public Relations</i>			*
<i>Recommendations</i>	*		
<i>Customer Service</i>			*
<i>HR policy interpretations</i>	*		
<i>Writes agency policy</i>		*	
<i>Solutions to problems</i>	*		
<i>Develops software programs</i>		*	
<i>Ideas and innovations</i>	*		
<i>Files paperwork</i>		*	
<i>Writes memos</i>		*	
<i>Computer systems that work</i>	*		
<i>Teamwork</i>			*
<i>A complete project</i>	*		
<i>Satisfied customers</i>	*		
<i>Answers the phone</i>		*	
<i>Assists team members</i>		*	

Source: OPM: Measuring Employee Performance p.18 JCN 9/17/99

### Building Performance Plans

Traditionally, performance plans have been developed by copying the activities described in an employee's job description onto the appraisal form. This guide asks you that you not begin with the position description. Even though a performance plan must reflect the type of work described in the employee's position description, the performance plan does not have to mirror it.

Most, if not all job descriptions begin with a verb. They describe activities and not accomplishments. (See example below. Notice how the duties and responsibilities in the description all begin with a verb. They describe **activities**.)

Traditional job description

**Position Description #KB7JCN  
Benefits Specialist**

**Introduction**

The incumbent of this position serves as a Senior Retirement Benefits Specialist in the Office of Human Resources. This is a highly-responsible position in an office accountable for the adjudication of claims for retirement and insurance benefits arising under the retirement system established by our company.

The work requires the skills of an experienced, fully-trained Retirement Benefits Specialist who is responsible for the adjudication of a broad range of assigned claims, project work which he or she may lead, monitoring workloads and assignments to solve retirement system-related problems.

***Major Duties and Responsibilities***

- ◆ Adjudicate cases of unusual technical difficulty
- ◆ Review and approve recommendations and decisions made by other Specialists, and provide advice and assistance.
- ◆ Respond to inquiries from various customer sources and provide clear, responsive explanations of actions taken and the bases for them
- ◆ Provide assistance in developing formal lesson plans. Ensures adequate training is offered.
- ◆ Serve as task force leader or project coordinator for team-related initiatives in processing retirement claims, post-retirement actions, and for special activity in response to legislation, etc.

This simplified and edited position description describes only a few of the major duties of a Benefits Specialist position in Human Resources.

***Approving Authority Signature:***

***Date:***

Source: OPM Website

Therefore a performance plan based on a position description might look like this:

<b>Employee Performance Plan</b>			
<i>Name</i>		<i>Effective Date</i>	
<b>Job Title, Series and Grade</b> <b>Human Resources Benefit Specialist</b>		<b>Name of Organization</b> <b>Human Resources</b>	
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Standards</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Technical and Policy Expert	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Fully Successful</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>U</b></li> <li>◆ <b>MS</b></li> <li>◆ <b>FS</b></li> <li>◆ <b>EFS</b></li> <li>◆ <b>O</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Adjudicates cases of unusual technical difficulty</li> <li>◆ Review and approves recommendations made by other Specialists. Provides advice.</li> <li>◆ Responds to customer inquires</li> </ul>		Cases are usually completed correctly and in a timely fashion. Customer inquiries are routinely addressed timely.	
<u>Training</u>	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Fully Successful</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>U</b></li> <li>◆ <b>MS</b></li> <li>◆ <b>FS</b></li> <li>◆ <b>EFS</b></li> <li>◆ <b>O</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Ensures adequate training is offered</li> <li>◆ Develops formal lesson plans</li> </ul>		Arranges for or presents high-quality training as needed. Training is specific to employee needs	
<u>Department ombudsperson</u>	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Fully Successful</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>U</b></li> <li>◆ <b>MS</b></li> <li>◆ <b>FS</b></li> <li>◆ <b>EFS</b></li> <li>◆ <b>O</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Serves as task force leader or project coordinator.</li> </ul>		As need, regularly leads work teams to the accomplishment of their assignments	
Comments:		This is a fictional employee performance plan. Notice the similarity to the position description on the previous page. Also notice how the elements describe work activities not work accomplishments.	
Appraising Official Signature		Employee Signature	

Source: OPM Website

Step 1:  
Looking at the big picture

Instead of beginning at the bottom of the organization with the position description begin the process by looking at the company's goals and objectives and begin to gather the following information

What are the organization's or department's general outcome goals as outlined in its strategic plan?

What are the specific performance goals established for your department as outlined in the organizations annual performance plan?

What are the organization's customer service standards?

What performance measures are already in place?

Step 2:  
Determine the accomplishments at the work unit or departmental level.

The next step in this eight-step method is to determine the accomplishments (i.e., the products or services) of the work unit.

A work unit or department is a small group of employees that in a traditional work structure, is supervised by the same first-line supervisor. A work unit can also be a team – permanent or temporary – where the team members work interdependently towards a common goal.

Because not all types of work situations and structures are the same, this guide offers three different ways to determine what to measure at the work unit level:

- ◆ a goal cascading method
- ◆ a customer-focused method and;
- ◆ a work flow charting method.

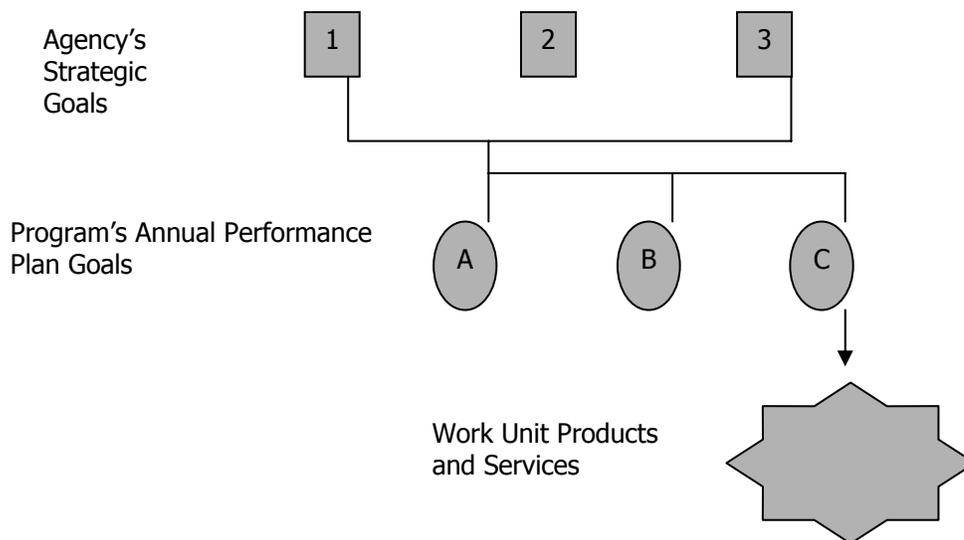
You can use one or all three methods, depending on what fits your situation. Whichever you use, remember to describe accomplishments (using nouns rather than activities (using verbs)).

## Cascading the organization's goals down to the work unit level.

The goal cascading method works best for companies with clear organizational goals and objectives, such as those established in the strategic plans and annual performance plans. This method requires answers to the following questions.

- ◆ What are the company's specific goals and objectives?
- ◆ Which company goal can the work unit affect?
- ◆ What product or service does the work unit produce or provide to help the agency reach its goals?

### **Method 1. Cascading Agency Goals to Work Units**



### **Method 2. Determine the products and services the work unit provides for its customers.**

The customer-focused method works well when there are no clear company goals and when the work unit knows whom its customers are and what they expect. Oftentimes, this method is easier to apply to administrative work units that provide support functions, such as human resources unit, an acquisitions unit, or a facilities maintenance unit. This method focuses on achieving customer satisfaction and requires answers to each of the following questions:

- ◆ Who are the customers of the work unit?
- ◆ What products or services do the customers expect?  
(remember to describe accomplishments and not activities.)

**Method 3. Develop a work flow chart for the work unit, establishing key steps in the work process.**

The workflow charting method works well for work units that are responsible for a complete work process, such as the processing of a case, the writing of a report, or the production of a customer information package. A work flow chart with pictures of the major steps in the process or project begins with the first step in the process and ends with the final product or service.

Example:

The key steps in building a house

1. Foundation
2. Walls
3. Chimney
4. Roof
5. Doors and windows

How does the work unit produce its products and services?  
Which are the most important steps in the process?

Step 3.

Determine individual accomplishments that support work unit goals.

Elements that address individual accomplishments can be identified using a role-results matrix or table that identifies the results of what each work unit member must produce to support the unit's accomplishments

<b><i>Unit Employees</i></b>	<b><i>Unit Product or Service</i></b>			
<b><i>Employee 1</i></b>	Accomplishment	Accomplishment	Accomplishment	Accomplishment
<b><i>Employee 2</i></b>	Accomplishment	Accomplishment	Accomplishment	*N/A
<b><i>Employee 3</i></b>	Accomplishment	*N/A	Accomplishment	Accomplishment
<b><i>Employee 4</i></b>	*N/A	Accomplishment	Accomplishment	Accomplishment

\* The employee had no part in this work unit product or service.

The products and services listed for each unit member are possible performance elements that might be included in the employee’s performance plan. All performance elements should be either quantifiable or verifiable and should be described as accomplishments (nouns), not activities (verbs).

With the previous example of the Benefits Specialist, a Role-Results Matrix would look like this:

Roles-Results Matrix for Human Resources

<b><i>Employees</i></b>	<b><i>Work Unit Products and Services</i></b>		
<b><i>Branch Chief</i></b>	<b>Accurately Settled Claims</b>	<b>Competent Division Employees</b>	<b>Accurate and Professional Correspondence</b>
<b><i>Team Leader</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An efficient adjudication process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR training needs assessment</li> <li>HR training plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A correspondence review and complaint resolution process</li> </ul>
<b><i>Benefits Specialist</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance and technical assistance to lower-graded specialists.</li> <li>Recommendations for improvements to work process and ADP systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations for training needs assessment.</li> <li>Lesson plans that meet training needs</li> <li>Workbooks and course handouts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses containing requested information or solutions to customers complaints</li> </ul>
<b><i>Clerk Typist</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decisions that are formatted and typed.</li> <li>Case files that are organized effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workbooks and handouts that are formatted, typed and Xeroxed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correspondence that is formatted mailed and filed</li> </ul>

#### Step 4

Convert expected accomplishments into performance elements, indicating type and priority.

In this step, we will:

- ◆ Identify which accomplishments should be included as elements in the performance plan;
- ◆ select which type of element to use; and
- ◆ assign weights and priorities.

All employees must have at least one critical element in their performance plan. Critical elements address individual performance only, except in the case of a supervisor who may be responsible for a work unit's products or services.

Once elements have been classified as either critical, non-critical or additional, prioritize them so that work units and employees know which elements are most important. One way to do this is to distribute 100 percentage points across the elements based upon each one's importance to the organization. Remember that critical elements are work assignments or responsibilities of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in a determination that an employee's overall performance is unacceptable. To help decide whether an element should be classified as critical or not, we must answer the following questions.

- ◆ Is the element a major component of the work? If the answer is "yes", the element might be critical.
- ◆ Does the element address individual performance only?
- ◆ If the employee performed unacceptably on the element, would there be serious consequences to completing the work of the organization?
- ◆ Does the element require a significant amount of the employee's time? If the answer is "yes", the element might be critical.

#### Step 5

Determine work unit and individual measures

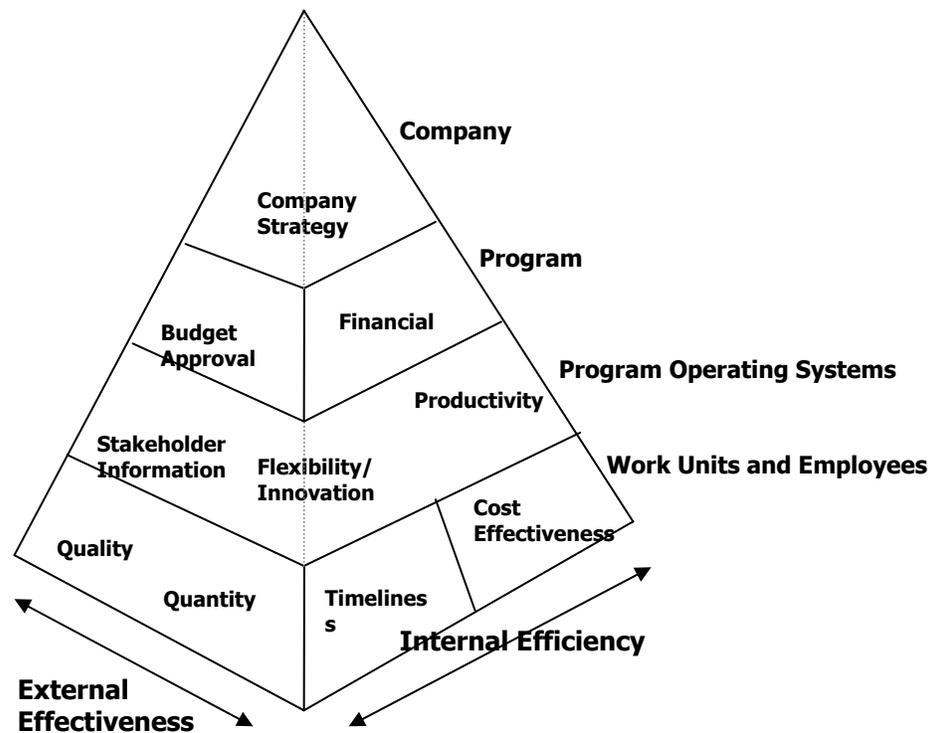
In this step we will determine how to measure performance of those elements.

In order to determine how well work units and employees produce or provide products and services we must develop specific measures of performance for each element in the performance plan. Once the general and specific measures have been established, we will be able to develop the standards for elements in step 6.

The performance pyramid below shows the types of general measures that are used at different levels in an organization. The four general measures used for work units and employee performance are:

1. Quality
2. Quantity
3. Timeliness
4. Cost Effectiveness

### Performance Pyramid for Identifying Performance Measures



**Quality** addresses how well the employee or work unit has performed.  
**Quantity** addresses how much work the employee or work unit has produced.  
**Timeliness** addresses how quickly the work was produced  
**Cost Effectiveness** addresses dollar savings to the company.

Source: adapted from Richard Lynch and Kelvin Cross, Measure Up! Yardsticks for Continuous Improvement, 1991 REV JCN 9.20.99

The kinds of questions we should ask in this process include the following:

For each element, decide which general measures apply:

- ◆ Is quality important? Does the stakeholder or customer care how well the work is done?
- ◆ Is quantity important? Does the stakeholder or customer care how many are produced?
- ◆ Is it important to accomplish the element by a certain time or date?
  
- ◆ Is it important to accomplish the element within certain cost limits? What measures are already available?

For each general measure determine:

- ◆ How could quality, quantity, timeliness and/or cost effectiveness be measured?
- ◆ Is there some number or percent that could be tracked?

If the element does not lend itself to being measured with numbers and can only be described:

- ◆ Who could judge that element was done well? What factors would they look for?

The chart on the next pages scopes out general and specific measures.

## Human Resources Benefits Specialist

<b>Priority Points</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>General Measure</b>	<b>Specific Measure</b>
<b>40</b>	Guidance and technical assistance to lower-graded Specialists	CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Quality</li> <li>◆ Timeliness</li> </ul>	The accuracy of the information as determined by the supervisor. The perceptions of lower-graded Specialists that the incumbent is willing to assist and that feedback is helpful. The number of hours it takes for the incumbent to respond to lower-graded Specialists' requests for assistance
<b>0</b>	Recommended for improvements to work process and ADP systems	AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Quality</li> <li>◆ Cost</li> <li>◆ Effectiveness</li> </ul>	The supervisor's and reviewer's judgement that the recommendation(s)
<b>10</b>	Cases of unusual technical difficulty that are completed	CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Quantity</li> <li>◆ Quality</li> <li>◆ Timeliness</li> </ul>	Ratio of errors to correct cases, as judged by supervisor and reviewers. The number of days it takes to complete an unusual case.
<b>25</b>	Responses containing requested information or solutions to customer complaints.	CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Timeliness</li> <li>◆ Quality</li> <li>◆ Quantity</li> </ul>	The number of days it takes to respond to regular and priority correspondence. Supervisor's and customers perception of the quality of the response. % of correspondence answered within a certain number of days.
<b>25</b>	Support Branch element Competent Division Employees	NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Quality</li> <li>◆ Quantity</li> <li>◆ Cost</li> <li>◆ Effectiveness</li> <li>◆ Timeliness</li> </ul>	Ratio of errors/correct cases for Division. % of training needs filled. Total cost of training given. # of days to fill a training need once determined.

Source: Performance Mgmt. Practitioner's Series  
OPM Website REV JCN 9.21.99

## Step 6

### Develop work unit and individual standards

The next step is to establish standards for the elements. This section will discuss how to address standards and what to avoid when writing standards.

A Fully Successful or equivalent standard must be established for each critical element. If the measure for the element is numeric, determine the range of number that would represent Fully Successful performance. For critical elements appraised at two levels, the Fully Successful standard identifies the level of performance below which performance is Unacceptable. For critical elements appraised at more than two levels, establish a range of performance above which special recognition may be warranted and below which a performance problem exists.

If the measure for the element is descriptive, determine what the appraiser would see or report that would verify that performance is Fully Successful. For critical elements appraised at two levels, describe performance of that element below which is Unacceptable performance. For elements appraised at more than two levels, and for elements, for which stretch goals are desired, determine what exceeding expectations would look like. Describe what the appraiser would see happening when expectations are exceeded.

Since Burrelle's has yet to establish a standard, we'll proceed to step seven.

## Step 7

### Determine how to monitor performance.

As stated earlier, frequency of feedback provides the employee and work unit with encouragement. Adding informal progress reviews within the timeframe of a typical appraisal process is an essential component of a successful performance management program.

## Step 8

### Check the performance plan.

Once it has been established, checking the work is always a good idea. Some questions to ask during this part of the review process are:

1. Are the critical elements truly critical? Does failure on the critical element mean that the employee's overall performance is unacceptable?

2. Is the range of acceptable performance clear? Are the performance expectations observable and/or verifiable?
3. Are the standards attainable? Is this a reasonable expectation?
4. Are the standards challenging? Does the work unit or employee need to exert a reasonable amount of effort to reach a fully successful performance level?
5. Are the critical elements truly critical? Does failure on the critical element mean that the employee's overall performance is unacceptable?
6. Is the range of acceptable performance clear? Are the performance expectations observable and/or verifiable?
7. Are the standards attainable? Is this a reasonable expectation?
8. Are the standards challenging? Does the work unit or employee need to exert a reasonable amount of effort to reach a fully successful performance level?
9. Are the standards fair? Are they comparable to expectations for other employee in similar positions? Do they allow for some margin of error?
10. Are the standards applicable? Can the appraiser(s) use the standards to appraise performance? Can the appraiser(s) manage the data collected through the measurement process?
11. Will work units and employee understand what is required?
12. Are the elements and standards flexible? Can they adapt readily to changes in resources or objectives?

## Summary

### **Step 1.**

Look at the overall picture

**Step 2.**

Determine the accomplishments at work unit level using any or all of the following methods:

**Step 3.**

Determine individual accomplishments that support work unit goals.

**Step 4.**

Convert expected accomplishments into performance elements, indicating type and priority.

**Step 5.**

Determine work unit and individual measures.

**Step 6.**

Develop work unit and individual standards.

**Step 7.**

Determine how to monitor performance.

**Step 8.**

Check performance plans often