



Assessing and Evaluating Individual Staff Performance
Supervisor Core – Module 4
Ohio Child Welfare Training Program




Training Requirements

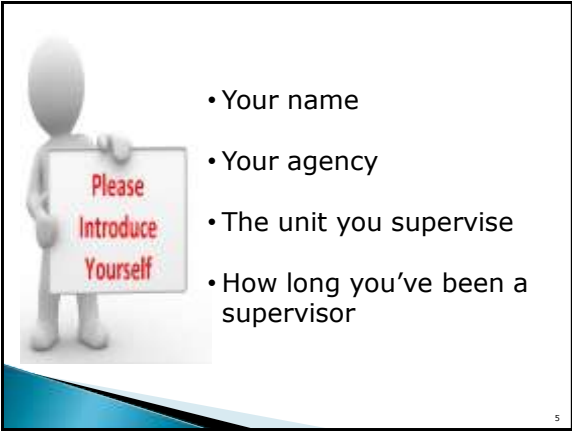
- ▶ Participants can miss no more than 15 minutes during the *entire workshop*, not per day.
- ▶ If you miss more than 15 minutes, you will be unable to receive credit for attending the workshop

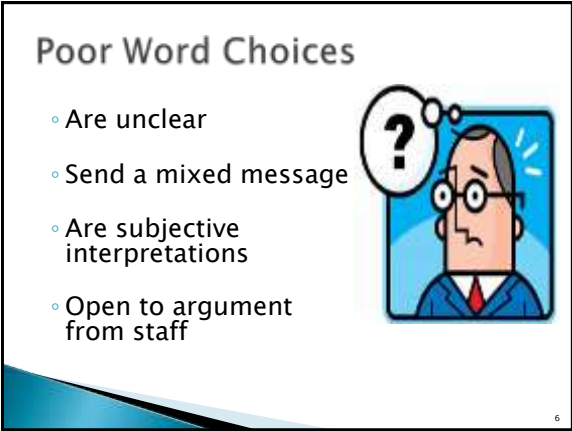


QR Codes










Do your staff always understand exactly what it is you're trying to tell them?

How do you know?


When writing a letter or documentation, do staff choose words that are unquestionably clear?

What happens when clients are unable to understand the message given to them?




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"Caseworker X is always showing disrespect to foster parents."



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Interpretation?



Description?

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Sarah has missed four appointments with foster caregivers, has not taken calls from them on five different occasions and has not returned six calls when messages were left.



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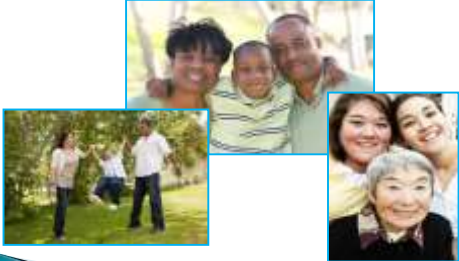
Interpretation?



Description?

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Competent, confident, and committed staff ensure the highest quality of services to children and families.



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Supervisors Must Understand

- ✓ What staff are supposed to do and why
- ✓ How each staff position fits into the entire organizational scheme
- ✓ The unit's role in helping the agency achieve its mission and objectives



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Supervisors Must Also:

- ✓ Know exactly what their unit must achieve
- ✓ Identify unit objectives
- ✓ Communicate necessary levels of performance
- ✓ Help staff stay focused on their unit's contribution
- ✓ Hold staff accountable

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Agency Mission

- Provides purpose/reason for being
- Guides activities and decision-making
- Spells out overall goal
- Provides sense of direction



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In collaboration with other community providers, we will provide services to ensure the safety, permanence, and well-being of children and families coming in to our system.

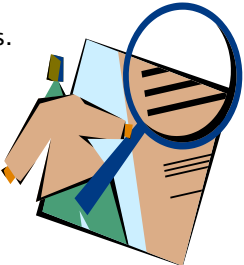
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Agency Objective

Define the areas of focus.

Example:

Achieve permanency for children who come into the child welfare system.



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Unit Mission

Describes how the unit will do its part to move the agency toward achievement of its mission and objectives.



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Unit Objectives


What the unit does to help the agency achieve its mission/goal and objectives

e.g., *Finalize adoption placements within 12 months*



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When agency and unit objectives are made *explicit*, staff are better able to understand *what they need to do* and *how their work contributes to the agency successfully achieving its goal.*



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Next: Consider all the job tasks that are required of the unit in order to meet its objectives.

e.g., *Caseworkers will meet with the adoptive family every two weeks to review progress on goals and provided services.*



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We know the job tasks required to the achieve unit objectives.

What will the job performance look like if done right?

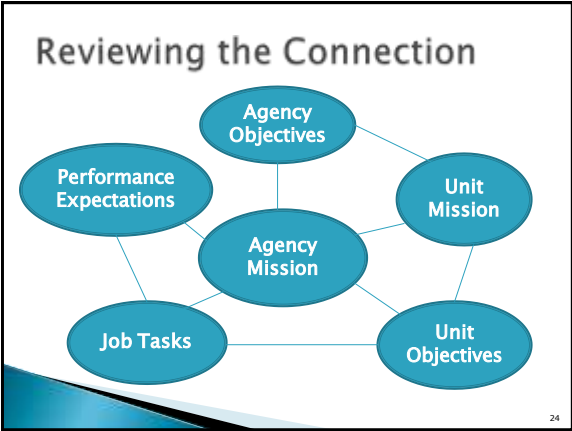
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For example:

Caseworker will visit adoptive placement (X frequency), identify strengths and weaknesses of the placement, and work with the family to remove barriers to finalization within required time frames.



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Small Group Activity

1. Choose a mission statement.
2. Create an agency objective, a unit mission, a unit objective, and two job tasks required to achieve the unit objectives.
3. Document these on flip-chart paper.

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Job Descriptions

- Inform staff of specific duties, tasks, and responsibilities of the job
- Provide list of qualifications necessary for position (skills, training, education, abilities)
- Identify person or position to whom staff are accountable

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Job Descriptions

- ▶ In what capacity are they used?
- ▶ How often are they reviewed with staff?
- ▶ Are the job descriptions current (i.e., are they truly descriptive of people's jobs)?

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Job Description Activity

In your small groups, take 10-15 minutes to develop a job description for staff in your type of unit.



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Performance Expectations

Statements that are:


- ▶ Quantifiable
- ▶ Observable
- ▶ Objective

What it looks like if done at an acceptable level

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S.M.A.R.T. Criteria

To develop individual performance expectations, use S.M.A.R.T. criteria



- S**pecific*
- M**easurable*
- A**chievable*
- R**elevant*
- T**imely*

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Small-Group Activity

Practice writing S.M.A.R.T. individual performance expectations for the two job tasks developed earlier.



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Parallel Process

Performance Expectations for Staff

Case Plan Expectations for Client Families

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Excellent

Good

Average

In every observation of staff, during every individual staff conference, and during every review of their work, supervisors assess staff performance.

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Performance Levels

- ▶ Acceptable level (meets expectations)
- ▶ Unacceptable level (below expectations)
- ▶ Higher than acceptable level (above expectations)

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Performance Expectation

All leave requests for vacations and personal days must be submitted on the leave request form two (2) weeks before the desired leave date.

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Unacceptable Performance

Leave requests for vacations and personal days are submitted less than two (2) weeks before the desired leave date and/or are not submitted on the leave request form.

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Above Acceptable

Leave requests for vacations and personal days are submitted on the leave request form at least two (2) weeks before the desired leave date. Coverage of essential duties is also arranged by the worker.


Excellent

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Ohio Differential Response Practice Profiles

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Individual Activity




1. Use one of the individual performance expectations developed in the previous exercise
2. Use S.M.A.R.T. criteria to describe what it would look like if staff were performing above standard and below standard expectations on their job task.

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Individual Activity

Determine the level of performance (acceptable, higher than acceptable, unacceptable) for their staff for the other job task.



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Performance Problems are like locks



Solutions are like keys

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Diagnostic Matrix


| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------------------------------|
| | DOES NOT HAVE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AWARENESS | HAS KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AWARENESS |
| DOES "IT" | REINFORCE POSITIVELY CLOSE FOLLOW-UP (+) | REINFORCE POSITIVELY (+) |
| DOESN'T DO "IT" | DISCREPANCY OF KNOWLEDGE (K) | DISCREPANCY OF EXECUTION (E) |
| | K | K/e |
| | K/E | k/E |
| | | E |

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Performance Discrepancies

There may not be a clear deficiency of knowledge *or* a deficiency of execution.

- E.g. Some staff may have some knowledge of how to do a task, but may not be doing it correctly.



incorrect

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1. Has staff performed this task acceptably in the past?
2. Does staff articulate understanding of the dynamics related to the job task in case conferences and/or other individual staff conferences?

If to "yes" to either question, proceed as if there is a deficiency of execution

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Strengths-Based Questions

- What is working well?
- What could be going better?
- What stops things working better for you?
- What small thing could you do that would make a difference?



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Performance Discrepancies



- Lack of motivation
 - Burnout
- Personal or family illness; problems at home
- Lack of understanding that the task is important

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Organizational Barriers



- Heavy workload
- Lack of needed resources
- Inadequate supervision
- Negative result for good performance
- Positive result for non-performance
- Lack of positive reinforcement for performance

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It Is Vital for Supervisors to...

- ▶ Identify deficiencies of knowledge vs. deficiencies of execution
- ▶ Explore non-training barriers to performance with staff




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Training Works ONLY

When staff do not know how to do job tasks.

If the "lock" to the performance problem is a lack of knowledge and/or skill



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Individual Activity

1. Analyze performance discrepancies of the challenging- least competent staff
2. Is deficit is due to lack of knowledge /skill/awareness or a deficit in execution?
3. If due to a discrepancy in execution, identify the apparent reason

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Next, consider where staff are along a continuum (e.g., mostly knowledge with some execution deficits; equal knowledge and execution deficits, etc.)

K Deficiency_____ Staff X _____E Deficiency

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What intervention is best?

- ▶ A deficiency of knowledge or skill is a training issue
- ▶ A deficiency of execution is a non-training issue.
- ▶ A combination of the two would require more than one intervention

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Documentation Components

- Timeliness
- Objectivity
- Neutrality
- Professionalism



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- Confirms desired results
- Identifies gaps between what staff are doing and what supervisors expect
- Provides information on how to improve

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Effective Feedback Qualities

- ▶ Useful and specific
- ▶ Frequent
- ▶ Well-timed
- ▶ Direct



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Effective Feedback Qualities

- ▶ Supportive
- ▶ Behavioral
- ▶ Clear



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Parallel Process


- ▶ Supervisors identify performance discrepancies in staff
- ▶ Caseworkers identify issues of risk with clients
- ▶ Both should address issues in a strengths-based, solution-focused manner

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Strengths-Based Feedback

Directive

- You are doing well when...
- You can improve further by...
- This is a challenge because...
- IF, you do...
- THEN, I will do...



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Strengths-Based Feedback

Non-directive

- Where are you doing well?
- Where can you improve further?
- Why is this a challenge? (*Never ask "why" if they are competent but uncommitted.)
- What, where, when, how? (will you do)...
- These are some things I can do. Would they help you?

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Strengths-Based Feedback

Evaluative

- ▶ Given after supervisors have directly observed staff performance
- ▶ Can be positive or corrective

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| <u>Corrective</u> | <u>Positive</u> |
|--|---|
| <i>"Jane, I observed you rolling your eyes when Mr. Smith was talking to you."</i> | <i>"Jane, I reviewed your court report today. You submitted it three days early, and it contains a comprehensive, behaviorally-specific, and detailed account of the child's interaction with the grandmother."</i> |

Strengths-Based Feedback

Developmental

- ▶ Given after evaluative feedback is offered
- ▶ Provides staff with information about behavior supervisors want to continue and what changes supervisors expect
- ▶ Can be positive or corrective

Corrective Developmental Feedback

"Jane, please use effective nonverbal communication skills when talking to clients. I observed your behavior as Mr. Smith was talking. This may communicate to him that you don't believe him or don't value his statements. Please show your interest in and your respect for Mr. Smith by making intermittent eye contact as he is speaking."

Positive Developmental Feedback

"Jane, I really appreciate that you finished your court reports before the deadline. You also provided a comprehensive detailed account of the grandmother's interaction. This is excellent work."



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Dyad Activity

1. Person One – present a brief scenario about a performance issue
2. Person Two – provide examples of:
 - Corrective evaluative feedback
 - Positive, strengths-based evaluative feedback
 - Corrective developmental feedback
 - Positive, strengths-based developmental feedback

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Principles of Effective On-Going Feedback

- Maintain and enhance self-esteem
- Listen actively and respond to staff with concern
- Ask staff for help and encourage their involvement
- Share thoughts, feelings, and rationale
- Provide support to staff without removing their responsibility

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Communicating Resistance

- ▶ Avoiding responsibility for the problem
- ▶ Flooding supervisors with details
- ▶ Changing the subject
- ▶ Being unusually silent
- ▶ Showing premature compliance



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Communicating Resistance

- ▶ Attacking supervisor verbally
- ▶ Pressing for solutions rather than trying to understand the problem
- ▶ Claiming supervisors do not fully understand the situation




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Small Group Activity

Discuss the following question:

How have you handled resistance when discussing performance issues with staff? What worked or did not work?



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Managing Resistance - 1

- Avoid giving logical explanations or offering solutions
- Deal with emotions first
- Identify what form the resistance is taking

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Managing Resistance - 2

- Listen to the words and to the underlying message: *"I am angry at being called on the carpet,"* or *"You don't understand my situation."*
- Focus on the feelings of staff, not the content. *"You seem angry (or frustrated). Tell me why."*

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Managing Resistance - 3

- Remain silent. Let staff respond to the feedback. This gives staff an opportunity to express their concerns or feelings.
- E.g., *"I'm afraid you're going to blame me for this,"* or *"This case is so complicated; I'm angry you haven't helped me with it."*

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Managing Resistance - 4

- Acknowledge and deal with the resistance and the feelings
- *Whenever* confronted with staff resistance, remember to check your own demeanor and make sure you're not contributing to the problem

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- ▶ Performance *assessment* - the ongoing process of observing and appraising staff performance
- ▶ Performance *analysis* - looking at performance execution to pinpoint where problems might occur.

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Performance Evaluation

- ▶ A specific event conducted by supervisors at least once annually with every staff person in their unit



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According to the Ohio Department of Administration

“It is the responsibility of every manager and supervisor to honestly evaluate the work performance of his/her employee at least once a year. Performance evaluation is not only a management right; it is a management duty.”

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Preparing for the Annual Performance Evaluation – 1

1. Communicate with staff about the process
2. Set date for actual review a month in advance
3. Provide staff with previous evaluation

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Preparing for the Annual Performance Evaluation – 2

Have staff complete a self-appraisal to be submitted at least two weeks prior to the performance evaluation date



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Preparing for the Annual Performance Evaluation – 3

- ▶ Provide staff with specific criteria that will be used. (i.e., rating scale and interpretation)
- ▶ Gather and analyze data

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Data Sources


- Notes from supervisory conferences
- Notes of staff participation in unit meetings
- Case reviews (or other work documentation review)
- Recorded observations of staff




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Data Sources

- SACWIS and CPOE data
- Staff job description
- Performance expectations
- Staff Performance Improvement Plan
- Staff Individual Development Plan
- Staff goals



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Very Important Point 

- If staff receive all high ratings, they are over-qualified for the job and need to be doing something that better meets their qualifications.
- If staff receive all low ratings, they are unqualified for the job.

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Conducting the Evaluation

- Review the job tasks
- Explain that higher or lower ratings are reserved for performance that stands out from the others, i.e., an area in which they're excelling or struggling.
- Provide specific examples and details.

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Suggestion

Near the end of the evaluation meeting, write down two or three things the staff person has done best over the past year and the two areas that most need improvement.

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Closing the Meeting

- ▶ Ask staff if s/he has questions or comments.
- ▶ After all discussion has taken place, request staff sign the evaluation.
- ▶ Once all required signatures are gathered, have the original evaluation (if it is a paper copy) placed in the staff's personnel file.
- ▶ Give staff a copy if appropriate.

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Responding to Staff - 1

- Use strengths-based language
- Maintain composure
- If staff refuse to sign the evaluation, explain their signature merely conveys they have had the evaluation reviewed with them.



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Responding to Staff - 2

- If anger or defensiveness continues, request that staff sign the back of the document. (It achieves the same purpose.)
- If anger or defensiveness still continue, document the nature of the resistance and add that information to the evaluation document.

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Dyad Activity

1. Find a partner.
2. Take turns practicing managing staff resistance during a performance evaluation.



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Have any of you experienced resistance from staff during a performance evaluation?

What happened?

How did you feel during the experience?

How did you handle the situation?

Was the strategy successful?

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Progressive Discipline

- ▶ Assists staff in understanding a performance problem exists but opportunity for improvement also exists.
- ▶ The goal is to bring staff performance to within an acceptable level.

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Progressive Discipline

- ▶ Requires use of the least severe actions necessary to correct the performance deficit.
- ▶ The severity of the action increases only when the deficit persists.

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Step 1

Talk with staff about their performance and their understanding of the job requirements.

Is there any issue contributing to the poor performance that is not immediately obvious to the supervisor?

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Step 2 **Step 3** **Step 4**

Resolve the issue if possible.

Explain the acceptable performance standard and give staff a reasonable amount of time to comply.

Inform staff of the consequences if they fail to comply.

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Step 5 **Step 6**

- Provide a verbal warning and document it in the staff's personnel file.
- Provide a written warning, and place a copy in the staff's personnel file.

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Last Steps


Recommend suspension without pay.

Recommend termination.




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Important Point



It's critical that the chain of documentation be provided to demonstrate the entire process



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Top Performing Staff

- ▶ Consistently perform their job tasks well
- ▶ Will likely have no discrepancies of knowledge or execution



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Top Performing Staff


Require supervisory:

- Attention
- Encouragement
- Support



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Cautions




- ▶ Overburden these staff with more work than they can accomplish
- ▶ Always give the top-performing staff the most difficult work

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Strategies - 1

- Expand their job responsibilities into an area of their interest
- Invite them to be peer coaches, trainers, or mentors
- Involve them in decision-making.
- Delegate supervisory responsibilities to them.



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Strategies - 2




- Provide personal and professional development opportunities
 - e.g., encourage them to be a conference presenter
- Support their involvement in professional/civic organizations

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Strategies - 3

- Advocate for their promotion or for a non-promotional increase in status and pay.
- Put them in highly visible positions.
- Acknowledge their work.
- Provide frequent feedback.




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- ▶ Is there trust and respect?
- ▶ Does s/he feel empowered and appreciated?
- ▶ Is s/he satisfied in his/her job and professional development?
- ▶ Based on what you've learned in this workshop, is there anything you would immediately do differently in your supervision with this person?


Situation 1

For the last month, a typically organized, responsible staff person has been consistently missing deadlines.



Provide feedback about the performance deficit.

Situation 2



One of the staff in your unit is expressing a lot of resistance about a new initiative the Director wants your unit to pilot.

Provide strengths-based feedback with this person.