



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Human Resources Management

A Workshop for Supervisors and Managers

**U.S Agency for International Development
Office of Human Resources
Training & Education Division (M/HR/TE)**

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Supervisors and Managers**

**Presented by the
U. S. Agency for International Development
Office of Human Resources
Training & Education Division (M/HR/TE)**

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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FOUNDATIONS OF SUPERVISION

You have made the move from technical specialist to supervision. This is, probably, the most challenging transition in a career and, in most cases, you were selected for your supervisory position because you were a star technical specialist. Now you are expected to leave behind some hands-on work and direct and take responsibility for work done by others. This lesson provides you with insight into making a successful transition.

Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Define their supervisory human resources responsibilities at USAID.
- Assess their success to date with undertaking the supervisory role.
- Create an action plan for next steps in their supervisory development.

Supervisors' Responsibilities at USAID

At USAID, major Human Resource responsibilities of supervisors are:

- To interpret, as management's representative, the objectives, policies, and mission of the agency.
- To plan, organize, and control the work of their employees.
- To select, appraise, train, motivate, promote, counsel, and discipline employees.
- To ensure that employees understand job standards, position duties, and conditions of employment.
- To assign and review work of employees.
- To make decisions regarding personnel matters and personnel actions that affect employees under their supervision.
- To recommend policies and procedures that will improve the personnel management program and employee morale.
- To provide guidance and make decisions on technical and management matters.
- To listen and respond to employee groups concerning information on work operations and employee views and opinions.
- To act, in all matters, in accordance with the principles of merit and equal employment opportunity expressed in law, OPM directives, agency instructions, and contracts with unions.

Assess Yourself

1. Am I willing to delegate to others and not feel the need to do it myself, even if I would take a different approach to accomplish the task? Yes _____ No _____
2. Can I leave my past successes behind and focus on new achievements?
Yes _____ No _____
3. Have I considered the need to manage “up” as well as “down”? Yes _____ No _____
4. Am I willing to set the pace for the organization I supervise even if I have to put in more time and work harder than anyone else? Yes _____ No _____
5. Can I put the good of my organization ahead of my need to be liked?
Yes _____ No _____
6. Even though I was previously very comfortable with my abilities to do the job, am I willing to learn new things and ways of operating? Yes _____ No _____
7. Am I willing to pitch in to do any and all jobs as necessary in my organization?
Yes _____ No _____
8. Am I willing to seek out new mentors and associates who can help me succeed in my new position? Yes _____ No _____
9. Can I let go of friendships that will cause me to stumble in my new job?
Yes _____ No _____
10. Am I a good listener? Yes _____ No _____
11. Do I give precise directions when needed? Yes _____ No _____
12. Am I able to take advantage of individual strengths and build on weaknesses of my staff? Yes _____ No _____
13. Do I understand my own temperament and preferences? Yes _____ No _____
14. Do I value different approaches that others take to work projects?
Yes _____ No _____

What do I do now?

Case A

The “brackets” have just been announced for the upcoming NCAA basketball championship. One of your employees approaches you to participate in the office pool. What is your response?

Case B

One of the support staff reports to you that one of your employees is playing poker on his or her work computer and asks you what you plan to do about it. You ask who is playing poker so that you can deal with the matter. Your staff member is unwilling to give you a name, but reiterates that you need to stop this improper use of the computer. What is your next step?

Case C

One of your employees comes into your office and is very critical of a new policy just announced by your boss at an “all hands meeting,” citing how out of touch with the realities of the day-to-day work the new requirement is and that management just “makes this stuff up in a vacuum.” You, too, believe that the new policy has not been fully thought out and know how difficult it will be to meet the new requirement. How do you respond to your subordinate?

Case D

You overhear three of your subordinates talking about how much you’ve “changed” and “not for the better” since you took over your new supervisory job. Among other things, you hear them say that you’re now a “management pawn,” “no fun anymore,” and all you care about is “work, work, work.” What should you do?

Before we leave this topic

1. What is a real strength that I've brought to the table or developed quickly as a supervisor?
2. Is there anything that I am doing now that I should reconsider?
3. Are there any personal skills that I should sharpen?
4. Considering the human responsibilities that I am to perform at USAID, is there a specific area that I need to learn more about?

Suggested Reading

Bennis, Warren. *On Becoming a Leader*. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1989.

Bennis, Warren and Burt Nanus. *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge*. New York: Harper and Row, 1985.

Bennis, Warren and Joan Goldsmith. *Learning to Lead: A Workbook on Becoming a Leader*. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1994.

Conner, Daryl R. *Managing at the Speed of Change: How Resilient Managers Succeed and Prosper Where Others Fail*. New York: Villard Books, 1993.

Cooper, Robert K. and Aymen Sawaf. *Executive EQ: Emotional Intelligence in Leadership and Organizations*. New York: Penguin Putnam, 1997.

Covey, Stephen R. *Principle-Centered Leadership*. New York: Summit, 1991.

DePree, Max. *Leadership is an Art*. New York: Doubleday, 1989.

Drucker, Peter F. *The Essential Drucker: Selections from the Management Works of Peter F. Drucker*. New York: Harper Business, 2001.

Katzenbach, Jon. *Peak Performance: Aligning the Hearts and Minds of Your Employees*. Boston: Harvard Business School, 2000.

Kotter, John P. *Leading Change*. Boston: Harvard Business School, 1996.

Lawler, Edward E. III. *The Ultimate Advantage: Creating the High-Involvement Organization*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992.

Meyerson, Debra E. *Tempered Radicals: How People Use Difference to Inspire Change at Work*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002.

Ulrich, David, Jack Zenger and Norm Smallwood. *Results-Based Leadership*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999.

REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

New supervisors and managers need to understand the “dos and don’ts” of the public manager. Sometimes supervisors and managers inadvertently violate the merit systems principles or commit prohibited personnel practices in the press of day-to-day operations. This session will not only give you insight into the ramifications of your decisions, but also provide you with information about the resources available to provide advice and assistance.

USAID has positions under Title 5 of the U.S. Code (Civil Service) and under Title 22 of the U.S. Code for the Excepted Service (Foreign Service). While the “rules” of the game are slightly different for these positions, both systems operate under a merit system, intended not only to assure fairness and equity to employees but also to give managers the freedom to manage their operations.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify actions and statements to avoid in the workplace
- Access the resources available to them in carrying out their supervisory responsibilities

Automated Directives System (ADS)

The rules and regulations for *Civil Service employees* are based on laws passed by Congress and Executive Orders signed by the President. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issues regulations to implement these, which can be found in the Code of Federal Regulation, Title 5. Individual agencies then create their own rules and guidance that make these Government-wide regulations specific to their operations. Importantly, OPM regulations cannot conflict with the law; and agency rules and guidance cannot conflict with either law or OPM regulations.

USAID, like many other agencies, has positions that because of their very particular assignments are not subject to these rules and regulations. In these cases, the agencies create a system that govern how these positions will be filled and will be treated for human resources purposes. These agencies having excepted service authority report directly to Congress on the operation of their merit system. USAID's excepted service positions are in the *Foreign Service*.

ADS: Everything You Need to Know But Were Afraid to Ask (or Didn't Know Whom to Ask)

USAID has created extensive information to help supervisors in carrying out their responsibilities in working with both Foreign Service and Civil Service employees through its Automated Directives System (ADS). Agency policy directives, required procedures, and helpful materials are drafted, cleared and issued through this system. Agency employees must abide by these directives and required procedures.

The ADS contains:

- Agency-created policy directives and required procedures
- Governing external laws, Executive Orders, and regulations
- USAID external regulations in the CFR
- Optional, helpful information and examples of best practices
- ~~Some~~ documents and how-to guidelines
- Policy Notices (Interim Updates)
- AID Handbook chapters that are still valid

The ADS system is divided into six series:*

- Series 100: Agency Organization & Legal Affairs
- Series 200: Program Policy
- Series 300: Acquisition & Assistance
- **Series 400: Personnel**
- Series 500: Management Services
- Series 600: Budget & Finance

Within Series 400, you will find more than 50 separate chapters dealing with individual topics, ranging from Family and Medical Leave to Disciplinary and Adverse Actions Based on Misconduct.

* Available at www.usaid.gov/policy/ads

Merit System Principles

Adapted from United States Code, Title 5, Section 2301

1. Recruitment from all segments of society, with selection and advancement made on the basis of ability, knowledge, and skills, under fair and open competition.
2. Fair and equitable treatment in all personnel management, without regard to politics, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or disability; and also with proper regard for individual privacy and constitutional rights.
3. Equal pay for work of equal value, with both national and local rates paid by private employers being considered and with incentives and recognition for superior performance included.
4. High standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest should be maintained by all employees.
5. Efficient and effective use of the Federal workforce should be the rule.
6. Retention of employees who perform well, correction of the performance of those whose work is inadequate, and separation of those who cannot or will not meet the required standards.
7. Performance improvement through effective education and training of employees should be provided.
8. Employees should be protected from arbitrary action, personal favoritism, or political pressure or coercion; and they should also be prohibited from using their official position in the same manner.
9. Employees should be protected against reprisals for lawful disclosures of information concerning violations of the law, mismanagement, waste, fraud, or abuse; by law no personnel action can be taken to punish an employee who is a "whistle blower."

Prohibited Personnel Practices

Adapted from U.S. Code, Title 5, Section 2301.

Under the law, any employee in a position to take, direct other to take, recommend, or approve any personnel action is prohibited from:

1. Discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicapping condition, marital state, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.
2. Soliciting or considering employment recommendations on the basis of factors other than personal knowledge or records of job-related abilities or characteristics.
3. Coercing the political activity of any person.
4. Deceiving or willfully obstructing any person from competing for employment.
5. Influencing any person to withdraw from competition for any position in order to either improve or injure the employment prospects for any other person.
6. Giving unauthorized preferences or advantages to any person in order to improve or injure the employment prospects of any particular employee or applicant.
7. Engaging in nepotism (this is, hiring or promoting or advocating the hiring or promotion of relatives within the same agency component).
8. Taking or threatening to take a personnel action against an employee for any disclosure of information, which the employee reasonably believes evidences a violation of law, rule, or regulation, or gross mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety.
9. Taking or threatening to take a personnel action against an employee for the exercise of an appeal, complaint, or grievance.
10. Discriminating on the basis of personal conduct which is not adverse to the on-the-job performance of the employee, applicant, or others.
11. Taking or failing to take a personnel action if doing so violates any law, rule, or regulation which implements or directly concerns the Merit System Principles.

POSITION MANAGEMENT

You carry out your position management responsibilities whenever you recommend or determine such things as:

- The number of people needed to get the work done
- The skills an employee needs to perform the work of a position
- Organizational structure to accomplish the work
- The kind and mix of positions you need
- The duties and responsibilities of an individual position
- When a vacant position should be filled, abolished, or revised

Making good position management decisions can:

- Reduce the cost of your organization
- Affect your organization's success at meeting goals
- Increase your ability to recruit and retain employees

Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define position management
- Identify common position management problems and their potential solutions
- Use a checklist to examine your individual organization for efficiency, economy, and effectiveness

Position Classification

For General Schedule employees, the classification of a position is the determination of position title, pay plan, series, and grade by comparing duties and facts about the job with appropriate OPM classification standards. OPM is responsible under the law for developing and issuing classification standards and has developed standards for virtually every Federal position. OPM is also responsible for resolving appeals brought by employees who believe that their positions have not been appropriately classified.

GS classification is based on a “*rank in the position*” concept which means that variations in grade will be based upon substantial differences in the difficulty, responsibility, and qualification requirements of the *work performed*. Within that system, managers need to be attentive to assigning work to employees that is appropriate to their grade level.

By contrast, Foreign Service employees are graded based upon a “*rank in the person*” concept. Foreign Service employees can, therefore, appropriately be assigned to positions that are above their “*personal*” grade. While Foreign Service employees do not get temporary promotions for these assignments, their experience enhances their competitiveness for future promotions.

USAID uses AVUE, an online system that automates the processes involved in creating classified positions. It helps a manager design, write, and tailor position descriptions. Managers need to assure that the work assigned a position is in keeping with the mission and function of the organization to which the person is assigned and that the position description accurately reflects the work of the person.

The position description serves as the basis for the development of knowledge, skill, and ability requirements for applicants; for the development of meaningful performance standards; and for the identification of training needs. Position classification is also the building block of position management.

Position Management is:

Structuring an individual position and an entire organization to balance:

- *Economy* - getting the work done with minimum outlay of dollars and
- *Efficiency* - accomplishing the mission timely and with least wasted effort and
- *Effectiveness* – ensuring that the right work is done

Position management requires systematic and continuous management attention and is *always* focused on accomplishing the organization's mission.

The *individual position* is the *foundation* for the position management process and all other human resources functions, including recruitment, classification, performance management, and training requirements. In the position management process, we need to consider:

- Why does the position exist?
- What materials are needed to perform the work of the position and where do they come from?
- What is the relationship of this position to others in the unit?
- How does this position contribute to the organization's overall mission?
- Are there problems with the way this position operates that can be remedied?

Could the position management process help the manager in the following cases?

Case A

You are a new supervisor in a unit of GS-12/13 employees, with no clerical or technician positions. You have spent your first weeks in the position looking at the work that is being done and the use of skills in the unit. You think you're ready to make some changes in the organization. Based on your assessment, the GS-12/13 employees are spending about 25% of their time gathering and evaluating data and writing up their findings and recommendations. The rest of their time is spent doing such things as sending out surveys, collecting statistics, requesting information and cataloging that information. You currently have five filled positions and three vacant ones

Case B

You have been given the responsibility for implementing a Congressional revision to the way your organization operates. Your unit has experience in this, but the law expands your unit's responsibilities. The law involves extensive work with other Federal agencies and will require greater negotiation skills than you believe your current workforce possesses. It appears that you will get limited additional staff, but you are concerned about your unit's ability to operate in the new environment.

Problems, Symptoms and Possible Solutions

Fragmentation occurs when an organization is unnecessarily split into many small segments.

Symptoms include:

- Poor communication among units and lack of cooperative work.
- Concern with who is responsible for doing the work rather than getting the work done
- Restricted employee development because of overspecialization
- High rates of absenteeism and turnover
- Low overall group productivity

Questions to ask:

- Are all the organizational units necessary?
- Can we combine/delete any functions?
- How can employee skills be broadened/used?
- Where is specialization required and where does it impede work?

Possible solutions:

- Consolidate functions to place related tasks/processes under one supervisor, leader
- Ensure breadth of knowledge/tasks in individual position to challenge and develop individuals

Layering occurs when an organization has too many levels in the chain of command.

Symptoms include:

- Difficulty in getting decisions made/actions taken
- Top management unaware of decisions made at lower levels
- Controversies don't reach top
- Lower-level supervisors/employees often frustrated because they feel restricted
- Excessive "red-tape" and bottlenecks

Questions to ask:

- Are there more supervisors than needed to plan/direct the work?
- What is the supervisory ratio?
- Are delegations of authority appropriate?

Possible solutions:

- Increase authority of individual positions
- Reduce numbers and layers of supervision
- Ensure clear lines of communication

Job Dilution occurs when high-level duties are spread thinly among several positions.

Symptoms include:

- High cost for work performed
- Low employee morale/turnover

Questions to ask:

- Are lower-level tasks grouped in lower-level positions?
- Are more complex tasks grouped in higher-level positions?
- Do positions seem to be a hodgepodge of unrelated duties?

Possible Solutions:

- Increase percentages of grade-controlling work in positions
- Establish technician and clerical positions to perform lower-level work

Unnecessary positions sometimes exist in an organization, increasing salary costs.

Symptoms include:

- High operating and/or salary costs
- Duplication of effort
- Lack of accountability

Questions to ask:

- Does the supervisory workload really call for a deputy?
- Can staff positions be shifted to the line?
- Do “shadow” staff positions exist?

Possible Solutions:

- Eliminate positions that are duplicative, including “shadow” staffs, unnecessary deputies
- Review positions for contributions to mission

Strength and workload mismatches occur when too few employees are assigned to a function or when a function could be accomplished with fewer employees.

Symptoms include:

- Recurring or excessive overtime or backlogs
- High employee dissatisfaction/absenteeism/turnover

Questions to ask:

- Is essential work not being done or backlogged?
- Should vacant positions be filled?
- Are production costs high?

Possible Solutions:

- Review each vacant position for necessity and fill if appropriate
- Examine causes for backlogs/overtime; revise staff levels, as appropriate

Missing career ladders occur when there is no clear path to higher levels within an organization.

Symptoms include:

- Recruitment problems
- Low morale
- “Dead-end” positions

Questions to ask:

- Are we “growing our own” as appropriate?
- Does our structure offer a natural progression

Possible Solutions include:

- Establish bridge positions
- Create developmental programs
- Consider announcing positions at multiple grade levels

Position Management Checklist

Consider the structure of your organization and ask:

1. Are the organizational mission and goals clearly defined?
2. Has the responsibility, authority, and accountability for all the outputs or services of the organization been clearly placed?
3. Does the organization have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to accomplish the quality and quantity of work expected from the organization?
4. Is the organization able to successfully interact with other organizational entities and the public, if necessary?
5. Does the organization have the flexibility required to adjust to change and maintain effectiveness during special situations, including emergencies?
6. Does the structure aid necessary horizontal communication and vertical communication between organizations to assure success?

Consider issues related to fragmentation and overlap and ask:

1. Is there any unnecessary duplication of work among positions?
2. Is there work the organization should be doing that isn't getting done?
3. Is there work being done that should not be done?
4. Are lines of accountability clearly defined and communicated?
5. Are delegations to the lowest practical level?

Consider issues related to job dilution and ask:

1. Do employees agree that their position descriptions cover their duties/responsibilities adequately?
2. Are high-level duties spread thinly across several positions? Is this the best mix of duties considering the product or service?
3. Is the managerial or supervisory work distributed in a way that avoids layers of supervision?

Consider issues related to unnecessary positions and ask:

1. Are all "assistant," "deputy," or "staff" positions necessary?
2. What is the supervisory ratio?
3. Have you considered the use of team leaders to relieve supervisory burden?
4. Is your organization staffed based on average, rather than peak, workload?

Consider employee utilization and morale and ask:

1. Have career ladders been established?
2. Do meaningful jobs exist to help maintain motivation?
3. Is there any temporary or project work that lends itself to the use of special appointment authorities for short-term assignments?
4. Are you growing the mix of knowledges, skills, and abilities needed for the future?

And some other position management issues to think about:

1. Did you consider the possibilities of flexible schedules, job sharing, part-time schedules, telecommuting?
2. Did you consider contracting out some of the work?
3. Did you consider other resources such as students, interns, volunteers?
4. Are you maximizing technology?
5. Did you consider whether a specialist or generalist approach best fits your organization?
6. Did you consider any special appointing authorities that might be useful, such as intermittent, interagency agreements, intergovernmental assignments?

Hiring Authorities

* Taken from USAID Job Aid

Category: FS career candidate/career

Legal Authority: FS Act Sections 302, 303, 306

Employment Status: Direct hire, world wide available. Evaluated on an annual basis and reviewed by promotion boards annually. Continues to be reviewed by promotion boards while serving during a Limited Career Extension (LCE). Is not reviewed by a promotion board during a FSA Sec 607(d)(2) extension.

Duration of Appointment: Career. Once tenured, subject to TIC and mandatory retirement. May be granted an LCE in accordance with FSA Section 607(b). May be granted a 1-year extension in accordance with 607(d)(2).

Limitations in Duties: May perform all inherently governmental functions.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. Career SFS are entitled to pay/Presidential rank awards in accordance with FSA Sec 405 based on recommendations of performance boards.

Category: Appointment of FS Career to any position in the Executive Branch by the President with advice and consent of the Senate, or by the President alone.

Legal Authority: FS Act 302(b)

Employment Status: Continues to be a member of the Foreign Service. The appointee may elect to either continue receiving the FS salary of his/her class and remain eligible for performance pay and leave OR the salary and leave (if any) of the appointed position. Is reviewed by USAID promotion boards annually.

Duration of Appointment: Serves at the pleasure of the President. Has reinstatement rights at the end of the appointment. TIC continues to run during Presidential appointment. However, TIC suspended if Presidential appointment runs past the end date.

Limitations in Duties: May perform all inherently governmental functions.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. Is eligible for promotion based on rank order of the USAID promotion boards. Entitled to performance pay in accordance with election, as noted.

Category: FS Non-Career

Legal Authority: FS Act 303, 309; 2004, 2005 Foreign Operation Appropriations Bills

Employment Status: Direct hire, primarily for overseas assignments. Employees are evaluated but are not reviewed by promotion boards.

Duration of appointment: Non career. Time limited to up to 5 years. Appointments cannot be extended or renewed for same assignment without break in service of at least 30 days.

Limitations in Duties: May perform all inherently governmental functions.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. Not entitled to performance pay.

Category: Recall

Legal Authority: FSA 308(a)

Employment Status: Direct hire. Retired Foreign Service Officer reemployed for a specific purpose. Retired members of SFS are recalled at the same rank held at retirement. Can be recalled at higher ranks only if appointed to the higher rank by the President with advice and consent by the Senate. Is not reviewed by promotion boards for promotion or performance pay.

Duration of Employment: No time limit applies. May be employed after age of mandatory retirement (65).

Limitation in Duties: May perform inherently governmental duties.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. Annuity is suspended during recall. Annuity adjustment during recall service is in accordance with FSA Section 823.

Category: Reappointment

Legal Authority: FSA 308(b). Appointment under 302(a)(1) or 303 without regard to 306 (tenuring requirement)

Employment Status: Direct hire, world wide available. Evaluated on an annual basis and reviewed by promotion boards annually. Continues to be reviewed by promotion boards while serving during a Limited Career Extension (LCE). Is not reviewed by a promotion board during a FSA Section 607(d)(2) extension.

Duration of Appointment: Career. Applies to former career members of the Foreign Service who have not retired. Subject to TIC and mandatory retirement. May be granted an LCE in accordance with FSA Section 607(b). May be granted a 1-year extension in accordance with 607(d)(2)

Limitation in duties: May perform inherently governmental duties.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. In the event the former member was a participant in the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System at the time he/she resigned, he/she will be placed in the Foreign Service Pension System if there is more than one year break in service. Other exceptions could apply.

Category: GS – career, full-time, part-time, temporary

Legal Authority: Various Title 5 appointment authorities

Employment Status: Direct hire

Duration of Appointment: Dependent upon type of appointment.

Limitation of Duties: May perform inherently governmental duties.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations

Category: GS Schedule B

Legal Authority: OPM approval required in accordance with 5 CFR 213.3201

Employment Status: Direct hire. Positions other than those of a confidential or policy-determining character for which it is not practicable to hold open competition or competitive examination.

Duration of Appointment: Dependent upon type of position.

Limitations in Duties: May perform inherently governmental duties.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations.

Category: SES Career

Legal Authority: 5 USC 3393

Employment Status: Direct hire. May serve in either SES Career Reserved or SES General positions.

Duration of Appointment: Career where appointment to the position or previous appointment to another SES position was based on approval by OPM of the executive's qualifications

Limitation in Duties: May perform inherently governmental duties.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. Career SES are entitled to performance pay/Presidential rank awards in accordance with 5 USC 5384 based on recommendations of performance boards.

Category: SES Limited Term, Limited Emergency, Non Career

Legal Authority: 5 USC 3394

Employment Status: Direct hire

Duration of Appointment: A limited term appointment is a nonrenewable appointment for a term of 3 years or less to an SES position, the duties of which will expire at the end of such term. A limited emergency appointment is a nonrenewable appointment, not to exceed 18 months, to an SES position established to meet a bona fide, unanticipated, urgent need. A noncareer appointee holds an SES position but is not a career appointee, a limited term appointee, or a limited emergency appointee.

Limitation in Duties: May perform inherently governmental duties.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. See 5 USC 3134 for limitations on these appointments.

Category: GS Expert/Consultant, usually When Actually Employed (WAE)

Legal Authority: 5 CFR Part 304

Employment Status: Direct Hire

Duration of Appointment: In accordance with 5 CFR 304

Limitation in Duties: May perform inherently governmental duties.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. If appointment is for less than 130 days, the employee is considered a Special Government Employee for ethics purposes. Annuity for GS reemployed annuitants is reduced \$ for \$. FS reemployed annuitants may supplement their annuity up to an amount equal to the base pay of the salary level at the time of retirement.

Category: Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA)

Legal Authority: 5 USC 3376, 5 CFR Part 334

Employment Status: Appointed or detailed to the U.S. Government and considered an employee of the Government for most purposes.

Duration of Appointment: Non Career. Appointment for up to 2 years, and may be extended for up to 2 more years.

Limitation in Duties: May perform inherently governmental duties.

Others: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. Usually, the agency does not pay the employee. The agency does pay the employee where the pay received from the State or local government is less than the appropriate rate of pay which the duties would warrant under the applicable Federal pay provisions.

Category: RSSA

Legal Authority: USAID's inherent authority to contract. RSSAs employed in connection with a service agreement with another U.S. Government agency or university.

Employment Status: RSSAs with a Title V or other appointment, including a Schedule B appointment from another Federal agency are direct hire employees of that agency. University RSSAs without a Title V appointment are not employees of the Government.

Duration of Appointment: Generally non career. Agreements are for several years. May be extended contingent on continued funding.

Limitation in Duties: May perform inherently governmental duties only if individual is appointed in accordance with Title 5.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulation if a Government employee (competitive appointment, Schedule B, other). Not covered by ethics statutes if there is no appointment.

Category: PSC Overseas

Legal Authority: Sec 636(a)(3) of FAA, 22 USC 2396

Employment Status: PSC are employees of the U.S. Government by contract, not appointment. They are considered employees for all purposes except for laws administered by OPM.

Duration of Appointment: Non career. In accordance with contract.

Limitation in Duties: By administrative decision, PSCs are not permitted to (1) supervise U.S. Direct Hire employees of USAID or other Government agencies. PSCs may supervise USPSCs and non U.S. citizen employees; (2) PSCs may not be designated as contracting officers or be delegated authority to sign obligating or sub-obligating documents unless warranted by OP; (3) PSCs may represent the Agency except that communications reflecting a final policy, planning, or budget decision of the Agency must be cleared by a U.S. Direct Hire employee; (4) PSCs may participate in personnel selection matters but may not be delegated authority to make final decisions on personnel selection. ADS 103.3.1.1 gives AA/M authority to waive these restrictions.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations. Reemployed annuitants do not lose annuity during PSC. PSCs may serve as CTO and participate in the selection of contractors and/or grantees.

Category: PSC Washington

Legal Authority: Freedom Support Act, SEED, DCHA, Foreign Operation Appropriations bill

Employment Status: Same as PSC Overseas

Duration of Appointment: Same as PSC Overseas

Limitation in Duties: Same as PSC Overseas

Other: Same as PSC Overseas

Category: AD

Legal Authority: Sec 625(b), 22 USC 2385

Employment Status: Direct Hire. May be appointed, compensated, and removed without regard to the provisions of any law.

Duration of Appointment: Non career. Serves at the pleasure of the Administrator.

Limitation in Duties: May perform inherently governmental duties.

Other: Covered by ethics statutes and regulations.

Category: Fellows

Legal Authority: Inherent authority to make grants

Employment Status: Employee of grantee.

Duration of Appointment: In accordance with the grant.

Limitation in Duties: May not perform inherently governmental functions.

Other: Not covered by ethics statutes and regulations.

MANAGING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Most of the employees that you lead are self-motivated, do good work, and look to you to provide useful direction. Effective supervisors:

- Assist those they lead to focus efforts on those things that contribute to organizational objectives
- Consistently monitor assignments and projects
- Increase the capacity of those they lead to enhance their performance
- Summarize employee performance through formal appraisals
- Recognize employees and groups for their contributions to the organization's mission

While these things seem intuitive, we know that successfully managing employee performance is one of the most challenging of the supervisory functions. We also know that many Government employees distrust our abilities to manage performance fairly and equitably.

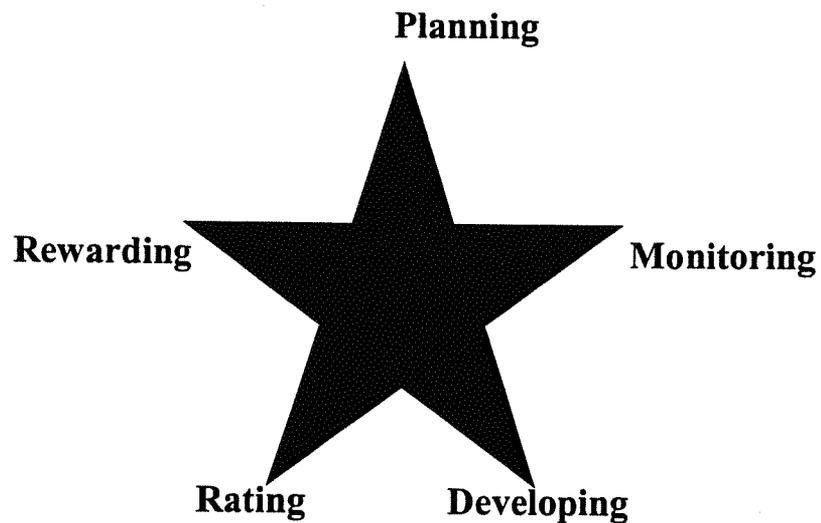
Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the five supervisory functions associated with performance management
- Identify successful strategies in each of these five functions

The Performance Management System*

Performance Management is the systematic process by which an agency involves its employees, as individuals and as members of a group, in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of agency mission and goals.



Which of these is most important to the process?

* Adapted from United States Office of Personnel Management. *A Handbook for Measuring Employee Performance: Aligning Employee Performance Plans with Organizational Goals*

Planning

Effective organizations plan work in advance. This means setting performance expectations and goals for groups and individuals to channel their efforts toward achieving organizational objectives. Getting employees involved in the planning process helps 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. Our requirements for planning performance include establishing the elements and standards to be measured in their appraisal plans.

In USAID, we seek to develop **SMART** objectives for our employees. These are objectives that are:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Timebound

Performance plans should be flexible so that they can be adjusted for changing program objectives and work requirements. When used effectively, they can be beneficial working documents that are discussed often, and not merely paperwork filed in a drawer and seen only when ratings of record are required.

Situation

You plan to meet with Mary early next week to begin the process of creating her performance plan for the upcoming year. What documents should you review before meeting with her? What is the purpose of your review of these documents? Do you plan to ask your employee to do any homework before the meeting? If so, what are your instructions to her? Where will you hold the meeting? How will you begin the meeting? What do you hope to accomplish at this initial meeting? Who will actually develop the objectives? What else do you need to think about/plan for?

Monitoring

In effective organizations, 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 goals. You should be conducting periodic progress review to compare their performance against objectives, to make changes to unrealistic or problematic standards, and to revise standards based on changing priorities or program goals. Day-to-day feedback is far more significant, however, than any more formal periodic reviews.

Monitoring allows you to identify unacceptable performance at any time during the appraisal period and to provide assistance to address that performance rather than waiting until the end of the period when summary ratings are assigned.

Your new Civil Service Annual Evaluation Form (AEF) has six standard performance elements, one of which must be critical. Additionally, there can be up to two additional performance standards, either critical or non-critical. These additional elements may *not* be a continuing part of an employee's position, but rather must be special assignments or projects that can be completed (or at least segments completed) during the performance year.

At USAID there is one mandatory progress review during the year; at this time the supervisor will contact sources for 360 degree feedback about the employee's performance. The supervisor and the employee must agree on at least three of these sources.

Feedback

Feedback is of two types:

Think of positive feedback as “**watering what you want to grow.**”

Positive Feedback	Acknowledges performance that meets or exceeds Enhances self-esteem Encourages continued good performance
Consider	Giving frequent and on-the-spot feedback Providing feedback on small steps and sub-tasks, not just the total task or assignment Praising effort and risk taking, even when the desired results are not perfect Praising positive results before entire work group
Constructive Feedback	Provides you with a process so that you don't react emotionally or overact to the situation Helps minimize defensiveness Helps employees understand what they need to improve or change
Consider	Giving shortly after poor performance is observed Providing feedback on small, specific steps or subtasks Always focusing on helping the employee improve Giving constructive feedback in private

Characteristics of Constructive Feedback

1. It is *descriptive*, rather than evaluative. (Avoiding the use of evaluative language reduces the need for the hearer to respond defensively.)
2. It is *specific*, rather than general. (To be told that one is “dominating” will not be useful as to be told that “in that conversation that just took place, you did not seem to listening to what Joe was saying and kept bringing the things back to the points you wished to make.”)
3. It focuses on *behavior*, rather than the person. (Refer to what the person “does” rather than on what you think or imagine he or she “is.” Doing this allows for the possibility of change; the latter implies a fixed personality trait.)
4. It requires an awareness of the *needs of both the receiver and the giver of feedback*. (Feedback can be destructive when it serves only our needs and fails to take into account the needs of the other person. Give helpful, not hurtful, feedback.)
5. It is directed toward *behavior which the receiver can do something about*. (Frustration is increased when a person is reminded of a shortcoming over which s/he has no control.)
6. It is *well-timed*. (Feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the given behavior. Excellent feedback delivered at an inappropriate time may do more harm than good. Feedback delivered in anger or emotionally is generally unsuccessful.)
7. It should often be perceived as *sharing of information, rather than giving advice*.
8. It involves the *amount of information the receiver can use*, rather than the amount we might like to give. (Overloading a person with feedback reduces the possibility that s/he may be able to use what is offered.)
9. It concerns *what is said and done, or how it is done*, not why. The “why” takes us from the observable to the inferred and involves assumptions regarding motive or intent. (Telling a person what his motivations or intentions are tends to alienate, creating an atmosphere of resentment, suspicion, and distrust.)

10. It provides *specific ways in which the person may improve performance*. The person giving feedback greatly improves his/her helping skills if he/she indicates what can and should be done. We know that feedback directs behavior and has the potential to improve performance at work.

11. It is an important step toward *authenticity*. (Constructive feedback opens the way to a relationship built on trust, honesty, and genuine concern, leading to personal growth and development.

Two additional points:

Don't overwhelm with feedback. People can only handle so much feedback at one time. If you provide too much constructive feedback, the employee may feel you are unreasonable. Too much positive feedback dilutes its impact.

"A person never changes until the pain of being the same is more painful than the change....."

Could these examples of feedback be improved? If so, how?

1. I really liked the way you handled that disagreement that came up this morning in the staff meeting. _____ Effective _____ Could be improved by

2. You've got to quit taking everything so personally. Every time somebody says anything at all critical about one of your projects, you sulk all day.
_____ Effective _____ Could be improved by

3. Great presentation yesterday afternoon! I'd really like you to do a little session at next week's staff meeting to share some of your tips with everybody.
_____ Effective _____ Could be improved by

4. I'm really not happy with the way Jim is taking hold of that assignment I gave him. You're so good at project management, I'm wondering if you could go to him, take a look at what he's doing, and get him on the right path.
_____ Effective _____ Could be improved by

SBI Method for Giving Feedback

Situation

Describe the situation in which the performance or behavior occurred. To do this, describe where and when the behavior happened

For example, *“Yesterday at our staff meeting, when we were discussing your new project....”*

Behavior

Describe the performance or behavior you heard or observed. To do this:

- Concentrate on the employee’s actions, not your view of his/her personality or motives
- Avoid using the word *you* as this often leads to defensiveness. You can tone down the you by saying: You may not have realized it, but....”

For example, *“You may not have realized this, but when we were discussing your new project at yesterday’s staff meeting, you interrupted John’s questions several times...”*

Impact

Specify how the behavior/performance has impacted you, others, and/or the organization. To do this:

- Be specific and objective about the impact by providing your actual observations
- Link the impact of the employee’s behavior/performance to expected standards

For example, *“You may not have realized this, but when we were discussing your new project at yesterday’s staff meeting, you interrupted John’s questions several times. Now, I’m afraid that John doesn’t have the information that he needs to give you quickly and easily the information that you need from him to get this project finished on time.”*

1. Think about the last time you missed an opportunity to give positive feedback to one of your group members. What should you have said?

2. Think about the last time you gave constructive feedback to one of your group members. What could you have done to improve your feedback?

3. What one thing are you going to incorporate into your communication style based on these principles of effective feedback?

Situation

Mary has been working on a difficult project. There have been delays in getting the information necessary to do the project and there have been technology problems. You know she's been working overtime on the problems, but despite her hard work, some deadlines have been missed. Your concern is that Mary is reluctant to relay bad news to you on a timely basis. Today, Mary missed a milestone on the project. Given all the problems with the project, you can understand the delay, but you must inform the Director in advance if a milestone is missed. You decide to give feedback to Mary about this problem. How do you begin?

Developing

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

Carrying out the process of performance management provides an excellent opportunity to identify developmental needs. During planning and monitoring of work, deficiencies in performance become evident and can be addressed. Areas for improving good performance also stand out, and action can be taken to help successful employees improve even further.

Developing employees in USAID means coaching for success and can include any number of techniques to increase technical competence or to develop other important skills for success, such as personal career management, networking within and outside the agency, and political savvy. Developing employees results in a more satisfied and productive staff. It challenges them to grow professionally and ultimately increases the performance capability of the work unit and organization. Your abilities to give both positive and constructive feedback are important to your success in coaching for success.

Some questions you may ask of the employee include:

- What ideas do you have for further developing your career?
- Where do you see your future in the unit, profession?
- What have been the most difficult problems that you have faced?
- What areas of your performance would you like to improve?
- Are there things that I could do that would help you be more successful?

At your table group, brainstorm all the ways – in addition to formal training – that you can use to develop employees on the job.

Situation

Mary was scheduled to begin training today and you saw her at her desk when you came in this morning. When you mention that you thought she was to be in training today, she tells you that she cancelled because she's behind on the project that's due at the end of the month. This is not the first time Mary has cancelled training without clearing it with you. Your view is that Mary would be more effective at her work if she participated in the training that you and she agreed to. You are meeting with Mary to discuss your concerns about her development. How do you plan to approach this meeting? What do you hope to accomplish?

Rating

Within the context of formal performance appraisal requirements, rating means evaluating employee or group performance against the elements and standards in an employee's performance plan and assigning a summary rating of record. It is based on work performed during an entire appraisal period. The rating of record has a bearing on a variety of human resources actions. Steps to consider in the process are:

Collect Information about Performance

- Gather and review documentation about the employee's performance over the last 12-month period (e.g., work samples, letters of appreciation, notes you may have made)
- Collect information from others, e.g., 360 degree feedback at progress review time and at the end of the rating cycle
- Ask employee for input about accomplishments and achievements

Analyze Information

- Make sure your observations are objective and based on observable facts
- Have concrete information to support your assessment
- Review the performance plan and determine how well the employee has met expectations
- Don't hold the employee accountable for things s/he cannot control

Record Draft Comments

- Include examples of performance wherever appropriate
- Be brief and specific; avoid subjective or biased comments
- Use both positive and constructive comments

Conduct the Review

- Anticipate the tone of the meeting
- Think about how you will handle potentially difficult reactions from the employee
- Set the climate
- Open the meeting with a positive tone and review objectives
- Discuss accomplishments and expectations
- Close the meeting, confirming any agreements or next steps
- Follow up to make any revisions based on comments and get necessary signatures

A good ground rule to follow in conducting formal appraisals is “**No Surprises.**” If you give continuous feedback throughout the year, you will help assure that neither you nor your employee will miss anything. Channels of communication will be open throughout the year; and, as a result, the final review will be more effective.

Avoid these common traps in rating:

- **Giving all employees the same rating**, which rewards substandard performance and discourages star performance
- Showing **favoritism**
- **Rotating higher ratings**, i.e., having employees “wait their turn” for higher ratings
- Falling victim to the “**halo**” effect, i.e., letting recent positive events affect the total appraisal or letting success in one critical area affect how you see the employee overall
- Falling victim to the “**horn**” effect, i.e., letting recent negative events affect the total appraisal or letting a lack of success in one critical area affect how you see the employee overall
- **Confusing performance with conduct or personality traits**
- Giving **ambiguous or non-specific ratings**

Situation

You are having the initial review meeting with Mary. While you are very satisfied with Mary’s fully successful performance, you know that Mary views her performance as outstanding. She is expecting an outstanding rating even though you have tried your best to give her regular feedback throughout the year. How do you plan to approach this meeting?

Rewarding

Effective organizations use rewards well. Rewarding means recognizing employees, individually and as members of groups, for their performance and acknowledging their contributions to agency mission. *A basic principle of effective management is that all behavior is controlled by its consequences.* These consequences can and should be both formal and informal and both positive and negative.

Good performance is recognized without waiting for formal awards to be solicited. Recognition is an ongoing, natural part of day-to-day work. Many actions that reward good performance – like saying “Thank you” – don’t cost anything and don’t require any approvals. Nevertheless, we have a broad range of forms that formal rewards can take, such as cash and time-off, and many non-monetary rewards. A variety of contributions can be rewarded from suggestions to group accomplishments.

Honorary awards, such as paperweights and mugs, should get their primary value as a form of recognition and not as an object of monetary value; should have lasting trophy value; and should clearly symbolize the employer-employee relationship.

1. In your table group, take five minutes to brainstorm all the ways you might recognize and reward performance using non-monetary awards (either honorary or informal recognition).

2. Think of a time when you missed an opportunity to enhance performance by providing one of your group members with a non-monetary reward or recognition.

What could you have done?

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Employee relations issues are among the most challenging that a supervisor must face. Often supervisors spend 90 percent of their time dealing with a handful of employees with performance or conduct problems. Effective supervisors, however, spend 90 percent of their time working with their good employees, not 90 percent of their time dealing with these few troublesome employees. This session will provide you with the “rules of the game” in employee relations to allow you to efficiently and successfully deal with these issues.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Distinguish between performance and conduct problems
- Describe a process for managing performance problems
- Conduct a performance counseling session with an employee
- Take steps to prevent conduct problems
- Describe a process for dealing with conduct issues
- Apply specific tools to address leave and attendance problems

Conduct or Performance?

Situation 1

You supervise an employee with a history of argumentative behavior. You give him a work assignment of no great complexity and he quarrels about the need for the work. He tells you it is a stupid assignment and he doesn't see why anybody should have to do it. After much discussion in which you try to explain the need for the work to no avail, you tell him he has to have it on your desk at 8:00 a.m. the next Monday morning.

At 8:00 a.m. on the next Monday, he has not given you the work. When you ask, he tells you that he went to complain to your boss about the assignment and hasn't heard back from him. You ask him if your boss told him he didn't have to do the work, and he reluctantly says no.

You have performance standards in a critical element that require timely completion of all work assignments. Should you handle this one as a conduct or performance matter?

Situation 2

You supervise an employee who, among other things, has responsibility for installing a device. The job requires no special talent or training and is simply a matter of paying attention. You find that she did not install the device properly. Somebody else caught the mistake, but about a thousand dollars worth of supplies had to be thrown away and work was delayed.

You have broad performance standards that conceivably could be stretched to include installing the device properly, or you could treat it as a disciplinary matter. Which would you choose?

Situation 3

You have an employee who seems to spend much of his day socializing on the job. For example, you saw him chatting with a friend for over a half-hour yesterday. He also spends at least an hour a day just walking around the office, chatting with coworkers about non-business topics. He is usually 10 to 20 minutes late each day, and takes long breaks and lunches.

Because he recently transferred to your work unit, you are not sure that he can perform all aspects of the job, although his previous performance appraisals were all satisfactory. Would you deal with this as conduct or performance?

Situation 4

Yesterday, one of your employees did not come to work or call to say that she would not be coming in. You believe she has a drug problem, and last week you suggested to her that she might want to contact the employee assistance program. You believe she met with the counselor for the first time last week. *However, you do not want to overlook this absence and want to take some action.* What action is appropriate?

Define these terms:

Poor performance

Misconduct

Steps in Managing Performance Problems

Step 1: Define the Performance Problem

- What is the employee doing/not doing on the job?
- Indicators should be specific, objective, measurable
- Compare performance with standards in performance plan
- Consider the actual or potential impact on the organization to illustrate to the employee why it is important to correct (impact may be tangible or intangible)

Step 2: Document the Performance Problem *(Check with your LER office as you begin this process and for information on specific documentation requirements.)*

- Maintain any records of formal performance discussions /counseling sessions
- Maintain any information submitted by the employee
- If you maintain any supervisory notes (memory joggers), they must be for your personal use, not in a system of records. *(Remember: These supervisory notes can be subpoenaed or discovered.)*

Step 3: Investigate the Reasons for the Problem Skill/knowledge

1. Has the employee received specific training?
2. Has the employee ever done it right?
3. Is the task performed infrequently?
4. Has it been a long time since the employee received training?
5. Does the employee lean on others when performing this task?

Environment

1. Are the physical conditions adequate to perform the task?
2. Does the employee have enough time to do the task?
3. Are there adequate tools, materials, and equipment?
4. Do the rules, regulations, and procedures make the task difficult?
5. Is the employee interrupted frequently?
6. Have expectations been communicated clearly and timely?
7. Does the employee receive feedback about whether he or she has completed the task correctly?

Motivation/Attitude

1. Are there negative consequences when the employee performs the task properly?
2. Are there positive consequences when the employee does not perform the task properly?
3. Are there personal issues outside the work environment that may be affecting how the task is performed?
4. Is the employee held accountable for performing the task?

Step 4: Determine a Course of Action

It is imperative to choose a course of action that goes to the cause of the performance problem. Remember that *training is not a cure-all*; training only helps resolve performance problems that are caused by shortfalls in skills and knowledge. *If the employee could do it if his/her life depended upon it, training is probably not the answer.*

1. At your table groups, brainstorm all the ways – in addition to formal training – that you might use to deal with skills/knowledge deficiencies.

2. At your table groups, brainstorm all the ways you might use to deal with environmental issues.

3. Issues related to motivation/attitude?

Situation

You are the supervisor in a unit that provides services to other USAID entities. In the past three months you have received four calls from the units Joan serves complaining about her “style,” delays in the return of voice mail requests for assistance, the curtness of her communications, and the accuracy of her advice. Joan has worked in the unit for seven years and, based on your experience as her supervisor, has previously shown concern for her work and has had good work habits. Her performance ratings have been fully or excellent.

You have noticed that Joan is spending a lot of time on the phone in recent weeks and recently looks as if she’s “carrying the world on his shoulders.” In the past 6 months, she has been on either sick leave or unplanned annual leave for a total of 10 days. You also have had to assign some of Joan’s workload to another staff member because of some backlogs that you observed and, because you tend to be a bit of a workaholic, you have actually taken over some pieces of work from her in the past six months.

Using the checklist on **Page 5-5**, what are the potential causes of Joan’s performance slump? What might be some effective ways to deal with these issues?

Conducting a Performance Counseling Session

The following guidelines will give you tips on dealing with this difficult session.

Step 1: Open the meeting – state what you’ve observed and the purpose of the meeting

- Separate observations from judgments
- Highlight impact or consequences of the performance
- Restate appropriate performance

Step 2: Wait for a response – getting agreement

- Getting agreement is a key concept; if the person doesn’t agree that a problem exists, it is unlikely that performance will change
- Restate specific examples
- Clarify consequences (both natural and imposed).

Step 3: Remind them of the goal: Refer to Performance Plan

Step 4: Ask for specific solutions, discuss alternatives, get commitment to act

- Mutually discuss alternative causes
- Ask person to suggest possible solutions, suggest alternatives as appropriate
- Get commitment to act
- Specify what actions will be taken, i.e., what is the person going to DO to improve the performance

Step 5: Agree together – close the meeting

- Summarize the agreements
- Thank him/her; offer encouragement
- Say how and when you will follow up

Step 6: Prepare and share a written summary of the meeting, including agreements

Side Tracks - Be prepared for these defenses:

The Stall

When to expect it: After you have stated what you expect to see (Step 3)

What it looks like: “OK.” “Yeah. Sure.” “Whatever you say.” “I’ll work on that.”

Or, total silence.

What you should do: Keep on track and move on to Step 4 and get involvement in solving the problem. If the stall is silence when you ask for ideas on how to solve the problem, or for agreement, then re-ask the same question and pause for an answer....

The Self-Inflicted Wound

When to expect it: After you have stated what you have observed (Step 1) or after you have stated what you need to see (Step 3)

What it looks like: “I know, I know I do that. You know what’s worse is....

What you should do: Again, keep on track with the next step. You may have to say something like “I’d be happy to talk about some other issues at another time, but for today, let’s focus on.....”

The Guilt Trip

When to expect it: At any time in the discussion, but most likely after you’ve stated what you have observed (Step 1) and after you ask for ways to resolve it (Step 4)

What it looks like: “You always pick on me.” “I’m doing my best, but that isn’t enough for you, is it?” “No one can please you. Why should I be any different?”

What you should do: Recognize the sidetrack; don’t fall victim to it. Stick to the facts and go through the steps firmly, but gently. Stay focused.

The Attack

When to expect it: Usually, right after you have begun stating what you observed.

What it looks like: “Who are you to tell me?!?” “Yeah, that’s easy for you to say. You’re not the one out in the trenches doing the work.”

What you should do: Stay calm and stick to the facts. **Do not** fight back. Say, “I regret that you feel that way, but this is what the expectations are.....” You may give the person some time to cool off, but do not let them leave without setting up a specific time to finish the discussion.

Situation

Review the material covered earlier in this module and the module on performance management. It's time to meet with Joan about the deficits in her performance. You have asked Joan to meet with you in your office to "talk about her performance."

Half of you will prepare the person of your choice to act as Joan in the upcoming role play. Do not overplay the part, but have Joan behave as you expect the typical employee would prepare and react if told to come to a meeting to "talk about her performance." You have ten minutes to prepare Joan.

The rest of you have ten minutes to prepare the person of your choice to act as the supervisor in the role play.

Taking Performance-Based Actions

Sometimes our efforts to work toward performance improvements do not have positive results. In those cases, we have the responsibility to our organization and to those who are affected by the poor performance to take appropriate action. The steps necessary to take these are:

Step 1: Get commitment of support from your boss; don't move forward unless you are certain that there is support from those above you in the chain of command.

Step 2: Get help and support from labor/employee relations advisor; your advisor can help you avoid false starts and can help assure success.

Step 3: Prepare a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). Your LER advisor can help you prepare the PIP which, legally, is *prepared only when a person's performance becomes unsatisfactory*. It includes such things as:

- A brief statement of exactly what critical elements the employee is failing
- Examples of how the employee failed
- What the employee must do to bring performance up to the "needs improvement" level
- The length of the opportunity period
- How the supervisor will monitor and evaluate the employee
- What the supervisor will do to help
- The consequences
- Referral to the employee assistance program if appropriate

Step 4: Monitor work during the opportunity period

- Document the performance during the opportunity period
- Take into account any approved annual, sick, or other leave during the period
- If the employee's performance improves to the "needs improvement" level or higher, remind the employee of his obligation to maintain acceptable performance
- If the employee fails to perform acceptably by the end of the opportunity period or fails again in the same critical element within one year from the start of the opportunity period, proceed to the next step.
- Remember, either a "needs improvement" or "unacceptable" rating results in withholding a within-grade increase.

Step 5: Take the performance-based action

Dealing with Conduct Issues

Discipline allows you to maintain an effective and efficient workplace; maintain the morale of employees obeying the rules; and maintain fairness in the workplace.

The goal of disciplinary actions is to correct conduct and modify behavior, *not* to punish an employee. Although supervisors have the right and responsibility to discipline employees, we also must assure that we do so in a fair and reasonable manner. Our primary goal is to *avoid* conduct problems. We can help assure that by following these three steps to preventing such problems.

Three Steps to Prevent Conduct Problems

Step 1: Set the Rules

- Hours of work and punctuality
- Use of leave
- Dress
- Use of office property (computers, phones, etc.)
- Use of cars
- Use of Government time
- Rules of ethics
- Violence and threats of violence
- Sexual harassment
- Any special rules that apply to the situation

Step 2: Monitor

Step 3: Take Immediate Low-Level Steps

- Anticipate problems by recognizing when employees might get into trouble and caution them
- Immediately correct low-level issues with gentle reminders, surprise, guilt, indirect or direct warning

USAID recommends that you document instances when you have pointed out discrepancies to an employee by giving the employee a record of the conversation and keeping the original for yourself. Also, keep an informal written record of notes about the incident. (Again, remember that these supervisory notes can be subpoenaed or discovered in legal proceedings.)

Disciplinary Actions

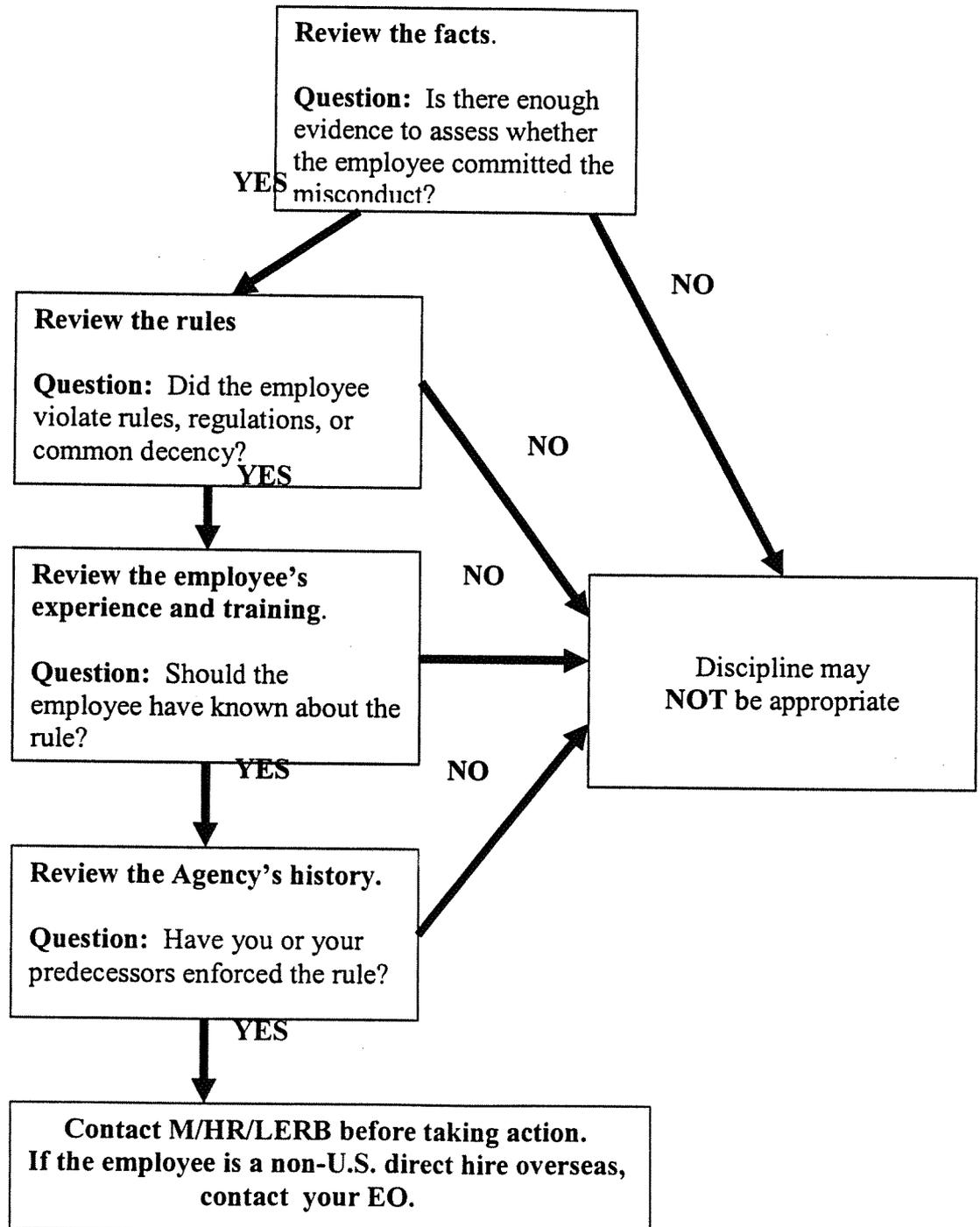
Disciplinary measures range from informal to formal measures. Our goal is to select the least severe penalty that will achieve the results we're after – a change to the employee's behavior. Progressive discipline means that the least severe penalty to correct the misconduct will be imposed for a first offense and more serious penalties will be imposed for further offenses. Remember, however, that for serious misconduct, a more severe disciplinary action could be imposed for a first offense. Your Table of Offenses and Penalties provides excellent guidance about the seriousness USAID places on specific acts of misconduct and provides guidance about appropriate penalties to address these acts. There is also an excellent Job Aid Summary Page on the disciplinary process at USAID.

To take a formal disciplinary action, you will have to prove four separate, sequential elements:

1. *Is there a cause for action?* Management must show that conduct was misconduct. You may discipline employees “for such cause as will promote the efficiency of the service.”
2. *Is formal action appropriate?* Ask yourself if the employee should have known that the conduct was wrong. If you feel that employee did not know it was wrong or should be given the benefit of the doubt, you take an informal action. If, on the other hand, you feel the employee should have known that the conduct was misconduct, take a formal disciplinary action.
3. *Is the penalty justified?* Especially, in cases of serious action, you have to show why you could not have taken a less serious action.
4. *Is there proof that what you're alleging actually happened?*

Assessment Flowchart

USAID has developed this flowchart to help you assess whether employee conduct requires disciplinary action.



Penalty	Description
Oral or written admonishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with LER advisor • Considered informal discipline • Indicates to employee that change in behavior must occur • Often the first steps in dealing with misconduct • Consider referring to EAP • In the case of oral admonishment, complete a memo to record • Written admonishment in effect for one year; not filed in official personnel folder
Letter or reprimand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare letter in consultation with LER advisor • Considered formal discipline • Includes instances of misconduct, description of appropriate conduct, and why excuses given by employee were not acceptable • Warns employee that more severe disciplinary action may follow unless change in behavior • Copy of letter kept in official personnel file for 1-2 years • Advises employee of grievance rights
Suspension of 14 calendar days or less	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out in coordination with LER advisor • Places employee involuntarily in non-pay, non-duty status • Includes a notice of proposed action, a reasonable time to reply, and a written decision
Suspension of more than 14 calendar days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out in coordination with LER advisor • Appealable to Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) for Civil Service employees
Reduction in grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out in coordination with LER advisor • Rarely used for misconduct; more often for performance • Appealable to MSPB for Civil Service employees
Removal from Federal service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out in coordination with LER advisor • Workplace equivalent of capital punishment • Only used after other less serious penalties have failed or very serious first offenses • Appealable to MSPB for Civil Service employees

Douglas Factors – Mitigating Factors

The Douglas Factors are criteria developed by the Merit Systems Protection Board to use in their review of the appropriateness of Agency penalties in appeal decisions. You and your LER advisor will always consider these factors in determining the penalty to impose in an employee misconduct case.

1. Consider the ***nature and seriousness of the act or offense***. Was the misconduct related to the employee's duties, position, and responsibilities? Was it deliberate and planned? Was the employee acting out of malice? Was the act frequently repeated?
2. Consider the ***employee's job level and type of employment***. Is it a supervisory role? What is the importance of the position? Management can usually discipline supervisors and higher-graded employees more severely than non-supervisory or lower-level employees.
3. Consider the ***employee's past disciplinary record***. Only consider past formal discipline. If an employee had received several oral reprimands but no other disciplinary action, the misconduct is considered a first offense.
4. Consider the ***employee's past work record***. If an employee is a reliable employee with a dependable attendance record, you need to take this into account. For example, you might want to give a long suspension instead of firing for a serious offense.
5. Determine the misconduct's ***effect on the employee's ability to perform at a satisfactory level***. Look at the effect it has on your confidence in the employee's ability to perform his or her assigned duties.
6. The penalty must be ***consistent with those imposed on other employees***. Look at penalties imposed for comparable types of misconduct and with employees who occupy similar types of positions. If this factor is not adhered to, employees are likely to claim disparate treatment.
7. The penalty must be ***consistent with the agency's table of penalties***. Use it when choosing appropriate penalties. If your penalty is ***not consistent*** with the table of penalties, be prepared to explain why not.

8. Consider the *impact on the reputation of the agency*. If the act results in public embarrassment for the agency or damage to its reputation, you can impose a harsher penalty.
9. Consider whether the employee had *knowledge that s/he was violating rules*. Generally, you can impose a more severe penalty if you can show that the employee knew s/he was violating a rule, regulation, or requirement. This is particularly true if the employee had received a previous warning.
10. An employee's *remorse and potential for rehabilitation* need to be taken into account. Employees who accept responsibility, do not blame others for their misconduct, and offer assurances that their conduct will improve, should receive different penalties than those who do not.
11. Miscellaneous *other mitigating circumstances* might come into play. For example, an agency's removal of an employee was reduced to a 3-month suspension because the supervisor had taunted and dared the employee to strike him.
12. Consider the *potential effectiveness of alternative penalties*. Could a lesser penalty have deterred the action in the future?

Situation

Assume that you are in a situation where your employees work under a flexitime program that allows them to work 40 hours a week at any time during the workweek. Employees are required to sign in and sign out when reporting to and leaving from work.

You discover that one of your higher-graded employees had falsified his reporting time at least once during a particular week. Rather than confront him, you ask other employees to watch the individual and record his arrival and departure time. You compare these to the times the employee signed in and out.

You determine that over a 6-week period, the employee falsified his time card 14 times, adding up to 19 ½ hours claimed, but not worked. When you confront your employee, he denies any wrongdoing. When you propose discipline, he finally admitted his actions. Although he admitted the charges, he noted that he had no prior disciplinary record, his performance was satisfactory, and the amount of time was “trivial.”

1. What type of penalty would you consider? (You may choose more than one.)
2. What factors would weigh most in choosing the penalties
3. What additional information would you like before making a final decision on this case?

Situation

You're a supervisor where an employee who works for you has been caught altering a date on a Worker's Compensation return-to-work form.

He was hurt on the job on July 16 and returned to work on July 28, giving his supervisor all appropriate forms. You notice that one of the forms indicates that the employee could return to work on July 21 and one says July 28. You turn this over to the group that manages workers compensation; they check with the doctor who told them that the return to work date was July 21, not July 28, and provided their files showing July 21.

The employee denies falsifying the forms and said the doctor was mistaken and had put July 21 on the form. He later admits to you that he had falsified the forms.

The employee has worked with USAID for twenty years with no prior formal discipline, although he received two letters of counseling for AWOL in the past year. His performance ratings are fully successful. He says that he is suffering from family problems and his mother-in-law is dying. He says the reason he falsified the form was because of the injury.

Your table of penalties states that the first offense of falsifying information on a document pertaining to entitlements is punishable by a penalty up to and including removal. This appears to you to be a fraud or theft against the government.

1. What penalty factors are at work in this case that you feel are "penalty-reducing," i.e., are in favor of the employee?
2. What penalty factors are at work in this case that argue for a strong penalty?
3. On balance, what penalty would you impose in this case?

Attendance and Leave Issues

Absenteeism is the most common cause for disciplinary actions.

The basic strategy for dealing with this issue is:

- You must learn and apply the rules for annual leave, sick leave, and leave without pay.
- Deny the leave request when it does not conform to the rules.
- Charge the employee AWOL (Absent without leave) for the absence. Remember: AWOL is NOT a disciplinary action; it is only a time-keeping charge. However, it now becomes the basis for a disciplinary action.
- Discipline for AWOL, applying the penalty factors previously discussed.

Nothing requires you to discipline someone for AWOL, but you should follow with some formal discipline. This is also important for purposes of consistency.

The most common absenteeism situations you will encounter will be these: the employee who does not come to work at all and does not call; the employee who walks off the job, the sick leave abuser, and the annual leave abuser.

When an employee does not come to work and does not call or when someone walks off the job, immediately charge the employee AWOL, follow progressive discipline, and apply penalty factors.

When an employee abuses sick leave,

- Don't be afraid to question absences. Questioning an employee about his/her illness and its limitations on the job is not an invasion of privacy.
- Monitor unplanned short absences for pattern
- Put the person on restricted sick leave. Your Labor & Employee Relations advisors can prepare a letter for you. Require documentation for every single hour of sick leave use. (Supervisors do not have to accept "conclusive" medical documentations; you can require "evidence administratively acceptable.")
- Deny leave and charge AWOL if documentation is not acceptable
- Progressively discipline for absences

Remember when we talk about sick leave abuse, it's not the amount of leave, but rather the frequency and increments. In looking for patterns of sick leave use, you're looking for a pattern of unplanned sick leave around weekends and holidays in short increments. There's no formula but many agencies look for six absences in one year, or four in conjunction with days off as a "signal" of sick leave abuse and put employees on leave restriction.

Situation

This is an actual case:

A GS-11 Immigration Examiner at an airport had been on continuous sick leave since April based upon severe back problems. In July, INS directed him to furnish a comprehensive medical report showing the exact medical problems he suffered from, the medical restrictions on the job, and how long his incapacity would last.

On July 30, the employee provided his supervisor information covering the entire amount of leave with a note from his doctor saying, "Mr. X will be off work until August 13 – lower back problems." The INS did not consider this sufficient and sent him another letter telling him that it would charge him AWOL effective July 16 (the start of the pay period) unless he submitted the more comprehensive medical evidence asked for.

He came back with two more notes from the some doctor. One, dated July 3, said "Recurrence low back problems" and another, dated July 30, said "Low back pain – will be off work until August 13."

The employee's supervisor told him that this was still inadequate and demanded more information about what was wrong with him, the prognosis, and what he was incapacitated from doing.

The employee said that he had already satisfied the requirement with the doctor's statement and had furnished all that INS needed. INS charged him with six weeks AWOL and removed him. The employee maintained that he did submit what should have been acceptable documentation and the doctor certified his incapacity.

Did INS have the right to demand more medical evidence? Do you think their removal action stood?

There's *really no such thing as misuse of annual leave*, since we want employees to take it. However, you should know the basic rules.

- Annual leave is an absolute right.
- Agencies may determine when it is used.
- If denied, the denial must be for legitimate reasons.
- Management has the right to determine whether last-minute requests meet agency standards.

Situation

This is also an actual case:

An Air Force Base in the state of Washington requires employees to schedule their vacation time in advance. In January an employee asked for three weeks of annual leave in June. The supervisor said that he could only approve two weeks. So the employee submitted the request for the two weeks, but told his supervisor that he wanted to pursue the issue of a third week of leave. The employee then went to the employee relations office and asked what would happen if he just went ahead and took the extra week of leave. One human resources specialist told him that their table of penalties called for a letter of reprimand for the first offense while another told him that he might be severely disciplined.

His supervisor heard about this and warned him in writing that he had better not take the extra week. The employee continued to maintain that he had the right to the extra week. He left for leave and his two weeks were up on July 11. One July 5, he had a flat tire repaired in Fontana, California (near Los Angeles) and on Monday, July 11, he called his office. The supervisor was not there so he told a clerk that he had tried to come back on time, but had a flat tire that delayed him for two days. He said that he also was in the LA area and that his recreation vehicle was overheating. He said that these problems would prevent him from coming home until the weekend. He came back and introduced evidence that on July 13, he had a wheel and wheel lug studs replaced in Weed, California (about 500 miles south of the air force base). The receipt showed that the work was needed because of damage caused when he had the tire replaced. The employee had no receipts or documentation for the overheating problem. The employee said that he arrived in Weed the night of July 12 after the dealer had closed and could not leave until the afternoon of the 13th.

The Air Force charged him AWOL for the entire extra week.

Will the AWOL charge stand up?

SUPERVISORS' ROLE IN VALUING DIVERSITY

Today's workforce is more racially, ethnically, and culturally mixed than ever before in our history. This presents a unique set of challenges in decision making, teamwork, and accomplishing objectives. Successful managers use all available talent and points of view to make better decisions and solve problems effectively; recruit and hire employees from an expanded candidate base; and capitalize on all of the talent available on work teams to reach organizational goals.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Identify supervisory responsibilities in preventing and dealing with discrimination and harassment
- Describe the appropriate actions managers should take to address EEO allegations
- Describe the differences between EEO, affirmative action, and diversity
- Identify ways to increase their effectiveness in dealing with a diverse workforce

How would you respond?

Scenario 1

An employee who has worked on your team for several years is generally considered a good and easygoing employee by others in the office. As his supervisor, you find him to be a hard worker with a pleasant nature and a great sense of humor. However, he has a habit of putting his arms around the shoulders of women or placing his hand on their backs when he is talking with them. Most of the women do not appear to mind, but you have noticed that a few appear uncomfortable. He does not engage in this behavior with men.

What, if anything, should you do?

Scenario 2

An employee has a lot of physical problems. Her speech is somewhat disorganized, her equilibrium is off, and she has some visual impairment. Over the last few weeks, she has become the subject of practical and derogatory jokes in the office. The nature of the jokes has deteriorated over time from good-natured fun to hostile and vindictive. She approaches you with a complaint about the unkind jokes.

What, if anything, should you do? Does she have a legitimate EEO complaint?

Guiding Principles for Supervisors - USAID Job Aid

- Model appropriate behavior at all times
- Protect the rights of employees
- Be alert for changes to EEO legislation
- Support EEO and diversity
- Act promptly to prevent or correct situations that may give rise to complaints
- Promote open communication
- Refuse to permit discriminatory acts of any type by anyone in your organization
- Examine your attitude and behavior and be open to change

Addressing EEO Allegations

* Adapted from USAID Job Aid

Step 1 – Listen actively to the employee.

- Seek to understand the employee's situation.
- Keep in mind the employee is probably hurting and it takes courage to come to you with his/her concerns. The employee may feel vulnerable, fearful, embarrassed, or act cautious.
- Listen and observe before you speak. Remember, you are trying to understand the situation "as the employee sees it."
- Only ask clarifying questions to understand the incident and to reflect the employee's feelings. Do not give your opinion or advice.

Step 2 – Summarize and reflect what you have heard.

- Once the employee has fully explained the situation, it is important that you repeat the account to the employee to demonstrate you have listened, heard, and understood. At this point you do not know whether the account is true, but you must understand it from the employee's perspective.
- If necessary, continue to ask clarifying questions until the employee is satisfied that you understand.
- When you both agree that you have it right, go to the next management step.

Step 3 – Ask the employee, "What do you want to see happen?"

- The response to this open-ended question will let you know what range of possible actions you will need to take to deal effectively with the problem.
- Depending upon the employee's response, you can determine if you will be able to resolve the issue yourself or if you need to seek higher level involvement.

Step 4 – Schedule a follow-up session with the employee.

- As you bring closure to the first meeting, arrange to get back to the employee in no more than a couple of days in most cases.

Step 5 – Take immediate management action. Consider the need to get the employee's permission to share information before involving anyone else.

Action steps may include

- Talking with another employee
- Collecting information
- Documenting all that has taken place up to this point. (Document thoroughly all incidents involving EEO concerns with which you have contact.)
- If you are unsure about what to do next, contact a specialist in the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, a specialist in the Labor, Employee Relations and Benefits Division, or your Executive Officer.
- Under most circumstances, notify your own supervisor of any potential problem.

Step 6 – Get back to the employee as scheduled.

- It is important to let the employee know you are actively pursuing concerns and trying to help resolve issue.
- You may/may not tell the employee all the actions you have taken.
- You may be able to resolve the issue, or you may advise your employee to contact the Office of EOP or M/HR/LERB if you feel you are unable to resolve the problem informally.
- If the employee has additional concerns, you may need to repeat Steps 1 to 5.
- Be sure to document your actions.

Step 7 – Follow-up with the employee.

Over time, check in with the employee to make sure that he/she is comfortable with the way the issue was resolved, even though a formal complaint was averted or you believe the problem was resolved.

Discrimination Pitfalls - USAID Job Aid

Selection (Recruitment and Hiring) and Duty Assignment

- Sharing past history with another selecting supervisor to “warn” that the candidate is a “troublemaker” or “not a team player” because the employee has filed a complaint or engaged in EEO activity
- Demanding higher qualifications from women, minorities, or persons with disabilities
- Refusing to select a minority, women, or disabled person because of fear that the candidate would not “fit in” and that the workgroup would not accept the individual
- Making any protected-group-related comments as a basis for selection or non-selection
- Failing to appropriately consider highly qualified minority or female candidates from underrepresented groups, and particularly if the Agency’s bureau or office profile shows conspicuous absences or under representation of minorities and/or females as compared to the labor force
- Failing to give appropriate consideration because a candidate has a disability that MAY need to be accommodated
- Refusing to give appropriate consideration to candidates because of their past use of the grievance, EEO, or any other official complaint system

Promotion and Recognition (Awards)

- Making selections for promotions and/or awards based on “gut feelings” or other non-job-related factors
- Failing to recommend an individual for an award because of past use of any official complaint system

Training

- Denying training or other developmental assignments to minority, woman, or disabled person, which is generally available to other workforce employees in similar positions and grades
- Failing to provide training because of past use of any official complaint system

Disciplinary Actions

- Not properly documenting reasons leading to disciplinary action. Then, saying or doing something which can be interpreted as discrimination or retaliation
- Imposing harsher discipline on an individual based on his/her protected class.

Performance Appraisal/Evaluation

- Preparing inflated performance appraisals
- Using the performance appraisal as a counseling statement
- Including inadmissible or inappropriate comments on appraisals

Harassment or Mistreatment

- Failing to investigate and take appropriate action when an employee brings an allegation of harassment or abuse to your attention
- Permitting ethnic or sexual humor in the workplace
- Overly scrutinizing work projects of employees based on any protected group status
- Applying Agency rules/policies differently based on employee's protected status

EEO, Diversity, and Affirmative Action

Concept	Explanation
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)	Required by law Focuses on compliance and treating people fairly and equitably Targets all races, ethnicities, colors, disabilities, religions, genders, ages
Affirmative Action (Employment)	Grew out of need to address historical patterns of exclusion and discrimination in employment Focuses on bringing minorities/women into workplace in occupations and levels from which historically excluded Reacts to under representation with local labor pool
Diversity	Focuses on improving productivity through respecting, valuing, and using the differences people bring to the workplace Encourages inclusiveness and respect Focuses on creating a workplace that is welcoming and rewarding to everyone

Successful managers continuously work to improve their skills in dealing with a diverse workforce. Some proven techniques include *preventing stereotypes from interfering with communication by using the process of equity checking, interacting effectively with all people by focusing on language skills, and practicing methods of inclusion.*

Equity Checking

The purpose of equity checking is to prevent stereotyping from interfering with communication. By using the process of equity checking, you will be able to focus on the individual and the available facts, not on stereotyping or bias.

The equity checking process involves questioning any stereotypes you may hold, questioning the assumptions upon which you base your decisions, and focusing on the facts of the situation. When confronted by either routine or problem situations at work, you can use this process to ensure that stereotypes do not influence your decisions.

For example:

Elaine has demonstrated performance problems since her transfer to your unit, and as her manager you need to determine the cause of the problems. Few women have ever worked in this particular job and some of her men colleagues have made stereotyping comments about a woman's ability to do this kind of work. You want to be sure that your discussion with Elaine focuses only on the facts of the performance problems and is not influenced by these comments or any stereotypes you may have.

Using the equity checking process, you ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I feel only men should work in this job?
- Does Elaine have the skills and/or experience to do her job?
- Is Elaine getting the support or cooperation she needs to do her job?
- Are there factors outside of the work itself which could affect her performance?
- Is Elaine doing anything that I think might support a negative stereotype?
- Is there anything that I think Elaine should be doing differently?

For the equity checking process to work, you need to ask yourself some questions either before or during an interpersonal interaction. These questions help you evaluate and confirm that stereotyping and biases do not interfere with the interaction.

Interpersonal Communication

- Are stereotypes at play in this conversation?
- How do they affect the questions I ask?
- How do they affect the information I provide?
- Am I focusing my attention on the person because of stereotyping?
- Am I creating barriers through my comments, language use, or phrasing?

Feedback

- Is my feedback focusing on knowledge, skills, and abilities?
- Is my feedback based on stereotype?
- Is my feedback balanced, identifying both positive and constructive factors?
- Do I avoid giving feedback because of some bias or stereotype?

Task Delegation

- Am I biased toward or against this person?
- Am I assigning tasks based on stereotype?
- Am I being objective?
- Do I provide the necessary information for successful task completion?
- Does my assignment set up the person for failure?

Decision Making

- Have objective criteria been established and agreed upon?
- Is the decision-making process based on objective criteria?
- Do my decisions support self-fulfilling prophecies?

Conflict Resolution

- Have I prejudged the person?
- Am I responding to bias or stereotype?
- Is the conflict about opinion and preference as opposed to task and objective?

Coaching and Mentoring

- Am I selecting employees for coaching and mentoring because I feel most comfortable with them, or because helping them would be best for the organization?
- Do I provide coaching based on individual needs?
- Do I eliminate or reduce barriers to success?
- Do I fulfill negative stereotypes by providing ineffective, insufficient, or inappropriate coaching?

Language Skills

Effective communication in a diverse organization requires sensitivity to the needs of other people. Certain words, phrases and language may be offensive, demeaning, or discriminatory. To interact effectively with all people, think about what you are saying and how you say it:

- Use inclusive language (employees, people)
- Respect the preferences of others (Ms., journey worker, not journeyman)
- Avoid spotlighting (use manager, not black manager; use engineer, not female engineer)
- Use universally understood references and analogies (use “finish the job” instead of “go the whole 9 yards”)
- Avoid remarks that are specific to a culture, ethnic group, race or gender (Avoid sayings like “You go, girl!” “Que pasa?”)
- Avoid demeaning/politically incorrect terms (girls, boys, cripples, retarded)

Methods of Inclusion

These methods can help you eliminate discrimination and foster a more productive work environment.

Open Membership

Allowing all employees to participate in the work effort

- Orienting new members of the team to the work process
- Publicly communicating goals and objectives
- Encouraging the use of coaching
- Acquainting new employees with the structure of the informal network and unwritten rules

Shared Influence

Empowering all employees to influence the work product

- Soliciting information from all employees
- Responding to feedback and constructive criticism
- Providing more accountability and authority at all levels of the organization

Mutual Respect

Fairly considering diverse points of view regarding the activities of the work team

- Listening with an open mind (equity checking)
- Keeping your communication clear
- Identifying and minimizing barriers for employee success

Candor

Encouraging frank and open discussion of concerns, issues, and problems

- Actively seeking the input and feelings of others
- Minimizing the rumor mill; dealing with issues directly

Objective Job Criteria

Establishing a realistic set of criteria for knowledge, skills, and abilities required for each job or position

- Using objective and effective interviewing and selection techniques
- Establishing performance-based objectives and using those exclusively for appraisal and recognition
- Carrying out a periodic review system
- Matching employee skills and abilities to tasks to ensure success or develop skills to ensure success

Fairness

Ensuring fairness, not necessarily equity because some people need different amounts of training, time, etc., than others

- Establishing a series of mentoring systems to accommodate all employee groups
- Promote awareness of diversity initiatives and their effect on organizational effectiveness

Case Study

Tyler is the first-level supervisor. The employees he supervises fall into two groups: those with 15 or more years with USAID and “newcomers.” The turnover rate for the “newcomers” can be as high as 30%. Turnover only happens with the high tenure group when someone retires. They are very loyal and trusted workers

Barbara is an administrative support person promoted to this position from a secretarial position a couple of months ago. She takes care of much of the documentation and reporting and is an invaluable asset to the group. Even though Barbara is not a secretary, Tyler bought her flowers and candy on Secretaries’ Day.

When he does not receive a “thank you” from Barbara, he asks her if there is a problem. Barbara replies, “Since I am not a secretary, I don’t think I should thank you for giving me gifts on Secretaries’ Day. I worked hard to get this job.”

Tyler is miffed and decides that Barbara is overreacting and being rude. All he wanted to do was recognize her. In fact, a colleague told him that he wasn’t even called Secretaries’ Day anymore. Whatever! Since that time, Tyler rarely compliments her work, and has a tendency to criticize many of work habits.

What is the cause of the conflict?

What unwritten rules might be operating here?

What could Tyler have done differently?

What could Barbara have done differently?

Case Study

There are three candidates for an opening for a supervisory position in the CFO's office. Carl, Steve, and Brian were hired over a year ago. They are all equally qualified for their current positions and have all progressed nicely and work well as a team.

Bright, talented, and quick to learn, Carl has been working toward certification as a CPA. He will be taking the exam in three months. Neither Steve nor Brian is a CPA, but Steve is enrolled in a program at night.

When the manager chooses to promote Steve, Carl asks for an explanation.

The Facts

- Carl is the only black man in the department.
- There are no black supervisors or managers.
- All of the previous supervisors have been CPAs before being promoted. This is not a requirement for the job, but it was always seen as a plus.
- Steve has worked on several major projects, one in particular for the CFO.
- Carl's performance reviews have always been good to excellent.
- Steve's performance reviews have always been good to excellent.
- Carl has successfully worked on more major projects than anyone in the department.

Carl's Point of View

- He feels he is highly qualified to be supervisor.
- He feels he has management talent that is not being used.
- If successful on the exam, he will be a CPA in less than six months.
- He feels he has been discriminated against.

Manager's Rationale for Promoting Steve

- Steve has good rapport with department members and senior management which will let him do the job better.
- Steve will be getting his CPA within two years.
- Steve is older and has more business maturity.
- Steve is assertive.
- Carl sometimes comes on strong when interacting with internal clients.

Are there any stereotypes operating in the situation? If so, what are they?

Do you think Carl is the victim of discrimination? Why or why not?

What would you recommend the manager, Carl, and Steve do? Why?