MANAGEMENT SERVICE PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS CHECKLIST

* Use this information with all relevant procedures, policies, or CBAs
* Involve HR and your Appointing Authority

**Performance Planning Policy (20.5.3), Principles and Steps:**

- Apply all principles from Policy 20.5.3:
  - A. The performance plan links employee performance with organizational success.
  - B. The performance plan establishes targets and standards.
  - C. The performance planning process matches organizational values.
  - D. The performance planning conversation is continuous and on-going.
  - E. All performance planning activities are motivational.
  - F. All performance planning activities reinforce positive long-term relationships.

- Utilize Performance Planning form (CD 1521).
- Start with the Position Description.
- Agree on SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-oriented) and/or CLEAR (Customer-focused, Linked to unit/agency mission, End results not activities, Agreed to, Recorded) goals.
- Schedule follow-up performance planning meetings for the upcoming year.

**Writing the Appraisal:**

- Use objective and specific examples, rather than subjective and general. Lead with a general statement and use specific examples to back it up.
- Word the performance examples so that they clearly relate to unit or agency outcomes.
- If genuine and if job related, a strength/challenge/strength format is frequently effective.
- Negative examples, i.e. unresolved issues of ineffective behaviors by the manager, require back-up documentation. Ensure these challenges have been discussed with the manager previously. No surprises.
- Make the written tone professional but not distant; personable but not overly friendly.
- Remove all Protected Class references (age, gender, race, religion, etc.)
- Avoid sarcasm and other attempts at humor.
- There is no place for personal attacks.

**Hazards: Preparing the Plan/Writing the Appraisal**

1. Non-existent or vague Position Description or agreed upon Performance Plan.
2. Infrequent follow-up, intermediate conversations.
3. Insufficient performance-related data/documentation.
4. Surprises. Gotcha!
5. The Halo Effect.
6. The Leniency, Strictness or Average Tendencies.
7. Unclear or inaccurate wording in the appraisal itself.

**Conducting the Interviews:**

- If current performance is satisfactory or above, be employee centered. Make it safe, encourage an environment of self-reflection. Discuss and positively reinforce successes. Link future performance goals to unit and agency outcomes.
- If performance improvement is needed in one or more areas, be employee centered. Make it safe for the employee, acknowledge challenges, encourage an environment of self-reflection, let the employee have the majority of the air time. Redirect if the employee begins to repeat justifications, explanations.
- Have the employee clarify the performance target. Encourage the employee to tell you what the target behavior is or should be. Encourage the employee to clarify the consequences of not changing and of changing, in that order.
- Diagnose whether or not the performance is a training problem: Can the employee perform as required on some occasions? If no, then there may be a knowledge or skill deficiency. If yes, then training is not the answer. If training is required, then mutually develop a training plan. If training is not required, then you are dealing with either resources or motivation.
- Notice resistance and then let it slide by, recognize and reinforce positive change language:
  1. Use open-ended questions to elicit how the employee thinks and feels about change.
  2. Affirm employee thoughts, language and efforts toward the target behavior.
  3. Use reflective statements to probe for depth and to demonstrate understanding.
  4. Use brief summaries to bring together the employee’s change language.
- Keep it short. Ask about the importance of the change, their confidence in making the change, and their readiness to make the change on a scale of 0 to 10. Follow up with “Why not a 1 or a 2?”
- Move toward and consolidate a performance plan.

**Hazards: The Interview**

1. Suggesting solutions before being asked. You may need to clarify the solution boundaries though.
2. Ordering, directing or commanding.
4. Debating.
5. Warning or threatening.
6. Stating the consequences if the employee already knows them.
7. Failing to document, follow up or start the next plan.