

WRITING PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS PROGRAM Quick Practices WORKBOOK

Section 1: QUICK PRACTICES



Quick Practice 8—Defining How Objectives Will Be Measured

DIRECTIONS: Employees are more apt to accept your rating if they know at the beginning of the evaluation period how you will measure their results.

How will their objectives be measured? How will you differentiate between ratings, for example, what differentiates a “Consistently Exceeds” from a “Performing”/“Meets”? This Quick Practice helps you convey those distinctions. Once you are pleased with your answers, compare them to the examples.

1. Write down a job-related accomplishment you or one of your employees achieved in the last 12 months:

Example: *Reduced accidents.*

2. Then, write a **smart** objective for the accomplishment as if it had not yet been accomplished. Use these elements to form an objective:
 - 1) Start with or include in each objective an **action verb** (e.g., *design, install, or update*) that states what the employee should do.
 - 2) Define the desired output in **measurable, quantifiable terms** by specifying whenever possible how many or how much (e.g., *31 widgets, or exceed overall Revenue by 4%*).
 - 3) Specify the **quality requirements** or indicators that will be used to measure performance (e.g., *customer specifications, or zero tax penalties*).
 - 4) Define **when** the objective is to be completed (e.g., *weekly, ongoing, by 06/01/20XX, or by the end of 1Q*).

Example: *By the end of 1Q 20YY (= when), reduce safety occurrences (= what the employee is to do) 25% over 4Q 20XX (= how much) to meet OSHA and company standards (= to what level of quality).*

3. Then, using your organization's rating scale, define how you will measure each objective. In the following example, increasing the breadth and depth of the result increases the value of the accomplishment.

Example: **Does Not Meet Expectations (D)** = *Safety numbers do not meet company standards. Has not made time to work on this objective.*

Meets (M) = *Ongoing communicates criticality of this objective to work group. Updates safety procedure manual and trains group on updates. Safety numbers meet company standards.*

Occasionally Exceeds (OE) = **Meets** + *Implements weekly lunch box safety meetings and recognition for those who contribute to safety goal. Reduces insurance costs ___% by sustained safety record.*

Consistently Exceeds (CE) = **Occasionally Exceeds** + *Reduces insurance costs ___% (even better % than that for OE) by sustained safety record. Champions this objective Divisionwide. Meets monthly with counterparts to share Best Practices. Distributes Division Safety Newsletter. Safety numbers improve >% Divisionwide.*

Does Not Meet Expectations (D) = _____

Meets Expectations (M) = _____

Occasionally Exceeds Expectations (OE) = _____

Consistently Exceeds (CE) = _____



Quick Practice 9. Defining Your Organization's Values

DIRECTIONS: Use the following list as a starting point to define your organization's Values for your team. Under each Value, select the definitions that would be appropriate for your organization, for your team as a whole, and for the individuals whose performance you manage. List any additional Values and behaviors. Share your definition for each Value with your team when you establish their individual objectives.

ACCOUNTABILITY/RESPONSIBILITY

- accepting responsibility for results
- whether is self-starting; independence with which plans, organizes, and implements projects; ability to work with minimum supervision
- recognizing and taking on responsibilities as they arise without being asked
- attendance—scheduling time off realistically; punctuality
- (as appropriate for job description) volunteering to work overtime when necessary to meet team or organization's objectives
- following standard procedures/processes
- demonstrated ability to coordinate responsibilities
- demonstrated ability to prioritize
- efficiency—how achieves results
- how measures up to group's standards for quantity; productivity
- activity (how time is spent); e.g., is conversation productive? Is an excessive amount of time spent on personal calls?

BEST COST

- allocating resources (time, money, materials) effectively
- achieving cost efficiencies through standardization and streamlining of functions
- seeking Best Cost alternatives
- implementing cost reduction strategies; identifying and eliminating unnecessary expenditures
- utilizing cost measurements to assess progress toward Best Cost decisions

BUSINESS FOCUS

- support of the organization's and the team's goals and of the organization's Values
- support of policies and business strategies in interactions with colleagues, customers, and suppliers/vendors
- development of long- and short-term tactical plans consistent with the organization's goals and objectives

COACHING AND FEEDBACK (managers)

- creating atmosphere of trust and providing opportunities for feedback
- completion of mid- and year-end performance appraisal documentation

- effectiveness in evaluating performance and in making compensation decisions that fairly reflect performance and contribution to the organization
- effectiveness in clearly communicating team and individual performance objectives and standards at the beginning of the performance year, ensuring that all employees have written performance objectives including (as appropriate) stretch goals for the performance period
- ensuring employees understand the relationship between year-end **Performance Appraisal** results and performance standards
- clear communication of individual achievements and **Development Plan**
- ensuring that each employee has a personal plan for acquiring skills needed to develop in a competitive environment
- focus on continuous improvement; providing appropriate and timely coaching and ongoing informal feedback to subordinates
- providing employees with training opportunities, work assignments, and other resources to support **Development Plans**; encouraging, guiding, and mentoring employees to achieve higher levels of performance
- supporting opportunity for two-way coaching between internal or external customers, peers, and direct reports
- encouraging employees to assume individual accountability for their long- and short-term career development
- providing appropriate and timely recognition, formal and informal

COMMUNICATION/INFORMATION SHARING

- whether recognized as source of information
- timely communication of information to peers and superiors, especially of “exceptions”: what’s going better or worse than expected or additional resources required
- speaking effectively one to one and in groups
- demonstrated ability to articulate ideas and facts, key customer/competitive issues
- demonstrated ability to train others
- responsiveness—returning calls promptly, responding to e-mails and requests for information promptly
- keeping support groups informed of progress
- keeping direct reports regularly informed about policies, business issues, and competitive strategies (managers)
- listening attentively and effectively
- writing clearly, logically, and effectively; using proper format and grammar; using appropriate medium of communication
- oral and written communication gain goodwill and credibility for team and organization

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- community service, volunteerism
- demonstrated commitment to improving quality of life in community

CUSTOMER SERVICE

- demonstrated commitment to quality customer service with client/customer needs an absolute priority
- demonstrated commitment to exceed the customer's expectations with competitively superior products and services
- identifying and conforming to customer requirements for defect-free products and services
- demonstrated understanding of who customers are and what their needs are; ensuring that each customer's expectations are clearly defined
- results of customer feedback; meeting and exceeding customer expectations
- supporting customer in achieving short- and long-term objectives
- (from observation of interaction with customers) how facilitates meeting expectations; demonstrated ability to remain composed in difficult situations
- setting and meeting demanding performance standards to ensure delivery of quality products and services at Best Cost
- creation of useful tools to measure customer satisfaction
- effective communication to customers of work delays, new developments, etc.
- demonstrated courtesy in oral and written communication

DIVERSITY

- demonstrated ability to create and maintain an environment of fairness, candor, and respect among individuals of diverse backgrounds and positions
- demonstrating appreciation of and respect for all employees and customers by valuing their cultural, educational, and background differences
- using the strength of Diversity to meet customer requirements
- seeking out and involving individuals with diverse perspectives in work planning and problem-solving activities
- recognizing employees fairly for their skills, abilities and contributions to the team (managers)
- ensuring a proper balance of developmental opportunities for all employees; demonstrating a commitment to Diversity by encouraging subordinates to seek advancement (managers)
- enhancing understanding of Diversity through reading, training, and interaction with diverse groups
- ensuring equality in employment opportunities—work experiences and training—so that everyone has an equal chance to advance based on demonstrated competence and results (managers)
- maintaining a work environment without unlawful discrimination (managers); treating all coworkers and customers equally and fairly
- complying with Affirmative Action Policies (managers)
- promoting awareness of Equal Employment Opportunity among members of team (managers)

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

- observed leadership and interaction on projects (supply testimonials of frequency, effectiveness and quality of participation; mention feedback)

- demonstrated ability to see big picture—the overall task at hand rather than just individual role
- demonstrated ability to coordinate work of others—delegation
- helping others; recognizing others' needs and helping without being asked
- volunteering to share information
- demonstrated patience
- using Team Agreements to ensure team behaviors are aligned and consistent with group norms
- using coaching effectively to improve team performance

EMPOWERMENT

- ensuring that employees have the necessary resources and authority to achieve organizational objectives
- providing the tools and work environment that encourage risk-taking and achievement of results

INNOVATION

- initiative; demonstrated ability to suggest process improvements, quality of ideas to streamline processes, and demonstrated ability to spot steps/reports/work that are/is unnecessary
- whether pro-acts or reacts; demonstrated ability to anticipate and prevent problems; development of contingency plans
- quality and quantity of new ideas
- process improvements
- eliminating tedious tasks
- application of management/technical principles to problem resolution
- implementing solutions consistent with organization's values, goals, and strategic directions
- optimized use of original thinking, new ideas to improve work processes, decision-making, and service delivery
- encouraging creativity in subordinates (managers)
- demonstrated initiative in introducing new approaches

INTEGRITY

- conformity to ethical standards; commitment to Integrity
- adherence to Code of Business Conduct and other policies
- prevention and detection of potential violations of the law
- facilitation of compliance training and establishing open communication channels for ethical concerns (managers)

JUDGMENT/BALANCED PERSPECTIVE

- demonstrated familiarity with broader policies and procedures of the job function and of the organization as a whole
- demonstrated willingness to place team goals before individual goals when the two appear to conflict

- demonstrated ability to balance customer needs with the organization's goals and objectives
- organization, prioritizing and managing activities and tasks
- revising work schedules in response to unplanned events; ensuring that progress toward individual or group objectives continues
- demonstrated ability to troubleshoot
- demonstrated ability to make trade-offs—to weigh risks, cost, and time considerations
- exercising sound judgment in decision making (without supervision; knowing when to call in manager)—using facts, data, and experience and considering impacts of alternatives—even when information is limited or uncertain
- demonstrated applied logic (examples of times showed good judgment)

LEADERSHIP

- demonstrated ability to take charge, initiate actions, and make quality decisions
- demonstrated ability to make timely decisions, even under conditions of risk or work pressure(s)
- demonstrated ability to manage competing demands
- communication to team of sense of urgency for high performance
- providing clear direction and guiding team toward accomplishment of challenging but realistic goals
- demonstrated ability to create esprit de corps, even in difficult situations
- using sound criteria to set priorities and deadlines
- demonstrated ability to develop strategies and contingency plans
- demonstrated ability to assess problems including underlying issues and impacts
- modeling a positive attitude for peers and subordinates
- communication to management team and stakeholders of critical information concerning achievements and issues
- demonstrated ability to establish relationships and networks across a broad range of people and groups

LOYALTY/PRIDE

- demonstrating appreciation for individual and group achievements and contributions
- demonstrating pride in the organization's achievements, products, and services
- demonstrating pride in self and the organization through professional work attire and attention to appearance of work area

NEW COMPETITION/NEW LINES OF BUSINESS

- receptiveness to change
- demonstrated ability to respond to ambiguity, new information, changing conditions, unexpected obstacles
- demonstrated ability to change; adaptability
- taking on additional responsibilities; flexibility
- whether takes part in cross-training
- demonstrated ability to change assignments
- demonstrated ability to deal with task variety; versatility

- adjustment to changes in hours as job requirements change
- keeping abreast of industry developments and corporate changes

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

- “what more can I do?” attitude; “can-do” attitude—provides solutions; doesn’t just spot problems
- going beyond call of duty
- modeling positive, professional working relationships with coworkers and customers
- presenting constructive feedback in a positive manner
- demonstrated desire to improve skills; receptiveness to constructive feedback

QUALITY/PROFESSIONALISM

- professional knowledge/job experience/subject matter competence
- grasp of issues, concepts, situations
- use of organization’s Values to achieve results
- use of quality tools to ensure that the job is done right the first time
- using quality improvement to prevent defects and achieve substantially improved results
- identifying and acting on opportunities to re-engineer existing processes to achieve quantum improvements in quality
- using measurement techniques to assess effectiveness of process improvement efforts
- follow through
- completeness of work—does someone else have to keep checking?
- accuracy of work
- reject/rework rate
- whether information is presented in form others can use (use of graphics, appearance of work, etc.)
- accuracy, completeness, and usefulness of documentation; keeping documentation current; keeping files up to date
- organization of materials presented to others
- organization and neatness of work area
- demonstrated professionalism in appearance and grooming

SAFETY

- compliance with organization’s safety and health requirements/standards
- meeting Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations
- pointing out safety problems to manager and peers; suggesting opportunities to prevent occupational injuries and illnesses and motor vehicle accidents
- correcting hazards or unsafe conditions in the workplace
- participation in investigation of accidents and “near miss” incidents to identify causes and eliminate them
- re-engineering work processes to improve protection of employees and equipment
- demonstrated commitment to safety of fellow employees; conducting frequent and effective safety training for team; reviewing and evaluating subordinates’ safety knowledge (managers)

- appropriate and safe use of equipment, methods, and procedures

TRAINING & EDUCATION

- ongoing assessment of own knowledge and skill development needs relative to business requirements; with manager, developing personal action plan to address growth objectives
- providing informal performance feedback to enhance individual and team effectiveness
- seeking out developmental learning and educational opportunities to enhance job knowledge and skills

TRUST/RESPECT

- modeling respectful language and behavior (never using offensive language; never perpetuating negative stereotypes)
- contributing to atmosphere of trust and open communication; consideration of others' opinions in meetings
- demonstrated compatibility; maintaining positive, professional, cooperative working relationships with coworkers and customers
- treating colleagues with respect, dignity, and concern for their professional and personal well-being
- awareness and consideration of others' opinions; ability to use differing views productively to enhance the decision-making process
- use of professional language on the job

ADDITIONAL VALUES AND BEHAVIORS



Quick Practice 10—Documenting Performance

DIRECTIONS: Considering the information reviewed in Module 3 and the examples below, list **three** ideas that you will implement to document performance.

Examples:

- *Implement the Template for Additional Accomplishments and Documentation Template.*
- *Review with employees the 6 Tips for Writing Self-Appraisals.*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



Quick Practice 12—Using the Documentation Pattern

DIRECTIONS: Use the documentation pattern to write about a positive and then about a negative situation you observed for one of your employees. Worksheets are provided on the following pages. When you are pleased with what you have written, compare your documentation to the example in Lesson 3.5.

POSITIVE SITUATION

- 1. Describe the situation:** Recreate the context; be specific and factual.

Describe when and where the behavior occurred, who was present, and what the situation was.

- 2. Describe the behavior:** Describe what the person did, not the person themselves. Avoid adjectives, but describe specific actions—what was done and how it was done. Relate the behavior directly to performance targets and/or standards of quality.

- 3. Describe the impact:** Describe the result of the action—the positive or negative impact on the employee, the team, the organization, the customer or other stakeholders.

- 4. Describe the future:** Describe what should continue or what should change moving forward. Be specific about how the employee can improve.

NEGATIVE SITUATION

- 1. Describe the situation:** Recreate the context; be specific and factual.

Describe when and where the behavior occurred, who was present, and what the situation was.

- 2. Describe the behavior:** Describe what the person did, not the person themselves. Avoid adjectives, but describe specific actions—what was done and how it was done. Relate the behavior directly to performance targets and/or standards of quality.

- 3. Describe the impact:** Describe the result of the action—the positive or negative impact on the employee, the team, the organization, the customer or other stakeholders.

- 4. Describe the future:** Describe what should continue or what should change moving forward. Be specific about how the employee can improve.



Quick Practice 14—Who Reads Performance Appraisals?

Directions: List **four** readers of Performance Appraisals, beginning with the most important. Then list their expectations. The list is started for you. When you are finished, you can compare your answers to those on the next course screen or in Section 2 of this Workbook.

1. *The employee expects:*

Appreciative as well as constructive feedback

2.

3.

4.



Quick Practice 17—Using Wording That Matches the Rating

DIRECTIONS: Select one objective for which two hypothetical employees perform at different levels. Choose Performing results or higher. For each employee's comments, in the space provided, write the first sentence that establishes the performance level. Then briefly describe the results achieved, using wording that matches each rating.

Refer to the **Words That Match Ratings** Resource and the examples below as you complete this Quick Practice. Although there are examples and space for three answers, write about **two** different ratings. Compare your answers to the examples.

Example: **Objective: Meet safety standards in the ABC area (ongoing).**

Results: Performing or Meets Expectations (M)—*Pat met this important objective by communicating its criticality to the work group, reviewing safety procedures with the work group weekly, and identifying and correcting unsafe practices. As a result of Pat's efforts, ABC area awaits approval to start dock area redesign. ABC area's safety numbers are ____; goal was ____.*

Occasionally Exceeds (OC)—*Chris exceeded expectations for this important objective by communicating its criticality to the work group, updating work group safety procedures/manuals and reviewing them with the work group weekly, identifying and immediately correcting unsafe practices, and recognizing those who contribute to ABC's safety goal. As a result of Chris' efforts, ABC dock area redesign has been approved and will be completed by end of 1Q 20XX. ABC area's safety numbers are ____; goal was _____. ABC's sustained safety record will reduce facility insurance costs ____%. These fine results were achieved while meeting all other objectives.*

Leading or Consistently Exceeds (CE)—*Lee consistently exceeded expectations by immediately communicating the criticality of this important objective to the work group, updating work group safety procedures/manuals and reviewing them with the work group in weekly lunch box safety sessions, identifying and immediately correcting unsafe practices, and recognizing those who contribute to ABC's safety goal. As a result of Lee's February 2 presentation to top management, ABC dock area redesign was approved and completed November 14. ABC area's safety numbers are ____; goal was _____. ABC's sustained safety record will reduce facility insurance costs ____%. Lee meets monthly with counterparts to share Best Safety Practices, and edits and distributes a Division Safety Newsletter. Lee's significant contribution to meeting this critical company goal was achieved while meeting all other objectives.*

Objective: _____.

Results: Performing or Meets—

Occasionally Exceeds—

Leading or Consistently Exceeds—



Quick Practice 19—Using Specific Wording

DIRECTIONS: Critique the following **Performance Appraisal** comments. Which are written about a specific employee and demonstrate knowledge of that employee's specific contributions? Which are too general and could be about any employee or give the employee's contributions short shrift? List your suggestions for making the wording more specific.

Then rewrite **one** comment that was written with general wording. Think about a specific employee whose work you supervise, and use details and examples to show the employee's level of contribution or demonstrated competencies. When you are pleased with what you have written, you can compare your answers to those on the next screen or in Section 2 of this Workbook.

1. [**Excellence**] Mark continuously 'raises the bar' on his performance over time.

2. [**Objective: Upon certification to instruct ABC Supervisory Training, customize three ABC modules in support of the company's new performance process.**] Susan achieved certification and delivered new modules Q3. The modules were very well received. Copies were sent to colleagues for customization and implementation in other sectors.

3. [**Excellence—Embrace new and innovative approaches that meet business demands**] Sam developed and implemented two new procedures that have reduced turnaround time for the ABC reports.

4. [**Excellence—Commits to high standards, focuses on providing superior value to internal and external customers**] Arlene is committed to Excellence. She is knowledgeable and sets demanding standards for herself to ensure quality deliverables. Because of the fine work she produces, she has been selected to train our new hires. She identifies what areas need improvement and provides immediate feedback.

5. [**Objective: Develop a target list of each region’s potential customers, and convert at least 50% of the list to grow territory volume for ABC by 80% through 20XX.**] **Interim Results:** Paula is well on her way to meeting this objective.

6. [**Respect for People**] George’s actions definitely are respectful. He maintains good working relationships with peers, subordinates, and superiors.

7. [**Objective: Roll out ABC on schedule**] Howard did a great job with this objective. We couldn’t have completed the roll out without him!



Quick Practice 21—Using Objective Wording

DIRECTIONS: Evaluate each of the following statements. Underline any unsupported, subjective wording.

1. Tom continuously strives for process improvement and is sensitive to our customers' needs.
2. Eileen has been very responsive to change. For example, she accepted the challenge of learning the new ABC system and helped others in our group until they could work with it on their own.
3. Sam understands the organization's priorities and is committed to Customer Focus.
4. In a recent customer satisfaction survey, Mary was viewed as a knowledgeable resource for information about the ABC system.
5. Stephen is a very strong team player and very concerned about the well-being of his peers.
6. Susan makes well-reasoned, timely decisions.

7. Tom is a very industrious employee—a doer—and a strong contributor to the Sales organization.



Quick Practice 22—Using Individualized Wording

DIRECTIONS: Return to the paragraphs you wrote for **Quick Practice 17 Words that Match Ratings**. Identify (1) where you successfully used specific, individualized wording and (2) where you could further individualize your sentences. Describe the types of examples you could use to individualize your comment. Keep in mind the employee’s advice: **Show me you know me!**



Quick Practice 23—Using Benefit Wording

DIRECTIONS: Select a performance criterion for one of your employees. Describe the employee's achievements in that area, using Benefit Wording to link the achievements to the organization’s goals or core Values.

When you write your comments, first write sentences whose wording matches the rating. Then layer in specific examples from your documentation. Finally, add the Benefit Wording. Use Benefit Wording selectively or it can sound contrived—artificial—and lose its emphasis.

When you are pleased with what you have written, compare your answer to the examples in Lesson 4.6.



Quick Practice 24—Using 9 Tips for Constructive Wording

DIRECTIONS: Underline negative words in the following sentences. Then use the **9 Tips for Constructive Wording** to rewrite **two** of the statements. Whenever possible, build in a benefit statement so the employee understands the suggestion's connection to group objectives. When you are pleased with what you have written, you can compare your answers to those on the next screen or in Section 2 of this Workbook.

1. When busy, Alex is impatient—even rude—with some of his co-workers and customers. His actions do not reflect the organization's Values.

2. Tai does not set priorities. He tries to handle too many activities at once.

3. Holly fails to make use of available resources to increase her team's efficiency

4. Joan refuses to take direction and insists upon doing everything her own way.

5. Gerry showed some improvement in oral presentation skills, but still needs work in this area.



Quick Practice 25—Using Constructive Wording

DIRECTIONS: Select a hypothetical development opportunity for an employee, for example, *schedule adherence*, *customer focus*, or *accuracy*. Then use constructive wording to describe the opportunity, the coaching you have provided, and the results to date. Whenever possible, build in a benefit statement so the employee understands the connection of the development opportunity to group objectives. Review the following sample answers to help you present the issue or opportunity:

Sample Answers—both are for the mid-year Performance Appraisal

Example 1

*For January through June 20XX, Betsy’s **Productivity** score was ## vs. the Team goal of ##. To increase **Productivity** to a Performing level, in our coaching sessions, Betsy and I have discussed the importance of:*

*—**Multi-tasking:** Notating accounts while speaking to the customer*

*—**Business Focus:** Eliminating unnecessary distractions*

*—**Keeping Commitments:** Setting follow-ups as necessary*

*For the remainder of 20XX Betsy has committed to reduce the amount of time spent in Call Work, increase her calls per hour, and thereby improve her **Productivity**.*

Example 2

*In January through June 20XX, Rufus completed ## of the required 25 trainings on time. In our weekly one-to-one sessions, Rufus and I have discussed the importance of **updating product knowledge**. For third and fourth quarters in 20XX he has agreed to set calendar reminders before launch dates to have all required product knowledge trainings completed. He has also agreed to complete all other required training and to demonstrate products at weekly team meetings.*

*By keeping his **product knowledge** up to date, Rufus will be ready to inform customers, resulting in increased customer satisfaction and higher NPS scores.*



Quick Practice 26—Writing Summary Comments

DIRECTIONS: Using the template below, write Summary Comments for one of the employees for whom you write Performance Appraisals. When you are pleased with what you have written, compare your answer to the template.

The **Summary Comments Template**, shown used for a high performing employee (with a Leading rating), can easily be adapted for use with other ratings:

STRENGTHS

Sally Smith's leadership, ability to manage priorities and build relationships, as well as her resourcefulness all contributed to her success this year. Highlights of her year include Those projects were the basis of our organization's successful

OPPORTUNITIES

For 20XX Sally has targeted _____ and _____ as areas where she would like to be even more effective. Those skills, especially important in our highly competitive market, will be leveraged for the upcoming ABC project.



Quick Practice 28—Writing Development Plans

DIRECTIONS: Write a **SMART Development Plan** for **one** improvement area for yourself or for an employee whose performance you manage. Identify the steps to take to develop the improvement area, the target date by which each step is expected to be accomplished, necessary resources, measures, and any obstacles to overcome. Double-check that your action plan helps to ensure follow-through and closure on this improvement area or opportunity.

The Development Plan can be written in paragraph form, or (as shown) it can be set up in table form. Compare your answers to the examples in Lesson 5.2.

Development Area	Action Items	Deadline

Section 2: SAMPLE ANSWERS TO QUICK PRACTICES

Quick Practice 14. Who Reads Performance Appraisals?

Your list may have included some or all of the following:

1. The employee expects:

- Clearly stated objectives.
- Understanding of and involvement in the process.
- Appreciative as well as constructive feedback.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and recognition for the employee's individual contributions.
- Accurate content.
- **NO SURPRISES:** The **Performance Appraisal** matches the manager's ongoing feedback.
- **Consistency:** As appropriate, the same rating is given for the same results across the team.
- Respectful delivery: The **Performance Appraisal** is discussed with the employee in a respectful manner. Quality time is given to writing, delivery, and discussion. The **Performance Appraisal** is proofread and contains the employee's specific results and statistics. The employee's name is spelled correctly.

2. Your manager sees Performance Appraisals from your entire team and from other teams in your business group and has a broad business perspective. Your manager expects:

- All that we wrote above to meet the employee's expectations.
- A clear explanation of the organization's goals and of the employee's individual objectives has been provided to the employee.
- Professionalism: Correct spelling, good grammar, clear writing, timely delivery.
- Honest, **consistent** communication: **NO SURPRISES**—the **Performance Appraisal** matches what you have communicated to your next-level manager throughout the year.
- Thoroughness: The wording is specific, detailed, and supported.
- Fairness: There is evidence of your good judgment in determining the ratings. The ratings are unbiased, supported by facts, and **calibrated** across the management team/business group.
- Appropriate emphasis/business focus: The **Performance Appraisal** demonstrates your focus on and alignment with the organization's goals and priorities. You discuss only that which is important enough to affect the employee's success in the position, the organization's reputation with the customer, as well as the team's, organization's, and customer's success.
- **Continuity:** There is pull-through of development from the employee's previous **Performance Appraisal** and **Development Plan**.
- Adherence/compliance: The **Performance Appraisal** provides evidence that you follow your organization's policies and procedures for **Performance Appraisals** and performance **documentation**. There is evidence of your ongoing **documentation**.
- Evidence that you are developing your team: There is evidence that you provide training and coaching—and other opportunities, such as special projects—for your team to gain knowledge and experience.
- Evidence of your leadership: Your words echo the Language of Leadership.

3. Human Resources sees mid-year and year-end Performance Appraisals from the entire business group. Human Resources expects:

- A quality **Performance Appraisal** for the employee (all that we listed above).
- Specific proof of the ratings with careful attention to Leading (does the **Performance Appraisal** support a promotion?) and Developing (does the **Performance Appraisal** support re-assignment or separation?).
- Honest, timely communication: **NO SURPRISES**—the **Performance Appraisal** matches what you have communicated to Human Resources throughout the year. Human Resources has received supporting **documentation** for and been involved in discussions about any overall Developing ratings.
- **Consistency**: There are no great leaps in an employee's ratings from one performance review period to the next without solid proof.
- **Continuity** and follow-through from previous **Development Plans**.
- Adherence/compliance: You have properly followed the organization's policies and procedures for any corrective action or written warnings.
- Individualized comments supported by quality, consistent **documentation**.
- Evidence that you provide employees ongoing coaching and professional development.
- Professionalism: The **Performance Appraisal** would reflect well on the organization should the **Performance Appraisal** be used as evidence in court.
- Legal language: There is no discriminatory language. The **Performance Appraisal** protects the privacy of any individually identifiable health information.

4. The next hiring manager expects:

- An honest summary of the employee's strengths and opportunities so that the manager can leverage those strengths and provide **continuity** for the development areas.
- **Calibrated** ratings that have the same significance across the organization.

Quick Practice 19—Using Specific Wording

NOTE: The sample answers incorporate the use of ‘ABC’ and ‘XYZ’ to represent different groups, programs, methods, and tools. In actual **Performance Appraisals**, these placeholders would, of course, be replaced with the names of actual groups, programs, methods, and tools.

1. [Excellence] Mark continuously ‘raises the bar’ on his performance over time.

*TOO GENERAL. (1) The comments could be about any employee. To better define and recognize Mark’s contribution, the manager should explain in what way Mark ‘raised the bar’ on his performance. (2) The manager should use past tense as only documented performance appears in the **Performance Appraisal**.*

Sample Rewritten Comment: *Throughout the year, Mark continuously ‘raised the bar’ on his performance. He set and met monthly his personal goal*

to increase ABC results 10% (vs. the team's goal of 5%) over the prior year's monthly results, thereby contributing substantially to the team's success.

2. [Objective: Upon certification to instruct ABC Supervisory Training, customize three ABC modules in support of the company's new performance process.] Susan achieved certification and delivered new modules Q3. The modules were very well received. Copies were sent to colleagues for customization and implementation in other sectors.

A GOOD START. More detail would demonstrate the manager's knowledge of and appreciation for Susan's contribution. The manager should explain how many modules were delivered, whether and how the modules were customized, and how the manager knows that the modules were very well received.

Sample Rewritten Comment: *Susan achieved ABC certification Q1 and then customized and delivered three new Supervisory Performance Process modules early in Q3. Sector leadership commented on the value and timeliness of the training for their managers, especially the section on writing SMART performance objectives and the emphasis on the criticality of quality performance documentation. Susan's modules were sent to colleagues as templates for customization and implementation in other sectors.*

3. [Excellence—Embraces new and innovative approaches that meet business demands] Sam developed and implemented two new procedures that have reduced turnaround time for the ABC reports.

A WEAK START. To demonstrate appreciation and knowledge of Sam's specific contribution, the manager should name the new procedures and/or any special attributes of those procedures, name any tools or methods that Sam employed to develop and implement the procedures, quantify the reduction in turnaround time, and describe the value of having ABC reports available sooner.

Sample Rewritten Comment: *Incorporating the XYZ business group's recommendations, Sam developed and implemented two new procedures—Procedure X and Y—that have reduced turnaround time for the ABC reports by 2 days. As a result, the XYZ management team can forecast personnel and materials requirements earlier and more accurately.*

4. [Excellence—Commits to high standards, focuses on providing superior value to internal and external customers] Arlene is committed to Excellence. She is

knowledgeable and sets demanding standards for herself to ensure quality deliverables. Because of the fine work she produces, she has been selected to train our new hires. She identifies what areas need improvement and provides immediate feedback.

SOME INDIVIDUALIZATION, but the wording is subjective (giving opinions rather than facts) and the sentences' verbs are in present rather than in past tense.

Sample Rewritten Comment: *In 20XX Arlene demonstrated her commitment to Excellence by increasing her own and the Analytical Team's technical knowledge and by ensuring quality deliverables. Because of the fine work she produced (she was Project Lead for Projects X and Y [the manager should insert additional explanation here to support/prove 'fine work']), she was selected to train 10 new hires. With each new hire, she identified opportunities (e.g., the quality of technical documentation or knowledge gaps [the manager should insert examples of the 'knowledge gaps']) and provided immediate feedback. With increased technical skills and knowledge, the Analytical Team is better positioned to support our internal customers.*

5. [Objective: Develop a targeted list of each region's potential customers, and convert at least 50% of the list to grow territory volume for ABC by 80% through 20XX.] **Interim Results:** Paula is well on her way to meeting this objective.

TOO GENERAL—could be about any employee. The manager should describe Paula's interim results specifically and how she successfully delivered those results.

Sample Rewritten Comment: *By the end of February, Paula had developed and rolled out her strategy to convert her targeted list of each region's potential customers. As of June, her regions had converted at least 35% of the list and grown territory volume for ABC by 45%. Paula achieved this result by rolling out X program. Y strategy produced immediate results because Paula identified customers' need for Z. She is well on her way to meeting this objective.*

6. [Respect for People] George's actions definitely are respectful. He maintains good working relationships with peers, subordinates, and superiors.

TOO GENERAL—could be about any employee. The manager should provide specific representative examples of how George works with peers, subordinates, and superiors.

Sample Rewritten Comment: *Throughout 20XX George’s commendations from peers, subordinates, and superiors have praised his “professional, positive, solutions-oriented” approach to ongoing challenges (such as the numerous customer-driven changes in the XYZ project). His timely project updates and team meetings kept everyone informed, motivated, and well-positioned to support the customer and thus ensure team and customer success. His ongoing communications also demonstrated respect for the organization’s hierarchy as well as for others’ schedules and priorities.*

7. [Objective: Roll out ABC on schedule] Howard did a great job with this objective. We couldn’t have completed the roll out without him!

TOO GENERAL—could be about any employee and doesn’t state clearly that the objective was met. The manager should describe whether and how Howard kept ABC on schedule and provide other details of Howard’s contribution to the ABC project.

Sample Rewritten Comment: *Through effective project management, Howard ensured the successful on-time roll-out of ABC. Of special note were his kick-off meeting (when he clarified project objectives, requirements, scope, schedule, and budget with his team of 20); his ongoing clear, timely communication of project status to stakeholders and top management; and the ABC Peer Review he implemented to ensure that deliverables were of the highest quality and met customer requirements.*

Quick Practice 21—Using Objective Wording

1. Tom continuously strives for process improvement and is sensitive to our customers' needs.

*Effective **Performance Appraisals** focus on results, not on whether someone “strives” to deliver results. Labeling Tom as “sensitive” provides no concrete feedback to Tom and no concrete understanding of Tom’s contribution to other readers of the **Performance Appraisal**.*

2. Eileen has been very responsive to change. For example, she accepted the challenge of learning the new ABC system and helped others in our group until they could work with it on their own.

*Effective **Performance Appraisals** substantiate claims. Here “very responsive” is substantiated by the example. Ellen receives appreciative feedback and reinforcement for her specific behaviors, “learning the new ABC system” and “helping others learn the system.” To provide a better sense of the value of*

Eileen’s contributions, the manager could quantify those who were helped, the time it took to train those individuals, and the benefit to the organization of having the ABC system in use.

3. Sam understands the organization’s priorities and is committed to Customer Focus.

A manager cannot know what another person “understands” or “is committed to.” But an employee can certainly demonstrate understanding and commitment. The manager should provide examples of how Sam demonstrated understanding and commitment.

4. In a recent customer satisfaction survey, Mary was viewed as a knowledgeable resource for information about the ABC system.

*A manager can cite documented third-party feedback to substantiate **Performance Appraisal** comments. It is a fact that customers rated Mary as “knowledgeable.”*

5. Stephen is a very strong team player and very concerned about the well-being of his peers.

Labeling Stephen as “a very strong team player” and “very concerned” provides no concrete feedback to Stephen and no concrete understanding to other readers of Stephen’s specific behaviors and contribution.

6. Susan makes well-reasoned, timely decisions.

Providing specific examples of those decisions and why they were “well-reasoned” and “timely” would substantiate this comment and better recognize and reinforce Susan’s behavior.

7. Tom is a very industrious employee—a doer—and a strong contributor to the Sales organization.

*Labeling Tom as “very industrious,” etc., provides no concrete feedback to Tom and no concrete understanding to other readers of the **Performance Appraisal** of Tom’s behaviors and contribution.*

Quick Practice 24—Using 9 Tips for Constructive Wording

1. When busy, Alex is impatient—even rude—with some of his co-workers. His actions do not reflect the organization’s Values.

In Q1 Alex received a Code of Business Conduct Warning for Respect (See Attachment 1) and was required to re-take ABC’s Values Training. Since the time of that warning and training, Alex’s behaviors have reflected ABC’s Values. He has demonstrated compatibility, courtesy, and patience in all observed

*interactions. In this way, he has supported and is expected to continue to support a **positive workplace atmosphere necessary for our team's successful interactions with co-workers and customers.***

2. Tai does not set priorities. He tries to handle too many activities at once. *With the growing challenge of competing project requests and deadlines, Tai and I have discussed the importance of, and strategies for, effectively prioritizing. Since our discussion in June, he has implemented monthly, weekly, and daily to-do lists; tracked project milestones and deadlines; prioritized work with his manager and team members; and moved quickly to secure adequate resources in advance. In 20XX, the goal is for Tai to gain greater confidence and eventual independence in setting priorities and **delivering timely, quality results by way of realistic schedules.***

3. Holly fails to make use of available resources to increase her team's efficiency. ***To increase her team's efficiency,** Holly and I have reviewed the organization's goal to replace manual procedures with automated X, Y, and Z tools and laid out an Action Plan. The expectation is for her to have everyone trained and proficient on X, Y, and Z by January 31, in time for the ABC roll-out.*

4. Joan refuses to take direction and insists upon doing everything her own way. *Joan and I discussed the importance of implementing team Best Practices to **ensure ABC accuracy,** including doing a "Stare and Compare," a "Mock Cycle Count," and calibrating her results with the Warehouse's results. Her receptiveness to and implementation of those proven procedures will **help her bring her own and the team's accuracy to a Performing level of 95% or better.***

5. Gerry showed some improvement in oral presentation skills, but still needs work in this area. *Gerry has enhanced her formal oral presentation skills as demonstrated by her solid Q4 team presentations on system efficiencies, when information was presented in a clear, confident, professional manner and trends were summarized succinctly. In Q1 20XX she will be provided the opportunity to further hone her oral presentation skills, focusing on incorporating PowerPoint and other media. Doing so will make her **an even more valuable part of ABC Organization's focus on Shared Knowledge.***