

PERforM

Productivity, Excellence and Results for Missouri

What's It All About?

If you are an employee, you make decisions that affect your performance based upon what you do each day at work. However, managing how you do, what you do, is a primary responsibility of your supervisor—and when it comes right down to it—a responsibility every employee shares.

The process of establishing and communicating clear performance objectives and working together to achieve them translates into shared commitment, professional growth and organizational success for everyone. Managing your own performance at work has an impact that extends well beyond an annual performance rating. Time spent managing your performance is one of your most valuable investments.

That's why the appraisal process—and the State of Missouri's new PERforM system is so important—they both exist to provide a shared understanding of what constitutes successful performance while promoting accountability at all levels within the organization.

This brief guide explains what the PERforM system is about and provides some simple steps to help you manage your own performance—and your career in Missouri State Government.

PERforM is administered by:
Office of Administration
Division of Personnel

Things to Know:

- The PERforM System and How It Works
- How Performance Appraisals Benefit Employees, Supervisors and Managers
- Tips To Help You Manage Your Own Performance
- Preparing for Performance Discussions with Your Supervisor

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The PERforM System and How It Works

Productivity, Excellence and Results for Missouri (PERforM) is an automated performance appraisal system designed to make the process of conducting appraisals easier for supervisors and managers. PERforM is also the catalyst to ensure that annual appraisals for employees are conducted in a timely manner using a consistent rating scale and job components.

Many appraisal related tasks a supervisor (or rater) must complete can be accomplished through PERforM.

Planning

Among the most critical tasks the rater (or supervisor) must complete is the creation of specific performance objectives for each employee he or she supervises. Each objective will be associated with one of five statewide components all employees will be rated on. These components are:

- Knowledge of Work
- Quality of Work
- Situational Responsiveness
- Initiative
- Dependability

Supervisors and managers are rated on three more:

- Conducting appraisals
- Management
- Leadership

While the components are standard, the performance objectives are employee-specific. The objectives are written to performance standards expected of a SUCCESSFUL employee in the position.

Once the objectives are entered into PERforM, they are printed and provided to the employee.

The Appraisal Period

Throughout the year, the supervisor and employee will meet as needed to ensure the performance objectives are still valid and discuss any issues that may affect the employee's ability to successfully complete them.

The annual appraisal period for every employee will be the calendar year (January 1 – December 31), a change from the anniversary date approach many agencies have used in the past.

The Appraisal

The benefit of using an established appraisal year is that all appraisals are done within a common rating period of January 1 to March 31 (following the appraisal period) to allow for greater comparison among employee performance levels.

In limited circumstances, employees may be exempted from the annual appraisal. However, these exemptions must be approved and accounted for.

Ratings

Each employee's annual performance appraisal will consist of a score for each of their five components. Supervisors and managers will also be rated on their three additional components.

An employee can receive a score of 1 – 10 based on their performance during the rating period on the objectives listed for each component.

Once the rating of each component is complete, PERforM will calculate an overall score based upon four possible ratings:

Rating	Score
Exceptional	9.0 to 10.0
Outstanding	7.0 to 8.9
Successful	4.0 to 6.9
Needs Improvement	<=3.9

Once the rating is completed and comments are added to the employee's

appraisal by the rater, PERforM automatically routes the appraisal to the reviewer (typically the supervisor's supervisor) for approval.

The reviewer may either approve the appraisal or send it back to the rater with comments.

Once approved by the reviewer, the supervisor will print and sign the appraisal document, obtain the reviewer's signature; and then meet with the employee to discuss the appraisal. At the conclusion of the meeting, the employee will sign the appraisal and a copy will be placed in the employee's personnel file. Then the rater marks the appraisal as "Complete" in PERforM – and the appraisal is "finalized" in the system.

During the meeting, or soon after, the supervisor and employee will determine if any performance objectives need to be added or modified for the next appraisal period—and the cycle continues.

Reports

Throughout the year, agencies can generate reports of appraisals that are pending or complete through PERforM. It will be up to each agency to monitor progress to ensure that all required appraisals are accounted for. Reports can also be generated to determine the overall ratings by agency, division of service or other organization within the agency.

Conclusion

Although PERforM will make the mechanics of completing the appraisal easier, the real work is in developing effective performance objectives for employees upon which the appraisal is based; evaluating the employee's performance based on those objectives; and discussing the rating of each of the objectives, and the overall rating with the employee. To facilitate this process, continuous discussion between employees and supervisors throughout the year is important.

Performance Planning and Appraisal...

Helps Employees:

- Receive a clear indication of the most important aspects of their job.
- Understand the level of performance that is expected for success on the job.
- Have opportunity for input into decisions concerning their job.
- Determine and pursue training and development opportunities for performance enhancement.
- Receive feedback about their performance and time to discuss other aspects of the work with their supervisor.
- Realize performance improvement when their individual expectations are aligned with those of the work unit and the mission of the agency.

Helps Supervisors:

- Identify areas of strengths and weaknesses of employees for development.
- Communicate objectives and expectations for performance to the employee.
- Provide information to the employee on their performance.
- Develop employees, and helps supervisors develop in their role.
- Identify employees for project assignments or promotional opportunities.
- Realize performance improvement for their area of responsibility when employee expectations are aligned with unit objectives.
- Identify areas where further improvement is necessary.

Helps Managers:

- Identify employees for promotional opportunities.
- Identify training and development needs (individually, within the work unit and organizationally).
- By providing a basis for compensation decisions.
- Identify employees whose knowledge, skill and abilities might be better applied in other areas of the organization (are the right people in the right positions?).
- Assess hiring decisions and qualifications to perform the work relative to the components and competencies required of the position.
- Realize increases in productivity by their work units and by individual employees, while diagnosing where room for improvement remains.

How Well Do You PERforM

15 Tips for Managing Your Own Performance

1. Meet regularly, one-on-one with your supervisor.

Use these meetings to discuss performance, progress and new opportunities for growth. Making the most of these regular meetings will help keep you on the right track toward meeting both your objectives and those of your organization.

2. Set SMART objectives.

When you and your supervisor meet to set or discuss your performance objectives, make sure they are SMART—specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely. That means you and your supervisor agree on objectives that are challenging but attainable. In addition, make sure progress on meeting those objectives can be measured and any deadlines can be indicated.

3. Set interim deadlines to make performance objectives more manageable.

If you have a long-term project, break-up the project by assigning a number of short-term deadlines. For example, Part 1 of Project A will be accomplished by the end of the first quarter. Part 2 will be done by the end of the second quarter, and so on. This will help keep major objectives on track while providing another measurement tool.

4. Ask your supervisor what is expected of you to achieve success on the job.

As with any of your performance objectives, you should have a clear understanding of what successful performance looks like and how success will be evaluated.

5. Be prepared to update performance objectives during the course of the year.

As agency needs change, one of your performance objectives may become obsolete—or your responsibility may shift, requiring another look at your performance plan.

6. Ask your supervisor for a mid-year review.

This may already be part of your agency's policy. If not, this mid-year review of your progress can

reinforce good work and proper direction—and help to correct any performance issues before they become a serious problem.

7. Make sure you understand the link between the goals of your organization and your performance objectives.

Ask your supervisor to help you make the connection if it isn't already apparent. Remember, you don't work in a vacuum and the impact of your success is much greater than you may imagine.

8. Share your achievements, including those not tied to a performance objective, with your supervisor before your appraisal occurs.

Since the objectives listed on your planning document can't encompass everything you do in your job, it is important to note your other work and achievements throughout the year, especially if they had an impact on performance in other areas, or your ability to meet originally agreed upon objectives.

9. Teamwork pays.

You may share performance objectives with other members of your team. That doesn't mean you get a pass at review time if you haven't met your goals. It does mean that you have to work just as hard if not harder with your teammates so everyone succeeds.

10. Do your own review.

Once a quarter, think through how you would evaluate your own performance. "Course correct" or stretch as needed to meet your objectives.

11. Get clear information during performance discussions.

Whenever you sit down with your supervisor to discuss your performance, make sure you receive clear and accurate information regarding your current performance.

12. Leverage opportunities.

If you get the chance to work on special projects that allow you to gain new skills, network with others and use your current skill set to further your organization's goals, don't pass it up!

Continued...

13. Listen.

You may hear it a lot, but it's important to listen during performance discussions. Whether it's a formal review, or simply a quick coaching moment with your supervisor, listen carefully to input and try to use it to enhance your future performance.

14. If you have questions, ask.

Don't be afraid to ask your supervisor for coaching or help if you are unsure about an answer or situation. Two-way communication is key, and your supervisor's job in large part is to help you develop professionally.

15. Always remember—you are responsible for your own performance.

Your supervisor will work with you to establish performance objectives and provide feedback on your progress, but ultimately you alone determine how much effort you choose to put into the work you do.

Get Ready for Your Performance Discussions

It's that time of year when you and your supervisor look at what you've accomplished and what you plan to do in the future to meet your performance goals.

This discussion should clarify your performance objectives, review prioritization of objectives if needed, and consider any potential challenges you may face.

Your agency wants you and your supervisor to have a productive performance review—whether it occurs as a mid-year review, a quarterly update—or your annual appraisal meeting.

Save these suggestions to make the most of your performance review meeting.

Employee Guidelines

Share your accomplishments and progress.

- Be prepared to discuss what you have accomplished to date against your established performance objectives.
- Make your supervisor aware of any issues or roadblocks you are facing—or have faced—in accomplishing your objectives.
- Consider providing documentation of accomplishments and feedback from others if your supervisor has not already been made aware of them.

If this is a mid-year review, discuss what you plan to achieve by the end of the year and confirm what your supervisor expects you to complete in this timeframe.

- Ensuring a shared understanding of your performance objectives and expectations now will minimize any surprises at your annual review.
- Ask how your supervisor will support you in accomplishing your objectives. Let your supervisor know what specific help you need from him/her during the remainder of the year to be successful.

Consider how you are doing (or how well you have done) on each of your five job components.

- If your supervisor hasn't given you any feedback on each of your components, ask him/her for feedback on what you are doing particularly well and what you might improve upon.

Discuss any professional development activities or plans.

- If you have been working toward any professional development goals, share the progress you have made with your supervisor.
- Discuss how your supervisor can help or support you in accomplishing any new development goals you—or your supervisor—may have in mind.

Supervisor Guidelines

Consider the employee's accomplishments.

- Throughout the year, maintain a file or performance log for each of your employees. This information will help you determine how well the employee is progressing on his/her performance objectives and help you evaluate the employee's performance when it is time for the annual appraisal.
- Ask the employee what is going well, and what challenges or roadblocks he/she is facing. Ask how you can help eliminate roadblocks—and then follow through.
- Provide feedback on accomplishment of any or all performance objectives.

Discuss the relative importance of the employee's performance objectives in light of any changing agency priorities.

- Agree on how the employee should prioritize his/her performance objectives for the remainder of the year—or the start of the new appraisal period.

If this is a mid-year review, discuss your expectations—and the employee's expectations—about what the employee should accomplish by the end of the year.

- Ensuring a shared understanding of your expectations now will minimize unpleasant surprises or emotion at the employee's annual performance review.
- Discuss how you will support your employee in accomplishing his/her performance objectives.

Consider how the employee is performing overall in each of his/her job components.

- Provide specific, behavioral examples of what the employee is doing particularly well, and examples of any behaviors to change.

Consider the employee's development activities for the year.

- Ask what you can do to help the employee make progress on his/her development activities for the year—does the employee have sufficient time and support to accomplish development goals?