



*Office of Executive Resources
Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer
U.S. Department of Energy*

FY 2015 Senior Professional (SP) Performance Appraisal System Opening Guidance

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**Fiscal Year 2015
Performance Appraisal System Opening
Guidance**

This document provides a summary of the key performance management requirements. These requirements should be understood and applied for all Senior Professionals (SP), which include Senior Level (SL) and Scientific and Professional (ST), employees in the context of the existing policies.

Supervisors must establish performance plans for SP members in consultation with them and communicate their written expectations no later than 30 days after the beginning of the rating period. The performance plan must encompass the entire rating period. SP performance plans must include measurable outcomes as documented in the DOE’s Strategic Plan. The gaining organization must also set performance goals and requirements for any detail or temporary assignment of 120 days or longer and appraise the performance in writing.

I. SP PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL TEMPLATE and TIMELINE

DATES (2014-2015)	ACTIONS
Dec 2014	<p>If needed, please contact HC-40 for the latest SP Performance Appraisal template</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SP employee prepares his/her 3-5 key programmatic accomplishments, DOE Strategic Plan goal linkage, and desired weights and submits their recommendations to the Rating Official • Rating Official reviews submission, discusses with the employee and signs and dates the Performance Appraisal • SP employee signs and dates the Performance Appraisal
Jan 30, 2015	All Performance Plans are complete
Apr 30, 2015	Progress Review completed
Sep 30, 2015	End of Performance Appraisal Cycle

II. PERFORMANCE PLAN - CRITICAL ELEMENTS

All SP members will be assessed and rated on two Critical Elements: (1) Key Programmatic Accomplishments (3-5 objectives) and (2) Key Leadership Attributes. Critical Element I focuses on the “critical few” program and mission-related activities linked to the agency’s strategic goals in the SP employee’s area of responsibility. The total weight for Critical Element I must be 60%. Each key objective will be tracked and evaluated in a uniform manner with two primary focuses: (1) how efficiently and effectively the SP employee executed or obtained the results, and (2) the impact of the results achieved (e.g., program improvements, outcomes, policy impacts).

Critical Element I must also identify clear, transparent alignment to relevant agency or organizational goals, including page numbers, from DOE’s Strategic Plan, Congressional Budget Justification, or other

organizational planning document for each performance requirement. Objectives must be measurable and established at the Meets Expectations level.

Critical Element II focuses on “how” the SP member carries out his/her responsibilities relative to highly desirable attributes that are expected of all DOE SP employees. The total weight must be 40% for Critical Element II. Critical Element II is based on the 5 Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs). The five ECQ’s are: Leading Change, Leading People, Results Driven, Business Acumen and Building Coalitions. Supervisory SP members will be assessed against all 5 ECQs and non-supervisory SP members will be assessed against the 4 ECQs as denoted below.

1. Leading Change (5% - 10%)

- Develops and implements a vision integrating key national and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors.
- Balances change and continuity; strives to improve customer service and program performance and creates a work environment that encourages creativity.
- Implements organizational vision that aligns key national and program goals and priorities with Agency and Office Strategic Plans and DOE and Government-wide initiatives.
- Accounts for stakeholders’ need and identifies and analyzes underlying dynamics and interests creating problems and conflicts including affected internal and external parties in problem-solving and conflict resolution.
- Develops creative insights and innovations and considers them along with conventional approaches; generates and evaluates with parties alternative solutions that achieve mutually acceptable goals.
- Builds consensus through focus on underlying interests and mutual gain of parties, demonstrates how collaborative problem solving was considered and used to support environmental and organizational decision-making.

2. Leading People and/or Programs (*Supervisory SP only*) (5% - 10 %)

- Designs and implements strategies that maximize employee potential and foster high ethical standards in meeting the program’s vision, mission and goals.
- Provides leadership and support to improve the hiring process to recruit and retain a diverse and highly skilled workforce by planning for current and future workforce requirements, identifying skills required for the job, proactively participating in the recruitment and interviewing processes, and providing assistance to newly hired Federal employees in accordance with DOE requirements and established timeframes in order to meet the President’s recruitment and hiring reform objectives.
- Works to improve the diversity of the organization and ensures that all employee rights are respected, and takes responsibility for the effective management of employee performance. Promotes equal employment opportunity and affirmative action.
- Ensures that subordinate employees know and understand the organizational strategic goals and how their positions contribute to meeting organizational goals.
- Ensures that performance requirements or performance objectives of subordinate employees are aligned with organizational goals and rigorously appraises subordinate performance results against clear, measurable performance standards.
- Provides timely and constructive performance feedback. Promotes teamwork and collaboration across organizations.
- Provides training and mentorship to employees on the relationship of program priorities to Departmental Strategic Objectives in accordance with the DOE Strategic Plan. Provides high-potential employees with opportunities to work between headquarters and the

field, as well as between line and support functions.

- Demonstrates two-way communication with employees and actively solicits employee feedback and uses the information to inform decisions.

3. Business Acumen (5% - 10 %)

- Acquires and administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that instills public trust and accomplishes the program's mission, and uses new technology to enhance decision making.
- Assesses current and future resource needs, including developing and implementing strategies for workforce planning, based on organizational goals and budget realities. As applicable, prepares and implements budget requests which are timely, well-defined, and include appropriate justifications that consider fiscal constraints, program priorities, and human capital objectives.
- Properly executes the operating plan and effectively manages funds. Produces timely and accurate financial information to support operating, budget and policy decisions. Successfully achieves cost management and other resource management objectives as reflected by reports from the organization's financial and other management systems.
- As applicable, effectively promotes and supports meeting the Agency's small business/socioeconomic procurement program goals and commitments.
- Identifies and builds business cases for opportunities to better utilize e-Government technology to produce and deliver goods and services, collects and uses information, or communicate, consult, collaborate, or partner with stakeholders, in order to improve organizational/program effectiveness and efficiency.
- Ensures access and security of technology systems. Establishes and maintains effective and efficient management controls in administrative and program areas, and as appropriate, conducts reviews to identify material and other weaknesses. Corrects weaknesses in a timely manner.

4. Results Driven (5% - 10 %)

- Makes timely and effective decisions and produces results through strategic planning and the implementation through continuous process improvement and evaluation of programs and policies.
- Sets long-term and short-term program objectives that: stress achievement of mission results, are realistic and measurable, and respond to the Agency Strategic and Annual Performance Plans and/or other key Government-wide or DOE objectives.
- Effectively structures, organizes and prioritizes work to accomplish the objectives set forth in the Annual Performance Plan and/or appropriate business/work plans, including management initiatives.
- Monitors progress toward achieving goals and organizational objectives using effective measures, processes and procedures.
- Considers customer perspectives and feedback, as appropriate, in adjusting priorities. Takes action to modify operating plans when organizational results and measures indicate corrective action is needed.
- Informs higher-level management of significant program initiatives, developments, and status. Holds self and others accountable for measurable, high-quality, timely and cost-effective results.
- Positions the organization for future success by identifying new opportunities; builds the organization by developing or improving products or services. Takes calculated risks to accomplish organizational objectives.

- Understands and appropriately applies principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise.

5. Building Coalitions (5% - 10%)

- Explains, advocates, and expresses facts and ideas in a convincing manner to negotiate with individuals and groups internally and externally.
- Develops an expansive professional network with other organizations and to identify the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization.
- Articulates program goals and objectives; promotes and supports DOE initiatives and objectives internally and externally in a clear and convincing manner, particularly when representing or speaking for the organization or DOE.
- Effectively identifies and manages internal and external influences and dynamics that impact the organization's work. As appropriate, cultivates alliances, strengthens for support internally and externally, and facilitates open exchange of opinion from stakeholders.
- Routinely considers and effectively employs collaborative approaches wherever appropriate to build strategic relationships and achieves common goals.
- Demonstrates two-way communication with the customers and actively solicits customer feedback uses the information to inform decisions.
- Effectively communicates with and listens to customers and stakeholders, gathering feedback as appropriate, to inform decisions. Shows evidence of giving feedback due consideration, especially in the area of organizational performance. Seeks to build trust in all interactions. Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.

III. SP SUMMARY RATING LEVEL DEFINITIONS

The performance standard definitions for each rating level are specified below:

- **Level 5 (Outstanding):** This level is reserved for the truly exemplary employee who demonstrates the highest degree of achievement in his/her area (s) of work.
 - This employee demonstrates an extraordinary degree of initiative and self-reliance in identifying and resolving problems or requirements of the work situation and in developing, recommending or executing innovative solutions successfully to accomplish tasks ahead of target.
 - The employee is extremely adaptable in adjusting to, and resolving, new, unusual, difficult or complex situations or problems in order to successfully accomplish program objectives. The employee's performance and contributions are of such a high level that they produce a significant and positive impact on the performance of others and the operations or reputation of the work unit.
- **Level 4 (Exceeds):** This level signifies that the results achieved are clearly beyond what could be reasonably expected.
- **Level 3 (Meets Expectations):** This level signifies the employee's performance results achieved are those that can be reasonably expected of any employee on the job in order to fully and adequately achieve assigned responsibilities.
- **Level 2 (Minimally Satisfactory):** This level signifies that there is a significant performance-related problem(s) although the performance has not reached "Unacceptable" in any Critical Element. The employee demonstrates limited ability in:

- Producing work of acceptable volume and/or quality within established timeframes; or
 - Exhibits limited sense of personal responsibility and accountability in work assignments; or
 - Experiences difficulty in addressing new or unusual work situations under normal pressure; or
 - Requires frequent guidance and assistance from supervisor or others.
- **Level 1 (Unacceptable):** This level signifies the performance of the employee consistently fails to meet the established performance standards in one or more critical elements of the employee’s position.
 - When performance is rated at this level, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) must be implemented to help the employee improve his/her performance to “Meet Expectations.”

IV. DERIVING THE SUMMARY RATING

The overall final performance score and rating is determined based on the derivation formula located in Table 1. Within the two Critical Elements, each objective is individually scored based on the Rating Level (Level 1 – Level 5) definitions provided in Section III. The ratings are multiplied by the weight of the objective. Both Critical Elements are summed to determine the overall performance score (max of 500 points) which equates to a corresponding final rating level (Level 1 – Level 5).

Table 1: Overall Performance Rating Derivation Formula (Supervisory Example)

*EXAMPLE	Rating Level		Score	Final Rating Level Derivation Formula		
Critical Elements	Initial Element Rating	Weight	Initial Point Score			
Critical Element 1 (60%): Key Programmatic Accomplishments				Outstanding	Level 5	475 – 500
- Objective 1	5	15	5 X 15 = 75	Exceeds	Level 4	387 – 474
- Objective 2	4	15	4 X 15 = 60			
- Objective 3	3	15	3 X 15 = 45	Meets Expectations	Level 3	300 – 386
- Objective 4	3	15	3 X 15 = 45			
Critical Element 2 (40%): Key Leadership Attributes				Minimally Satisfactory	Level 2	200 - 299
1. Leading Change	4	8	4 x 8 =32	Unacceptable	Level 1	0 - 199
2. Leading People	5	8	5 x 8 = 40			
3. Business Acumen	3	8	3 x 8 = 24			
4. Building Coalitions	4	8	4 x 8 = 32			
5. Results Driven	4	8	4 x 8 = 32			
				Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1		
	Total	100	385			

V. TRAINING AND EVALUATION

- All senior professionals must review the annual training SP performance management training. This will constitute training for FY 2015. The training slides are available on the Chief Human Capital Officer website for review at the following link:
<http://www.energy.gov/hc/downloads/slst-performance-management-training>
- The Department of Energy evaluates the effectiveness of the performance management system and implements improvements as needed.

VI. PERFORMANCE PLAN TIPS – SP MEMBER

- Key Programmatic Accomplishment (3-5 objectives) should not exceed one page
 - Use bullet or narrative format with a minimum of 10-point font
 - Limit the use of jargon/acronyms and technical terms so goals are better understood
 - Eliminate typos
- Ensure Objectives are:
 - Written at an executive level with a strategic focus, yet measurable and quantifiable
 - Focused on outcomes/deliverables rather than meeting milestones
 - Not written like a Position Description
 - Completed with Metrics for Meeting/Exceeding
- Reference a specific DOE Strategic Goal
 - May use an Organizational Goal that stems from the Strategic Goal
- Provide a timeframe for completion (not just by Sept 30)
- Use the SMART Framework

VII. PERFORMANCE PLAN TIPS – RATING OFFICIAL

- Ensure objectives are of quality and provide a challenge to the employee
 - Communicate changes/edits to be made by employee in the key programmatic objective section of the plan
 - Identify performance targets for inclusion that were not identified by the employee
 - Ensure performance targets are realistic and within employee's control
 - Ensure employee is made fully aware of performance expectations
 - Conduct Initial Feedback Session

VIII. SMART FRAMEWORK

Performance Standards should be **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ligned, **R**ealistic, and **T**imeframe – bound.

Specific - Clear, concise statement of what is being measured with observable outcomes.

Measurable - Result should be observable or verifiable with a method, procedure or standard to assess and record the result of the requirement.

Aligned - A clear, direct connection should exist between Standards and the organizational priorities and/or component strategic goals.

Realistic - The outcome must be achievable with the resources and personnel available, and it should be within the employee's control and responsibility.

Timeframe - bound - Timeframe needed to complete the Standard should be within the period of performance.

Tips

- Use the phrase “as measured by...” to ensure measures have been included
- Use multiple measures, when possible
- Measure what is truly critical to the performance of the job – not just what is easiest to measure

IX. DOE POINTS OF CONTACTS

- Contact the Office of Executive Resources for assistance:
 - Erin Moore; Erin.Moore@hq.doe.gov; (202) 586-9558