

Air Intelligence Agency Civilian Appraisal and Performance Awards Handbook

Performance Plans

General Information

Each SIP/GG/WS/WG civil service employee must be given a performance plan against which he or she is to be evaluated when the appraisal cycle begins. The performance plan contains elements (brief description of duties) and standards (description of level of performance required).

The performance plan is prepared on an AF Form 860, Civilian Performance and Promotion Appraisal-Performance Plan (available on the Air Force Electronics Publication Library at <http://afpubs.hq.af.mil>), or incorporated in AF Form 1003, Air Force Core Personnel Document. The AF Form 860 is a blank form upon which the supervisor creates and types the elements and standards. The form is used when an employee's position description is prepared on an AF Form 1378. The AF Form 1003 is a computer-generated product developed under the Core Document Writer (CDWriter) program. It combines both the performance plan and position description into one document. Elements (Job Duties) and standards are generated by the program and supervisors choose the applicable ones to appear on the core document. Elements and standards written by the supervisor may be added to the computer-generated product if desired. The Requirements and Workforce Effectiveness Branch (HQ AIA/DPCR) will provide access and training for this product.

Final determination of performance elements and standards rests with the supervisor and reviewing official. However, each plan should be developed as a joint effort between employee and supervisor.

At least one critical element addressing individual performance must be included in the performance plan, but more may be necessary (normally not more than 7). Some elements and standards are mandatory and must appear in performance plans. They include elements on security, audit follow-up, internal controls, inventory management, acquisitions, safety and EEO. For example, the AIA security element and standard(s) are mandatory and must appear in each performance plan of all AIA employees. Other elements that must be considered for inclusion in employees' performance plans can be found in attachment 3 to AFI 36-1001 and the mandatory security element and standards for AIA organizations appear at the end of this chapter.

Performance plans must be provided to employees within 30 days after they are first hired or placed in a new position. Thereafter, recertified or reaccomplished plans are provided at the beginning of each annual rating cycle. Plans are approved by both the rating and reviewing officials, then discussed with and signed by the employee.

If an employee is detailed or temporarily promoted and the action is expected to last 120 days or longer, the detail or temporary promotion supervisor will provide a written Performance Plan to the employee as soon as possible.

Supervisors should review their employees' performance plans periodically to ensure they accurately reflect the significant duties of the position. If an employee's duties change appreciably during the appraisal period, the supervisor should modify the plan. If the changes are minor, a simple pen-and-ink change to the AF Form 860 or the AF Form 1003 initialed by employee will suffice. Any major changes to the core document (AF Form 1003) must be made in conjunction with HQ AIA/DPCR.

After the performance plan is completed, including required signatures, a copy of the plan should be given to the employee. This includes revised plans with minor pen-and-ink changes. The original performance plan is filed in the Supervisor's Employee Work Folder (commonly known as the 971 file).

How To Write Effective Performance Elements

An element, or job duty, is a major and important requirement of the position. Elements establish the employee's direct contribution to the accomplishment of the organizational objectives. Elements are DESCRIPTIVE, and they relate WHAT needs to be done. Elements must be job-related and consistent with the position description, including the level of authority or complexity that accompanies the position.

There is no universal method used to determine the number or content of performance elements. Performance elements should not attempt to cover every conceivable activity, knowledge, skill, or product needed for a job. You may have some insignificant job duties assigned that you do not feel are important enough to describe as an element, or you may feel an additional duty is important enough to include in the plan and rate. Performance elements should be written in short, simple, concise sentences that describe the major duties.

Criteria for effective elements includes:

- a. They should support department or work unit objectives, as well as the broader mission.
- b. They should be job related and reflect the level of authority or complexity that accompanies the position. Only require what the employee has the authority to do.
- c. They should cover major job requirements, the key job components that represent the complete job. They are important enough (grade-supporting), and done often enough, to make them worth appraising. Each element says something different, without overlapping another.
- d. They are important enough so that individual job success, and sometimes the success of the organization, is threatened if not properly performed. (Elements are so important that unacceptable performance cannot be tolerated.)
- e. They should be clearly stated, understandable to all interested parties as specific, objective job components.

Some sample elements:

- Directs staff in the performance of a full range of external recruitment activities.
- Maintains office documentation files.
- Prepares routine correspondence, forms, reports, and other documents.
- Reviews, distributes, and controls incoming and outgoing mail.
- Conducts negotiations to reach an agreement on contract price, terms, and conditions.

How To Write Effective Performance Standards

One of the most important activities a manager or supervisor performs is that of developing standards. Employee input to the process can be extremely beneficial. Good standards clarify performance expectations for employees. The challenge is to “put down on paper” in a clear and concise manner what supervisors know intuitively to be successful performance.

Performance standards describe at least acceptable performance. Acceptable performance is a level of performance, which is neither higher nor lower than would be expected from a majority of employees in a similar position.

Performance standards prescribe how a particular element is to be accomplished. Effective standards must be measurable and exceedable, and expressed in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness, or work behaviors. You may use all four types for a single element, but there are performance elements that can't or don't need to be measured by all four types of standards. Necessary nonexceedable standards (e.g., safety) could be “compounded” with an exceedable standard, or in those rare cases where possible loss of life or damage to property could occur if the standard is not met, they could stand alone.

Standards should be within the employee's control. They should not require something that is either impossible or inappropriate for a particular job, grade or title. Employees cannot be held accountable for events and circumstances beyond their control. For example, an employee may be responsible for a budget recommendation, but cannot be held responsible for the final decision if it is made at a higher level.

Standards should be stated in a positive manner. Standards should prescribe how to perform rather than how not to perform. We all benefit from a positive environment as well as positive objectives. Error rates or tracking of complaints do not motivate employees and do not provide them an incentive to learn. Motivation comes from tracking successes rather than failures.

Standards are now being written in a subjective manner that becomes objective in the course of observing and evaluating performance. Quality standards can be defined in terms of performance indicators, e.g., results desired or manner of performance. Examples:

a. RESULTS DESIRED - Type of result to be obtained

“Option papers contain accurate data.”

This does not necessarily mean zero errors; rather, it means no significant errors in fact.

“Thorough discussion of options.”

No significant options were omitted. All key aspects of the options were addressed.

b. MANNER OF PERFORMANCE - Desired work behaviors:

“Speaks clearly and with sufficient volume to be heard.”

There is no doubt what work behavior is needed to be successful.

“Forms are completed according to office standard operating procedures.”

In this standard the method of doing the work is expressed as a work behavior.

Most people are familiar with standards that address quantity and timeliness because historically we have taught supervisors to use plans that contained numbers, percentages, and dates--things that could be counted. We have found that writing objective standards does not mean we can or should always quantify what we do. Quantity isn't always an appropriate measure and using numbers may establish arbitrary and unrealistic standards. For example:

“The telephone must be answered within 3 rings.”

That's certainly measurable but does it really communicate a realistic performance expectation? In reality, the expectation is that the telephone should be answered promptly. It is unlikely a supervisor has the time to listen, count, and record each ring to ensure the employee is performing at an acceptable level. Also, changing priorities may delay answering the phone by the required number of rings. As you can see, a supervisor may lose the flexibility of subjective standards to adjust to different work situations by using quantitative standards.

In another example, can you measure a person's success as a manager with numbers and percentages? You may look at such things as staying within budgets. But numbers can't be used when setting expectations that address effective work relationships with other organizations or how well the manager plans and organizes. It's more likely that you would establish expectations based on work behaviors that lead to success on the job. Work behavior standards are particularly effective because they not only identify the desired work behavior needed to accomplish the job, but they allow performance to be evaluated that may not have an end result during the annual appraisal cycle.

Work behavior standards are seldom used to their full potential. For example:

Although a Little League coach determined that a batting average of “300” represented “fully successful” performance on his team, several players failed to reach this average. Simply telling the youngsters that they must hit 3 out of every 10 balls was ineffective because the players kept striking out and became demoralized. (Note that hitting 3 out of 10 balls is a very objective, results-oriented, quantitative standard.) However, performance improved tremendously when the coach focused on work behaviors, such as standing closer to the plate, keeping the bat level during the swing, changing to a wider stance, and having players wear their glasses. Identifying work behaviors greatly improved performance, plus it gave the coach the desired end result.

The same approach can be used in the work setting. The need for detail in describing the work behaviors would depend on the level and complexity of the position.

To illustrate further, work behavior standards for the element “prepares all division reports” may include the following:

- Identifying the requirements for the report through discussion with the supervisor.
- Conducting fact-finding.

- Researching appropriate regulations.
- Collecting data from other specialists.
- Preparing the report in a particular format or style.
- Reviewing and proofreading the report prior to submission.
- Forwarding the report to the appropriate people within previously established timeframes.
- Providing follow-up to make sure that the report was received and that no further action was required.
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The following is a sample list of action verbs for writing standards:

accepts	complies	extends	oversees	retains
accomplishes	completes	factual	periodically	returns
accumulates	comprehensive	fills	pertinent	runs
accurately	computers	films	plans	reviews
achieves	concise	finds	positive	revises
acknowledges	conducts	finishes	precise	rewards
acquires	conforms	formulates	presents	satisfactory
activates	considers	forwards	processes	satisfies
adapts	consistent	fulfills	proficient	sends
addresses	contacts	functions	promotes	services
adequate	contracts	gathers	proofs	settles
adjudicates	coordinates	grants	promptly	signs
administers	corrects	greet	proper	solicits
admits	counsels	groups	proposes	submits
advises	deducts	guides	prosecutes	substitutes
aids	defends	handles	protects	successful
alters	defines	heads	proves	sufficient
amends	delegates	helps	provides	suggests
amortizes	deploys	highly	publicizes	supervises
analyzes	describes	holds	purchases	supports
announces	designates	imparts	qualifies	sustains
answers	designs	implants	quantifies	teaches
appoints	destroys	improves	questions	testifies
appraises	details	in accordance with	rations	tests
appropriately	detects	includes	reads	thorough
arranges	determines	independently	realistic	timely
assembles	deters	initiates	reasonable	trains
assesses	develops	interprets	receives	transports
assigns	directs	leads	recommends	travels
assists	disapproves	logical	reconciles	uncovers
attends	disarms	makes	records	unifies
audits	disburses	manages	recruits	upgrades
authorizes	discusses	meaningful	refers	usable
buys	dispenses	monitors	reflects	useful
clearly	distributes	motivates	registers	utilizes
calls	documents	names	regularly	varies
cancels	downgrades	normally	relays	verifies

carries	effectively	notes	releases	voids
cashes	examines	notifies	relegates	well
checks	engages	obtains	requests	within
classifies	enhances	opens	researches	writes
collects	ensures	operates	responds	
commits	establishes	orders	responsive	
communicates	estimates	organizes	resulting	

Supervisors are sometimes confused about the difference between performance elements and standards. A common mistake is writing standards as duty statements (elements):

- Performance Element: Reviews purchase requests and attachments. (This briefly and concisely describes a duty; it does not describe “how” they are expected to perform it. In other words, there are no means of measurement identified in the element.)
- Performance Standard: Promptly reviews purchase requests and attachments to ensure compliance with contracting directives. (The means of measurement (standard) are “promptly” and “ensures compliance with”.)

NOTE: When applying measurement standards, it is important that the supervisor be able to explain what “prompt” and “timely” means in relationship to the expectations of an acceptable level of performance.

An example of a standard gone awry:

- Performance Element: Processes correspondence.
- Performance Standard: Forwards correspondence to the responsible official with no more than one deviation per week.

On the surface the standard seems reasonable, but consider the consequences of 52 pieces of misrouted correspondence with your organization in a year. How many of those would result in missed suspenses and who ultimately would be held responsible? Even more distressing is the fact that even if 52 pieces of correspondence were misrouted, this employee’s performance would still be acceptable. A suggested revision: Forwards correspondence to the appropriate responsible official in a timely manner (standards are “appropriate” and “timely”).

How to Prepare a Performance Plan (AF Form 860)

Type in the employee information at the top of the form (**see sample form at the end of this document**).

f. Position Title. If possible, use the employee’s functional title. For example, an Intelligence Specialist may have a functional title as Imagery Functional Manager.

g. Performance Elements and Standards. Type Part I of the form. Elements and standards should be listed together and in sequence. The first element on the plan should be numbered 1E, and the corresponding standard(s) 1S (or 1Sa, 1Sb, 1Sc, etc.). The second element should be numbered 2E, and the corresponding standard(s) 2S (or 2Sa, 2Sb, 2Sc, etc.).

Signatures and Review of the Performance Plan

The following information pertains to both the AF 860 and AF 1003 (core document).

The Rating Official (supervisor) signs and dates the performance plan and completes the phone number and Appraisal Period blocks on the performance plan. The Appraisal Period refers to the present appraisal cycle--not the employee’s date of hire. It will always be 1 Apr __ to 31 Mar __. After signing the plan, the Rating Official forwards the plan to the Reviewing Official.

The Reviewing Official reviews and approves the plan. Although Commanders should ensure there is a reasonable

quality control process in place, it is no longer required to designate a Quality Control Official to perform this function. Commanders may designate the reviewer or others to perform quality control on performance plans. After it is determined the plan is viable and meets administrative requirements, the plan is returned to the supervisor for presentation to the employee.

The supervisor discusses the performance plan with the employee, striving for a complete understanding of what type of performance is expected from the employee to be acceptable. The supervisor then obtains the employee's signature on the plan, provides a copy to the employee, and documents the discussion on the Supervisor's Employee Brief, AF Form 971. ("Steps To An Effective Performance Interview" under the appraisal portion of this guide will provide you with effective tools to conduct your discussions with employees.)

The performance plan must be signed by the Rating Official, Reviewing Official, and employee each rating cycle. If a new document is not required, the plan (or core document) may be recertified as many times as space permits. The original performance plan is placed in the supervisor's employee work folder (971 file).

Mandatory Elements and Standards

SECURITY :

The security element and standard below is not an example, but contains MANDATORY wording for all AIA employees. This is the only mandatorily worded element and standard in AIA. Supervisors may not add or subtract from the requirements written below. This element is to be in the plans of all employees if they hold security clearance/access.

- E. Protects classified information.
 - S. Demonstrates sound security practices for ensuring the safeguarding of classified information.

This standard is to be added as a substandard b if the employee is also a supervisor. As an option, it may be added to a combined element for supervisory responsibilities.

- S. Ensures education in and establishes and maintains procedures to ensure compliance with minimum requirements of security directives for employees with access to classified information.

Some regulations, DoD policies and provisions of law require certain matters be considered in the performance evaluations of employees. If your employee performs work in audit follow-up, internal management control, Equal Employment Opportunity (supervisors), inventory management, acquisitions, regulatory reinvention, classified information management, and safety (management level including first-line supervisors) Attachment 3 to AFI 36-1001 should be reviewed and applicable requirements placed in the performance plan.

Performance Appraisals

When to Complete a Performance Appraisal

When a SIP/GG/WS/WG employee is first appointed or reinstated to an Air Force position, the employee is assumed to have an entrance appraisal of Acceptable with presumptive ratings of 5 given in each of the nine appraisal factors. This assumed rating would be used until replaced by the rating given at the end of their first annual appraisal cycle. Employees are not barred from promotion consideration during this period but compete with other eligible employees with ratings of 5 in the appraisal factors. After the employee works in the position for the initial 90 days, a supervisor may, at his or her discretion, submit a rating to replace the presumptive rating. This may be accomplished to effect a personnel action or, if warranted, allow the employee to compete for promotion with appraisal factor ratings based on current performance. After their entry into the Air Force, employees receive annual appraisals that cover the period 1 April through 31 March. If an employee is reassigned, promoted, converted, or changed-to-a-lower grade, they carry their current rating of record until the next annual appraisal is due.

Employees leaving federal service prior to 31 March (i.e., retirement, resignation, etc.) are not required to receive a closeout or annual rating.

When an employee is temporarily assigned for 120 days or more (for example, on a detail or temporary promotion), the temporary rating official gives the employee a written performance plan on the temporary assignment as soon as possible. At the end of the temporary assignment, the temporary Rating Official rates the employee's performance and forwards the information to the permanent supervisor, who considers the input when completing the employee's next rating of record.

When an employee is on detail or temporary promotion for 90 calendar days or more and the annual appraisal is due, the temporary supervisor completes the rating in consultation with the permanent supervisor. If an annual appraisal is due and the detail or temporary promotion is for less than 90 calendar days, the Rating Official (permanent supervisor) completes the appraisal, but consults with the temporary supervisor.

Extend the last rating of record for one rating cycle for employees on long-term full-time (LTFT) training, intergovernmental personnel act (IPA) assignments, or military furlough if they have not worked at least 90 calendar days during the current rating cycle. If the employee is absent for more than one rating cycle, contact HQ AIA/DPCR for instructions.

Annual Performance Appraisal Cycle

PAY PLAN	TYPE OF RATING	APPRAISAL PERIOD	DATE RATED	PROCESSING PERIOD	EFFECTIVE DATE
GG, FWS or SIP	Annual	1 April, or date of entry on duty, through 31 March	1 April	1 April through 31 May	1 June

Management Responsibilities When EMPLOYEE CHANGES POSITIONS

If Employee Moves Within the Air Force		Between These Dates	Then	And
From	To			
GG, FWS or SIP	GG, FWS or SIP	Beginning of appraisal period to 1 January	Losing supervisor prepares information concerning performance and forwards to new supervisor	New supervisor renders annual rating of record at end of cycle.
GG, FWS or SIP	GG, FWS or SIP	1 January to 31 March	Losing Supervisor renders annual rating of record	Losing organization pays approved award

Management Responsibilities When SUPERVISOR DEPARTS

If the Employee Is	And the Supervisor Departs Between	And the Supervisor	Then
GG, FWS or SIP	Beginning of appraisal period to 1 January	Supervised Employee for any length of time	Departing Supervisor prepares informational rating and sends it to new supervisor
		Supervised Employee for 90 days or more	Departing Supervisor prepares informational rating for incoming supervisor
	Fewer than 90 days before closeout, to closeout date (1 Jan - 31 Mar)	Supervised Employee less than 90 days	Reviewing official prepares annual rating of record with input from departing supervisor

		Supervised Employee for 90 days or more	Departing Supervisor prepares annual rating of record and leaves it for processing
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Effective Dates

An employee new to federal service, reinstated, or transferred to the Air Force from another federal agency may be appraised at the end of, but no earlier than, 90 days. Therefore the appraisal period begins with the date the employee entered on duty; the ending date must be at least 90 days later; and the effective date is 30 days after the ending date of the appraisal period. AF Forms 860A, for your use, is a form flow form. Type in the employee's name, social security number, office symbol, and the From, To and Effective dates at the top of the form.

All SIP/GG/WS/WG employees employed by the Air Force for 90 days or more must have an annual appraisal completed for each rating year ending 31 March. The annual appraisal period is 1 April through 31 March, with ratings effective 1 June.

Ratings are closed out for employees who depart and employees whose supervisors depart during the period 1 January to 31 March. Any recommendations for awards should also be considered at this time. Funds for the recommended award will be deducted from the losing organization. These appraisals are the official rating and are presented to the employee for signature by the current supervisor after 31 March.

How to Rate an Employee's Performance

The rating official (supervisor) is responsible for ensuring annual appraisals are completed on each of their employees at the end of the cycle. The supervisor must finalize the rating with the Reviewing Official and, if necessary, with the Award Approving Official, before showing it to the employee. Commanders should ensure that there is a reasonable quality control process in place to ensure that awards are properly justified and that the appraisal is technically and administratively, and that correct data is sent to the Civilian Personnel Office.

AF Form 860A is used to record the rating ([see sample form at the end of this document](#)):

- AF Form 860A, Part A: Rate each element or job duty that appears on the employee's performance plan as either "Meets" or "Does Not Meet." The overall performance rating is derived from the ratings of the performance elements. If all elements are rated "Meets Standards," the overall rating is Acceptable. An overall rating of "Unacceptable" is given if one or more of the elements is rated "Does Not Meet." (If an Unacceptable rating is given, supervisors should immediately contact their Human Resources Specialist (Employee Relations) at their servicing Civilian Personnel Office for assistance. This contact must take place before the employee is advised of the Unacceptable rating.) If the employee has not had the opportunity to perform against an element in their performance plan during the appraisal period, mark "N/A" in the element block and do not count it when determining the overall rating. You may delete this element from the performance plan if it is obsolete, or leave it in if you expect the employee will perform against it in the future.
- AF Form 860A, Part B: "Impact on Mission Accomplishment" statements are required for GG-14s and GG-15s because they will be used for GG/GS-15 screening boards currently being prototyped in the Personnel and Financial Management Career Programs. These screening boards will be part of a larger initiative to revise the way senior personnel are selected and developed in the Air Force. The mission impact statements are limited to nine lines in bullet format. The impact statements are not required for other grade levels. Guidance on writing effective impact statements can be found in AFPAM 36-1003.
- AF Form 860A, Part C: Nine lines are available to provide justification in bullet format for performance (cash) or Time Off Awards. Justification in addition to the nine lines provided in Part C is not required unless your Award Approving Official requests it.
- AF Form 860A, Part D: Enter the type and amount of award in the appropriate block(s). The certification statement for Time Off Awards is preprinted on the AF Form 860A and does not have to be restated elsewhere.
- AF Form 860A, Part E: The Rater (supervisor) signs when he or she completes the rating. The second level supervisor signs as Reviewer. If the Rater is a wing or center commander, no Reviewer signature is

required. The Award Approving Official signs the rating form if an award is approved. The employee does not sign the appraisal form until after the rating is finalized and award decisions are completed. If the employee is unavailable for signature due to TDY or other reasons and the appraisal is needed for data input, the supervisor should write in pencil "Employee unable to sign" in the Employee Signature block and forward the AF Form 860A to the organization's designee for processing. After the processing is completed, the AF Form 860A will be returned to the supervisor to obtain the employee's signature. When all signatures have been obtained, a copy of the appraisal should be given to the employee and the original appraisal filed in the supervisor's Employee Work Folder (971 File).

- AF Form 860A, Part F: On the back of the AF Form 860A, rate every appraisal factor. The appraisal factors represent work behaviors that can be observed in the context of the employee's current position and are considered predictive of potential to perform at the next higher grade level. Do not complete appraisal factors if the employee is a GG-15 or higher.

Awards Given at Appraisal Time

Cash Performance Awards (PAs), Quality Step Increases (QSIs), Exemplary Performance Awards (EPAs) and Time Off Awards (TOAs) may be given to an employee incident to the appraisal cycle to recognize high levels of performance. Awards are not given automatically and employees may not grieve non-receipt of an award. Normally each year AIA organizations receive approximately 1 percent of their assigned civilian position salaries to distribute as cash awards throughout the year. Major staff officers, directors, and wing and center commanders are responsible for staying within this budgetary limit. When making recommendations, supervisors should consider all available means of recognition, both monetary (PAs, QSIs, EPAs, Notable Achievement Awards) and non-monetary (Time Off Awards, performance rating itself, promotion, etc.), for their employees.

Justification to support an award must be written in bullet format in Part C of the appraisal form. Major staff officers, directors, and wing and center commanders must ensure that a reasonable quality control process is in place to ensure that performance awards are properly justified.

Approval authority for cash or awards of 1-6 percent of an employee's salary (PAs, QSIs and EPAs) is the director, major staff officer, or center or wing commander. There is no minimum amount for monetary awards and award percentages may be given in fractional amounts (e.g., 1.33 percent, .66 percent). Approval authority for TOAs from 1-40 hours given in conjunction with the annual appraisal is the same as cash awards. A combination of a TOA and PA may be given; however, TOAs may not be combined with QSIs or EPAs.

- c. Performance Awards are computed on the employee's basic salary (basic salary does not include locality pay) as of 31 March. To indicate a PA on the AF Form 860A, Part D, enter "P" in the Award block and write in the percentage or dollar amount in the Award Percentage or Amount section.
- d. Quality Step Increases are a one-step increase in pay for GG employees. QSIs can only be based on Acceptable appraisals and are limited to employees at step 4 and above on the General Schedule pay scale. An employee is eligible for only one QSI at the same grade level during a 3-year period unless approved by HQ AIA. In any case, a QSI may not be granted to an employee who has received a QSI during the previous 52 weeks. Organizations are charged 3 percent of the employee's salary against their award monies. To indicate a QSI on the AF Form 860A, Part D, enter "Q" in the award block. Leave the Award Percentage or Amount section blank.
- e. Under the Civilian Intelligence Personnel Management System (CIPMS), an Exemplary Performance Award may also be given in conjunction with the annual rating. The EPA is a two-step increase in pay for GG employees. With an EPA, a GG employee's pay may be extended to the equivalent of Step 12 of the General Schedule. Employees receiving an EPA must have been at the same grade level for the last 3 years and officially rated Acceptable (or Superior) the last two rating cycles as well as the current cycle. Organizations will be charged 6 percent of the employee's salary against their award monies. To indicate an EPA on the AF Form 860A, enter EPA in the Award block. Again, leave the Award Percentage or Amount section blank.
- f. Time Off Awards may also be given in conjunction with the annual appraisal. The maximum amount of time off which may be granted is 40 hours. (The total amount of time off which may be granted to an employee during any one leave year is 80 hours.) To grant a TOA on the appraisal form, Part D, enter the number of hours in the Other Award block. The TOA certification statement is already preprinted on the appraisal form for your convenience.

Quality Review

Commanders should ensure that there is a reasonable quality control process in place to ensure that awards are properly justified and that the appraisal is technically and administratively correct before they are approved.

Maintenance of AF Forms 860, 860a, and 1003

The original AF Form 860, Civilian Performance Plan, or AF Form 1003, core personnel document and the original AF Form 860a, Civilian Rating of Record, will be filed and maintained by the supervisor in the supervisor's Employee Work Folder along with the AF Form 971. (NOTE: The Civilian Personnel Office will no longer keep copies of employee performance appraisals or performance plans.) Supervisors need to ensure the forms are readily available in the event their employees or the Civilian Personnel Office request copies. Employees will no longer be able to obtain copies from HQ AIA/DPC.

How to Prepare an Effective Performance Interview

Once the appraisal rating is finalized and all award decisions are completed, the appraisal is returned to the supervisor. The supervisor then obtains the employee's signature on the form during the performance interview. Performance interviews are among the few opportunities supervisors have to motivate employees and significantly improve their performance. Because it can have such a highly positive impact on employee behavior, an effective performance interview is one of the most powerful tools managers have to improve performance. Improperly handled, however, a performance interview can undermine employee morale and commitment and severely damage the work environment.

Performance interviews ordinarily occur in five situations:

- Ongoing, day-to-day problem solving
- Creating work performance plans
- Periodic review of performance (recommended quarterly, must occur at least once mid-cycle using mandatory progress review worksheet, AF Form 860B)
- Developing improvement plans
- Final end-of-cycle review

By following these four steps, supervisors and managers can help to ensure all of these performance interview situations are conducted effectively.

- Step 1 - Create a Positive Climate

Allow no interruptions - Reserve an adequate block of time, holding all telephone calls and drop-in visits from other staff. (Remember how you felt when you sat nonchalantly looking out the window while your boss took a phone call.)

Ensure privacy - Although performance interviews may happen anywhere--in the hall, the cafeteria, or on the golf course, it is recommended interviews be held in a professional setting. If you do not have an office, you should reserve a private place to conduct your interview.

Remove barriers - Physical barriers between you and your employees often result in psychological barriers that prevent free and open communication. If possible, try to face the employee directly, without a desk or table between you. If you want real give-and-take in the performance interview, hold it in some neutral territory, like a conference room or another office.

- Step 2 - Communicate an Agenda

Give advance notice of the interview - Although almost any meeting with an employee offers an opportunity for an informal performance interview, any formal or lengthy interview situation requires advance notice.

Prepare your own agenda - Always write your agenda down; although you may not use the agenda, writing

it down will greatly assist you in organizing your thoughts. Include the issues you plan to raise and the performance outcome you expect.

Include all agenda components - Ordinarily, a performance interview has four components:

- Agreement on the actual results of performance
- Diagnosis of causes
- Identification of areas in need of improvement and reinforcement of areas in which improvements have been achieved
- Development of improvement plans
- Step 3 - Give and Get Feedback

Feedback is simply the transfer of information from the supervisor to the employee and/or from the employee to the supervisor.

Start with strengths - By beginning a performance interview with the employee's strengths, you establish a positive environment for discussion.

Let the employee take the lead - When discussing problem areas, employees should be encouraged to take an active role in identifying the causes of performance problems and in generating solutions. It is surprising how often employees who are given the lead will identify below-standard performance, saving the supervisor from having to focus on negatives.

Provide positive feedback - The opportunity for positive feedback is a gift for any supervisor; remember the last time your supervisor gave you positive feedback, even the most modest kind? Positive feedback is the major factor in increased motivation and improved morale. If your employee performed well and you didn't say anything, you lost a real opportunity to motivate him or her.

Give feedback daily - Supervisors do not need to wait until a formally scheduled performance interview to provide feedback. The closer the feedback to the actual performance, the better the chance of changing the employee's behavior. However, feedback should be carefully planned, not impulsive or emotional, and it should be based on actual performance.

- Step 4 - Establish Goals and Plan for Future Achievement

Develop the performance improvement plan - The most critical objective of the performance interview is the development of a performance improvement plan. The major focus of the plan should be on the behavior, activities, and assistance that will help the employee improve performance.

Accept the challenge to improve performance - Identify any barriers to performance improvement. After all, employee performance is not the cause of all problems, and changing employee behavior should not be the only objective of the performance interview. Other causes for performance problems, such as the supervisor's behavior, the design of the job, lack of training, or overly optimistic or unreasonable standards, should also be discussed.

Set a follow-up date - Before the performance interview is over, a follow-up meeting should be planned at which you can review progress to date.

Evaluate the interview - Take the last 5 minutes to review how the meeting went. If possible, get feelings on the table. Decide how future meetings can be improved.

Definitions

AWARD APPROVING OFFICIAL - Directors, major staff officers, and center or wing commanders approve awards *up to 6 percent*. HQ AIA Incentive Awards Committee approves awards *over 6 percent*.

CRITICAL ELEMENT - An employee's job performance element sufficiently important so that performing this element below the set standard requires remedial action and denial of a within-grade increase. Such performance may become the basis for removing, reassigning, or demoting the employee, without regard to other performance

elements.

EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE AWARD - Two within-grade increases granted to a GG Civilian Intelligence Personnel Management System (CIPMS) employee to recognize sustained high quality performance far beyond normal expectations.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL - A systematic comparison of an employee's performance of duties and responsibilities with performance standards.

PERFORMANCE AWARD - A performance-based cash payment based on the annual rating of record. A performance award does not increase base pay.

PERFORMANCE ELEMENT - A significant job requirement derived from analyzing the job. Performance elements include: Important duties or responsibilities of the position and specific projects or tasks that are part of the duties and responsibilities in the position description or core document.

PERFORMANCE PLAN - The written performance elements and standards developed for the employee and documented on AF Form 860 or AF Form 1003 (computer-generated).

PERFORMANCE STANDARD - A description of minimum level of accomplishment necessary for full successful performance. Performance standards are expressed in terms of qualitative (preferred) or quantitative objectives; specific actions; project assignments, and other job performance elements. More than one standard for a single performance element may exist.

QUALITY STEP INCREASE (QSI) - An additional within-grade increase granted to a GG employee under Title 5 U.S.C. 5336 to recognize sustained high quality performance beyond normal expectations.

RATER - The supervisor who evaluates the performance of an employee and assigns the rating; the employee's first-level, immediate supervisor of record.

REVIEWER - Normally, the supervisor in the chain-of-command at the next higher level above the rating official. An immediate supervisor who is an AIA wing or center commander may also serve as the reviewing official.

TIME OFF AWARD - Time off from duty without loss of pay or charge to leave in recognition of superior accomplishment or personal effort that contributes to the quality, efficiency, or economy of government operations.

Air Force Policy

1. Commanders, managers, and supervisors must carry out the spirit and intent of this program and use the requirements of AFI 36-1001 to increase productivity and improve Air Force readiness.
2. Supervisors should encourage employees to participate in the creation of their work plans, identifying job performance elements and developing performance standards.
3. This program must be administered without regard to politics, race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, national origin, or handicapping condition.
4. Every effort must be made when preparing appraisals or award nominations to use only UNCLASSIFIED information. If classified information is essential to these documents, it must be processed according to DOD 5200.1-R/AFI 31-401.
5. Employees receiving individual recognition under AFI 36-2803 are not eligible for recognition under AFI 36-1001 for the same act or service.
6. Cash awards and pay will be used together to pay for the value of performance in an equitable but not excessive manner.

Appeals and Grievances

Employees may not appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) the substance of performance elements and standards, nor may they grieve under the Air Force grievance procedures.

Employees resolve disagreements over performance ratings through the Administrative Grievance System procedures.

The nonreceipt of a performance award, cash award, honorary award, Quality Step Increase (QSI), or Exemplary Performance Award (EPA), amount or percentage of cash award may not be appealed to the MSPB or grieved under the grievance procedures.

Matters involving allegations of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicapping condition are processed according to the discrimination complaints process administered by the Chief EEO Counselor.

POC: S. Wilson, HQ AIA/DPCR, Commercial (210) 977-2716 or DSN 969-2716 (Posted: 11/5/01)

CIVILIAN RATING OF RECORD

(Please read Privacy Act Statement on reverse before completing this form.)

EMPLOYEE (Last Name, First, Middle Initial) CHARGE, IMA N.	SSN 111-11-1111	ORGANIZATION HQ ORG/OFF	PAY PLAN GG	SERIES 0343	GRADE/STEP 12/01	SALARY W/O LOCALITY PAY \$48,223.00
APPRAISAL PERIOD	FROM: 20010401	TO: 20020331	EFFECTIVE DATE: 20020601			

- Part A normally contains one to seven critical elements.
 - Rate the critical element(s) in Part A by placing an "X" in the appropriate block(s). The overall performance rating is derived from the ratings of the critical elements. A rating of "Does not meet" on any critical element results in a determination that overall performance is unacceptable. An unacceptable rating is the basis for initiating a performance improvement plan and requires proper documentation. Contact the Civilian Personnel Flight for assistance.
 - Complete Part B, "Impact on Mission Accomplishment" for GS-14s and GS-15s (bullet format, limited to 9 lines). Optional to complete for others.
 - Complete Part C, "Award Justification" for those being recommended for an award (bullet format, limited to 9 lines).

PART A. Position Requirements. (Was the employee's performance Unacceptable or Acceptable on the Performance Plan's critical elements?)

	DOES NOT MEET	MEETS		DOES NOT MEET	MEETS
ELEMENT 1		X	ELEMENT 8		
ELEMENT 2		X	ELEMENT 9		
ELEMENT 3		X	ELEMENT 10		
ELEMENT 4			ELEMENT 11		
ELEMENT 5			ELEMENT 12		
ELEMENT 6			ELEMENT 13		
ELEMENT 7			ELEMENT 14		

OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING
R
*R - ACCEPTABLE: Rated "Meets Standards" on all critical elements.
 N - UNACCEPTABLE: Rated "Does Not Meet Standards" on one or more critical elements.*

PART B. Impact on Mission Accomplishment. (Mandatory completion required for GS-14s/15s.)

(This section is currently blank in the provided image.)

PART C. Award Justification. (Part B may serve as Part C award justification.)

-Expertly briefed members from Air Staff and NSA, resulting in overwhelming approval of \$18M project.
 -Led and orchestrated project team's efforts in getting proposal to final stage, exceeding all timeliness milestones.
 -Ensured team members received important and necessary training to enable them to develop well-researched, easily understood plans for the future of our organization.

PART D. Performance Award.

AWARD (Enter "P"-Performance or "Q"-QSI) P	AWARD PERCENTAGE OR AMOUNT (If P (cash), enter as a percentage, e.g., 1.5, or a dollar amount) 1.03%	OTHER AWARD (For time-off awards, state number of hours) TOA - 4 Hours
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Certification for Time-Off Award (as applicable): I have considered fully the wage costs and productivity loss in granting this time-off award. The amount of time-off granted is commensurate with the individual's contribution or accomplishment. I also considered the unit's workload and unit employees' leave projections and certify that the employee can schedule the time-off award in addition to other scheduled leave. I also considered other available forms of recognition in determining the amount of this time-off award. *Note: Ensure the number of time-off award hours previously awarded to this employee this leave year plus this award does not exceed 80 hours.*

PART E. Certification. (Certify by having rater, reviewer, award approving official (if required), and employee sign and date this form.)

RATER (Supervisor's signature and duty phone) WANTIT YESTERDAY, 999-0000	DATE (YYYYMMDD) 20020706
REVIEWER (Signature and duty phone) DEMANDS A. LOT, Col, USAF, 999-0000	DATE (YYYYMMDD) 20020706
AWARD APPROVING OFFICIAL (If required, signature and duty phone) HASAL THEBUCKS, Col, USAF, 999-0000	DATE (YYYYMMDD) 20020706
EMPLOYEE (Receipt acknowledged. Signature does not indicate agreement or disagreement.)	DATE (YYYYMMDD)

PART F. Civilian Promotion Appraisal.

This appraisal is used for competitive inservice placement actions, including promotions, reassignments or demotions to positions with known growth potential, and other such instances. The ratings on this form are used as a sort factor in determining final rank order of employees having substantially equal knowledge, skills and abilities, when the number of candidates exceeds the number of employees who can be referred to the selecting official for consideration.

APPRAISAL FACTORS - MANNER OF PERFORMANCE *(Do not complete if employee is a GS-15)*

Appraisal factors listed below represent work behaviors that can be observed in the context of the employee's current position and are considered predictive of performance at the next higher level. Based on your observations of the employee's performance, rate EVERY appraisal factor. Use the following scale in making the ratings. Place the number (1-9) in the block preceding the factor.

LOW RANGE	CENTRAL RANGE	HIGH RANGE
1. Very Poor	4. Slightly Below Fully Successful	7. Above Fully Successful
2. Far Below Fully Successful	5. Fully Successful	8. Far Above Fully Successful
3. Below Fully Successful	6. Slightly Above Fully Successful	9. Outstanding

9	1. WORK EFFORT:	<i>Exerts effort and shows initiative in starting, carrying out and completing tasks; spends time effectively performing work.</i>
9	2. ADAPTABILITY TO WORK:	<i>Picks up new ideas and procedures quickly; is easy to instruct; can adapt to the demands of new situations; understands and carries out oral or written instructions.</i>
9	3. PROBLEM SOLVING:	<i>Devises effective solutions to problems or identifies effective methods and procedures for accomplishing objectives.</i>
9	4. WORKING RELATIONSHIPS:	<i>Sensitive to the behavior of fellow workers, supervisors and subordinates; maintains effective working relationships with others.</i>
9	5. COMMUNICATION:	<i>Communicates clearly and effectively, whether orally or in writing.</i>
9	6. WORK PRODUCTIVITY:	<i>Productive during work time; completes his/her work projects, duties and tasks in a timely manner.</i>
9	7. SELF-SUFFICIENCY:	<i>Works independently with little need for additional supervision or help; follows through well; accomplishes all tasks required to complete a job on his/her own.</i>
9	8. SKILL IN WORK:	<i>Performs job-associated tasks well, whether they require physical, technical, professional, supervisory or managerial skills, is considered very skillful on the job.</i>
9	9. WORK MANAGEMENT:	<i>Effectively plans and organizes work; properly follows or implements management procedures, directives, regulations, or technical orders; ability to direct or evaluate or substitute for absent supervisor.</i>

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authority: 10 U.S.C. 8013 and Executive Order 9397.

Purpose: The social security number is needed to correctly identify the employee.

Routine Use: This information may be disclosed to another agency if the employee transfers to another agency.

Disclosure is Voluntary: However, without it, it may affect the ability to accurately identify the employee and the records.

CIVILIAN PERFORMANCE PLAN

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authority: 10 U.S.C. 8013 and Executive Order 9397.

Purpose: The social security number is needed to correctly identify the employee.

Routine Use: This information may be disclosed to another agency if the employee transfers to another agency.

Disclosure is Voluntary: However, without it, it may affect the ability to accurately identify the employee and the records.

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial) CHARGE, IMA N.	SSN 111-11-1111	PAY PLAN GG	SERIES 0343	GRADE 12
POSITION TITLE PROGRAM ANALYST		ORGANIZATION HQ ORG/OFFICE		

Performance plans define expectations for employees based on position requirements. They may be written as part of a core personnel document (CPD) or standard core personnel document (SCPD) and may be tailored at local discretion to meet mission needs, provided the changes do not impact the classification (*pay plan, title, series, grade*) of the position. This form, the AF Form 860, may also be used to record performance plans not covered by a CPD/SCPD. The performance plan is a result of a thorough review of position requirements and any oral or written input from the employee.

At least one critical element addressing individual performance must be included in the performance plan, but more may be necessary (normally not more than 7).

Performance standard(s) must be developed for each performance element, defining at least acceptable performance. They may address characteristics of performance such as quality, quantity, timeliness or work behaviors.

Include the performance elements and standards in Part I. If more room is needed, use a separate sheet. Once the plan is approved by the reviewing official, the rating official should discuss performance elements and standards contained in the plan with the employee. Provide the employee a copy of the plan. This form is retained for four years.

I. PERFORMANCE PLAN

1E. Represents our organization at conferences, presents briefings, and works with and through other people.

1Sa. Briefings are clear, concise, technically accurate, and presented in a professional manner. Responses to questions reflect understanding of the material and how it impacts management processes.

1Sb. Works in a constructive and harmonious manner with conference participants and members of own and other organizations. Represents the organization by being positive and promoting effective working relationships.

2E. Manages program(s) work in support of mission requirements.

2Sa. Continuously evaluates program to assess weaknesses and identify needed improvements. Develops improvement plans that are relevant and well-researched with attainable goals. Ideas for improvement are made on a regular basis and are usually accepted by management.

2Sb. Develops and prioritizes program goals and objectives that contribute to mission accomplishment. Periodically reviews progress toward meeting established goals and objectives and effects actions necessary to meet them.

2Sc. Normally coordinates program direction with other offices that affect or are affected by the organization.

2Sd. Normally informs supervisor of problems as they occur.

3E. Protects classified information.

3S. Demonstrates sound security practices for ensuring the safeguarding of classified information.

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial) CHARGE, IMA N.	SSN 111-11-1111	PAY PLAN GG	SERIES 0343	GRADE 12
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(This area is intentionally left blank for the employee's use.)

II. PERFORMANCE PLAN CERTIFICATION

The following signature blocks should be signed at the beginning of each appraisal period, within 30 days of the employee's assignment, or upon any formal change to this plan.

NAME, GRADE, DUTY TITLE, AND SIGNATURE OF RATING OFFICIAL (Supervisor)		PHONE #	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
WANTIT YESTERDAY, Chief, Quality Control Branch		999-0000	20010706
APPRaisal PERIOD		NAME, GRADE, DUTY TITLE AND SIGNATURE OF REVIEWING OFFICIAL	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
		DEMANDS A. LOT, Col, USAF	20010706
FROM	TO	SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE (Receipt acknowledged. Signature does not indicate agreement or disagreement.)	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
20010401	20020331		
NAME, GRADE, DUTY TITLE, AND SIGNATURE OF RATING OFFICIAL (Supervisor)		PHONE #	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
APPRaisal PERIOD		NAME, GRADE, DUTY TITLE AND SIGNATURE OF REVIEWING OFFICIAL	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
FROM	TO	SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE (Receipt acknowledged. Signature does not indicate agreement or disagreement.)	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
NAME, GRADE, DUTY TITLE, AND SIGNATURE OF RATING OFFICIAL (Supervisor)		PHONE #	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
APPRaisal PERIOD		NAME, GRADE, DUTY TITLE AND SIGNATURE OF REVIEWING OFFICIAL	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
FROM	TO	SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE (Receipt acknowledged. Signature does not indicate agreement or disagreement.)	DATE (YYYYMMDD)