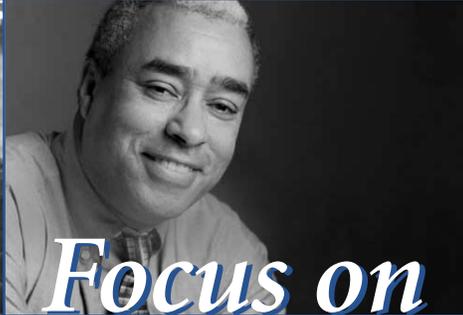




**National Security
Personnel System**

*Manager
Supervisor*



Focus on

Performance



The National Security Personnel System (NSPS) is about performance and results. Working in an organization where employees know what is expected, where there is a shared vision of what needs to be accomplished, and where employees are provided feedback about performance is a recipe for success. You are encouraged to help employees take ownership of their performance. This brochure provides you with information on what you should be doing to

It Starts with You

Focusing on performance requires leadership, but you can't guide your staff to succeed without having a clear understanding about what drives organizational and individual performance.

Periodically reviewing your organization's strategic goals and objectives will help you stay focused on what is relevant and important and ensure work activities and individual performance objectives are aligned with mission requirements. Consider

- Your organization's mission and strategic goals and objectives
- How your team's work will achieve these goals
- What performance objectives each individual can set to support the goals
- How you will know when you achieve success

- Link individual performance with organizational goals
- Discuss performance objectives, career goals and developmental needs with your employees
- Monitor performance
- Evaluate contributions and accomplishments

It Begins with Alignment – Linking Individual Performance with Organizational Goals

Understanding the linkage between organizational goals and objectives and individual performance is key to implementing the NSPS performance-management system. As a supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring your employees' understanding about NSPS and encouraging their involvement in the performance-management process.

To give your employees an idea of how their work and performance relate to your organization and mission, start with analyzing the work that you and your staff perform. Are your employees focused on the right type of work? Can you identify the relationship between what your employees do and how this helps the organization achieve its mission? Is the work properly aligned? By taking time to assess what you are doing, you can focus on high-value tasks and eliminate low-value tasks, where possible. Identifying gaps and redundancies will maximize individual performance and give you a picture of how each individual contributes to the success of your organization. This information also provides the foundation for you and your employees to jointly develop their performance plans.

Performance Planning – Thinking About Employees and What They Contribute

NSPS performance planning is a shared responsibility. Before meeting with your employees, have them consider the role they play in the organization and what they want to focus on during the performance cycle. You may ask them to think about

- What they do and how they perform their job
- How they contribute to the work their group accomplishes
- How they support your team in working toward its goals
- How to capitalize on my strengths
- Where they need to improve and what support they need

Your employees need to understand the objectives that you jointly establish at the beginning of the performance cycle will be the basis for determining their accomplishments and resulting performance-based pay increases at the end of the cycle.

Establishing Performance Objectives

Performance objectives should be clear, concise, measurable statements that describe the specifics of what employees plan to accomplish during the year. While the number of performance objectives established depends on the nature of individual work, employees typically have between one and eight performance objectives. As your employees write their performance objectives, a few things to keep in mind

- This should not be complicated
- This is not about being a good writer – it is about employees effectively documenting what they want to accomplish during the year
- This is an opportunity to discuss what you and your employees think they should be focusing on during the year so that you have a shared understanding of expectations
- This is a chance for you to help employees think about what they want to do with their career and what opportunities they need to take advantage of to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to progress
- You should be preparing for the individual-performance meeting that generally occurs at the beginning of the performance cycle

Here is a simple acronym to share with employees when writing your performance objectives

Specific – objectives should describe what you expect to accomplish

Measurable – employees should have some way to demonstrate their accomplishments

Achievable – objectives should be written within their control

Realistic – objectives should be something obtainable

Timely – objectives should identify realistic time frames

Meeting with Your Employees

The initial performance session provides a structure opportunity for you and your employees to discuss their work and the key activities they will engage in throughout the year and how to facilitate ongoing communication. You need to ensure that you have sufficient time to meet with each employee. Sessions should be scheduled around a mutually agreed upon time that allows you both to share your thoughts and openly discuss performance objectives. During this meeting, you should also discuss any developmental needs you or your employee has identified. Be realistic about the type of support you can offer – consider training, mentoring, coaching, on-the-job activities or some other assistance that would be helpful. The conversation should serve as the foundation for an ongoing dialogue between you and your employees.

Monitoring Success

You and your employees should meet regularly to make sure they are on track to achieve their objectives. Making performance discussions a regular part of your business routine builds mutual trust and confidence that you are working together to achieve individual and organizational success. These sessions can occur informally in brief meetings or e-mail exchanges or on a more formal basis.

As you monitor your employees' performance, you will be able to identify strengths and examples of success. You will be able to see how they did and what they can do to repeat the successes. In addition, you will be able to note weaknesses and shortfalls as they happen. Taking time to communicate with employees about their performance ensures their awareness and, if a problem surfaces, provides time for you to help them improve before the performance cycle ends. This interaction builds performance accountability. Employees will be more engaged in the process and more inclined to take ownership of their performance.

Communicating Their Accomplishments

It is your employees' responsibility to communicate what they have achieved. It is your responsibility to help your employees achieve their objectives by creating an environment that fosters success. Because you have been having discussions with your employees, the results of your final meeting to discuss their accomplishments and their performance rating should not be a surprise to either party. Rather the meeting should be an opportunity for you to offer suggestions for ways that they can translate what they do well into other areas and to address deficiencies in a constructive manner. You need to help employees document their accomplishments. Employees need to

- Write their accomplishments in a clear and concise manner
- Identify specific examples of what they achieved
- Demonstrate how their accomplishments resulted in your organization achieving its goals

This session is also a time to discuss career goals, training and other career broadening opportunities that the employee was able to take advantage of to enhance skills, identify additional skills building opportunities, and plan for anticipated developmental needs.

NSPS provides the tools and the focus for increasing individual and organizational effectiveness. Helping your employees shape their careers and ensuring their work assignments are aligned with your organizational goals is key to their success – and yours – under NSPS.



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For More Information

NSPS

Visit the NSPS website
<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps>

NSPS in Your Component

Visit the Air Force at
<https://www.dp.hq.af.mil/dpp/dppn/nsps/index.cfm>

Visit the Army Civilian Personnel On-Line at
<http://www.cpol.army.mil>

Visit the Fourth Estate at
<http://hrd.whs.mil>

Visit the Navy Knowledge Online at
<https://wwwa.nko.navy.mil>