

## THE “ADDITIONAL” PERFORMANCE ELEMENT

**What is an “additional” performance element?** An additional performance element is a “dimension or aspect of individual, team, or organizational performance that is not a critical element” and cannot be used in assigning a summary rating level.

**Why would I want to use an “additional” performance element if it cannot be considered in the performance rating?** Reasons why an organization might want to use additional performance elements include:

- **New Work Assignment.** There may be an aspect of work for which management and employees would want to establish goals, track and measure performance, and develop skills, but which they do not want to count in the summary level. For example, if an employee volunteered to work on a new project that requires new skills, an additional performance element describing the new assignment provides a non-threatening vehicle for planning, measuring, and giving feedback on the employee’s performance without counting it in the summary level. In essence, this is a form of a developmental work plan or assignment.
- **Group Performance.** In our new performance appraisal program, additional performance elements are the only way to include a discussion of group or team (aggregate) performance in the appraisal process. Even though the element assessment is not considered when determining the summary level, managers and employees may use it to manage the group’s performance. It is important to involve all members of the group in the goal-setting process and in deciding on what will be measured and how. The group decides on a common objective and goals are then set showing who will do what and when.
- **Awards.** Additional performance elements may be used to determine awards eligibility since our program no longer bases awards solely on a particular summary level.

**(See the following examples.)**

### Example 1.

You want to automate the work assignment database, but your GS-5 clerical assistant is not experienced in using database software. The overall objective is to automate the work assignment database. You provide the parameters of the project to the employee and maintain ongoing close supervision of its progress. The employee will need to meet with the primary user(s) to identify the purpose and scope of the project and the desired outcomes (i.e., reports, fields, etc.). The employee will determine the appropriate types of fields to be used based on the information to be maintained and/or manipulated. Reports are to be designed for attractiveness and usefulness of the information. It has been determined that the employee will need to complete, at a minimum, Beginning and Intermediate ACCESS. The employee will be measured on: (1) Quality -- fields used are appropriate; reports are attractive; information provided is useful; (2) Timeliness -- assignment is completed within 6 months of completion of required training; and (3) Cost effectiveness (from the perspective of supervision requirements) -- assignment is completed with substantial independence.

The employee and supervisor agree that consideration for recognition will be based on the quality of the completed project. In other words, if the employee at least meets his/her expectations in the quality factor, an award will be considered.

Another option in considering recognition would be to weight each factor and then base the award amount on whether the employee at least meets all criteria of each factor being measured. For example, you decide that quality is the most important factor to you, so a weight of 75% is assigned to that factor. You decide that timeliness and cost effectiveness are somewhat equal to each other in importance and assign each a weight of 12.5%. The total, of course, is weighted at 100% meaning that if employee meets (or exceeds) all criteria, s/he will receive 100% of the award amount. Let's say that the employee meets the criteria for quality and timeliness (87.5%), but required a lot of your time for assistance (i.e., did not meet your expectations in cost effectiveness). You have decided the contribution of the completed work assignment is moderate and that \$350 or 12 hours of time off is appropriate. Since the employee met 87.5% of your expectations, you may opt to award him/her either \$306 (87.5% x \$350) or 11 hours of time off. (Under the employee recognition policy, you should allow the employee to choose the form of recognition they desire whenever possible.)

### Example 2:

A team or group decides to track performance in customer service. They decide their overall objective is to strive for excellence in customer satisfaction by having customers assess the team's overall performance in 5 areas: (1) Usefulness of information or assistance; (2) Needs met; (3) Quality of service; (4) Timely service; and (5) Manner of performance by team members/employees. The team decides that at each 3-month interval during the appraisal or survey period, team feedback worksheets will be sent to customers based on the project assignment database (to determine for whom products or services were provided). The customers evaluate the team's performance and return forms/data to team leader (or members). The forms/data provide information for discussion of team performance, i.e., where improvement is needed, where they are doing well, etc. The information is to be used in a positive manner and shared by everyone.

The team decides that at the end of the survey period, awards may be considered if 95% of responses indicate the team at least either met or exceeded expectations in all categories. Individual awards should be considered where individual team members are mentioned for their service excellence in their participation in a major process improvement or where performance consistently exceeds expectations.

Both of these are relatively simple examples of how an additional element might be used. They may also be used to incorporate organizational goals. Another use might be to capture employee or professional development. Additional performance elements have not been used widely, yet, but their popularity is rising as supervisors discover the possibilities they present for managing performance. Keep in mind that performance-based actions may not be taken for failing to meet an additional performance element, but they do provide a vehicle for use in determining awards eligibility.

For those of you who like forms for ease in implementing programs, there is a form for displaying additional elements and a team feedback worksheet on the following pages.

For assistance in developing or using additional elements, contact your Servicing Human Resources office.