

COOPERATIVE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM



EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE THROUGH COOPERATIVE EFFORTS

Headquarters, Training and Doctrine Command
Civilian Personnel Directorate
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GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING A COOPERATIVE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION: The purpose of this “Introduction” is to give the reader an overview of the Cooperative Improvement (CI) Program. It deals generally with program scope, coverage, philosophy, components, and related issues. More detailed information follows under the appropriate subject headings.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS:

- * **Day-to-day Supervisory Responsibility**
 - ** **Communicating Expectations**
 - ** **Coaching**
 - ** **Positive Reinforcement**
- * **Formal Actions**
 - ** **Performance Appraisals**
 - ** **Recognition**
 - ** **Formal Improvement Steps**
 - *** **Reminders**
 - *** **Caution Memos**
 - *** **Decision Day**



REMOVAL

EMERGENCY ACTIONS

GRIEVANCE/REVIEW RIGHTS

RECORDS/FORMS

INTERFACE WITH OTHER SYSTEMS

COOPERATIVE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

A. SCOPE:

1. CI is a broad scope, holistic approach for dealing with all aspects of an employee's behavior on the job.

(a) CI uses the same methods for dealing with both performance and conduct matters. This is different from the current concept contained in AR 215-3, which distinguishes between performance and conduct and which contains two separate procedures for dealing with problem situations (traditional discipline for conduct problems and unsatisfactory performance procedures to correct performance problems).

(b) CI recognizes that the real purpose of discipline is to encourage all employees to meet performance and conduct expectations, and to behave responsibly at work. Therefore, in addition to formal improvement steps that may be necessary in the minority of cases that require formal action, it also focuses on positive efforts to motivate the majority of good employees.

2. CI is an alternative to the traditional discipline program and unsatisfactory performance procedures contained in AR 215-3, and installations must opt to use one program or the other. Once this decision is made, installations will be responsible for consistent application of the selected program and will not be able to use the other procedure.

B. COVERAGE:

1. The communication, coaching, reinforcement and recognition aspects of the cooperative improvement program are generally applicable to all employees.

2. The performance appraisal system and formal improvement process are applicable only to regular employees who have passed their probationary period.

3. CI does not cover those situations that require immediate removal of an employee from the employer's premises, due to serious and inappropriate behavior, or when an employee is not ready, willing and able to work. The section entitled "Emergency Actions" gives more information regarding action to take in these situations.

C. PHILOSOPHY:

1. Before discussing the philosophy behind CI, let's look at the traditional punitive disciplinary programs with which most of us are familiar.

(a) Punitive discipline primarily consists of motivation by threats, by fear, by coercion, i.e.:

"If you don't do this, you'll be punished."

Or

"You'll do this, or else!"

(b) Under a punitive concept, people don't accomplish things because they want to. Rather, they do them because they are afraid of the consequences. When this happens, and when people feel authoritatively shoved into doing something, they usually push back by using procrastination, absenteeism, sloppy work, little pride in what they're doing, or "creative avoidance." In short, they will do what is necessary to get by and what they need to do in order to get the supervisor to shut up.

2. Compare this with the concept of CI, or discipline without punishment. Non-punitive discipline is not new. In July 1964, John Huberman published an article entitled "Discipline Without Punishment" in the Harvard Business Review, in which he concluded that punishment is not a suitable instrument to maintain good workmanship and discipline. Huberman's philosophy is essentially a common-sense type approach which incorporates the following principles:

(a) Most people have adequate self-respect to want to do a good job. When such people have performance or conduct lapses, a "friendly reminder" is usually sufficient to correct any problems. Severe punishment is normally not the answer to redirect behavior into more productive channels. Instead, punishment generally produces many undesirable and few, if any, positive results.

(b) If friendly methods do not resolve the problem, then that person's employment is no longer desired, and orderly means may be used to terminate his/her services.

D. REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING A COOPERATIVE IMPROVEMENT (CI) PROGRAM:

1. Traditional discipline is not the solution. Punitive disciplinary systems have been the accepted practice for most of this century. Despite this, however, employee productivity and morale continue to be low; absenteeism, tardiness, and turnovers are high; and supervisors resist supervising, either because they do not know what to do, or do not like doing it. Many supervisors are frustrated with existing disciplinary procedures and will tell you that their employees resist change, lack commitment and resent almost all efforts to correct a problem.

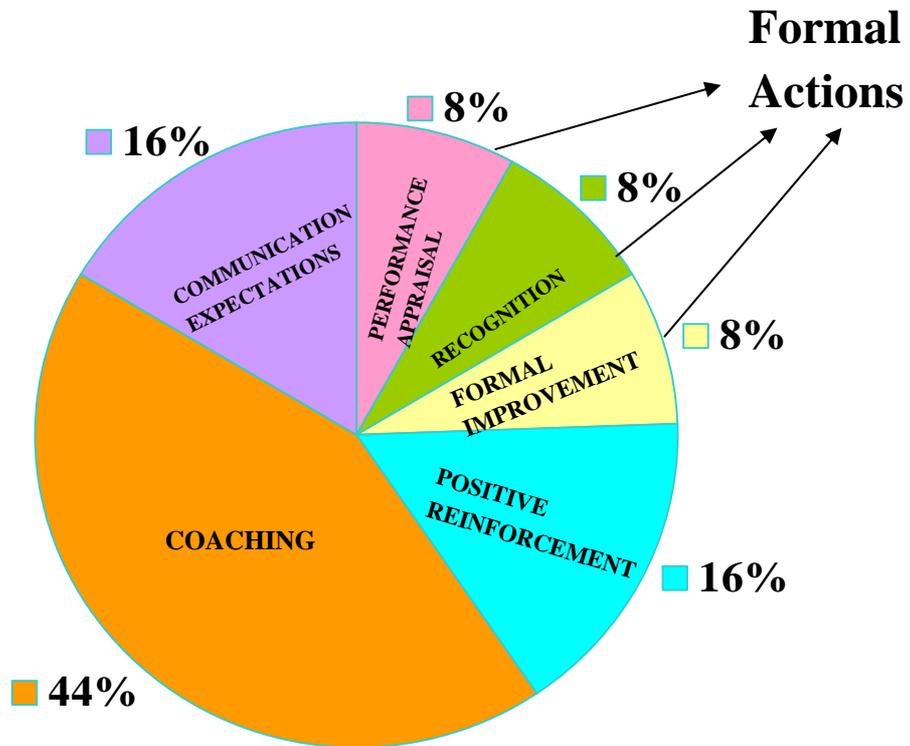
2. With financial considerations and the need to maintain a lean workforce, productivity increasingly will be the key to organizational success. Non-punitive discipline will give us greater potential to maximize the return on our investments in human resources. It is intended to better motivate employees and correct performance and conduct problems while at the same time, allowing employees to maintain a positive attitude and desire to do a good job.

3. CI is easier for supervisors to use. It removes much of the adversarial role that is part of traditional punitive discipline, fosters a collaborative climate between the supervisor and employee, and places the responsibility for problems correction on the employee.

E. PROGRAM COMPONENTS: The CI Program is made up of two major components: “Day-to-Day Responsibilities” and “Formal Actions.”



- PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL
- RECOGNITION
- FORMAL IMPROVEMENT
- POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT
- COACHING
- COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS



Day-to-Day Responsibilities

1. As you can see from the preceding chart, the largest component concerns the day-to-day supervisory responsibilities that are necessary to motivate employees and foster a strong functioning team. We build such a team and get employee involvement when we communicate to employees that, (1) we think they have something important to offer, (2) they are important and responsible, and (3) their ideas will be given full consideration. Implementing this concept, however, involves more than lip service. We put meaning behind these words when:

(a) We communicate fully to employees all goals, objectives, and work methods – those for the organization, as well as the employee;

**COMMUNICATING
EXPECTATIONS**

(b) We encourage each person to set personal objectives relevant to time and productivity and work jointly with employees to develop a work plan of action; and

COACHING

(c) We recognize employees who meet our expectations.

**POSITIVE
REINFORCEMENT**

These are basic supervisory responsibilities that deal with helping employees take ownership of their jobs so that they take a personal interest in improving the performance of their organization. The greater amount of time and effort spent on this first component will lessen the amount of time spent on formal improvement efforts and generate greater job satisfaction for employees.

2. The second program component deals with formal actions:

(a) Annual review and official evaluation of performance.

**PERFORMANCE
APPRAISAL**

(b) Commendation and recognition for meritorious performance.

RECOGNITION

(c) Progressive, non-punitive approach to deal with specific performance or conduct deficiencies which require formal resolution.

**FORMAL
IMPROVEMENT**

3. The Formal Improvement Steps provide a framework within which performance and conduct problems are brought to an employee's attention in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

(a) Employees who accept responsibility for their performance and conduct, and correct problems brought to their attention, will receive feedback and recognition for that commitment.

(b) Employees who do not accept responsibility for correcting a deficiency in either performance or conduct, once the problem has been brought to their attention, will move through a series of formal improvement levels and ultimate removal if the deficiency is not corrected. The severity of the offense will determine the appropriate improvement level which is used.

(c) There are three formal improvement levels.

- o Reminder**
- o Caution Memo**
- o Decision Day**

F. REMOVAL:

1. Removal is not part of the CI program and does not constitute a step of the formal discipline process. However, it is the result of an employee's refusal or inability to meet performance and conduct expectations.

2. Removal may occur when an employee fails to show required improvement during the active period of a "Decision Day", or when an employee commits an offense so serious that progression through formal improvement levels is not warranted.

3. In certain performance situations, changing to a lower grade/level or reduction in pay within a pay period may be a preferable alternative to removal. These alternative actions are discussed under the subject heading of "Removal."

G. OTHER ISSUES: Information on related subjects (emergency actions, grievance/review rights, records/forms, and interface with other systems) are contained in the appropriate subject headings for each subject.

COMMUNICATING EXPECTATIONS

PURPOSE:

- o To let employees know what is expected of them in performing their job.
- o To gain their involvement and maximize their contributions to the "team."

ON-GOING PROCESS:

- o Initial orientations
- o Coaching
- o Feedback/Evaluation

COMMUNICATION TOOLS:

- o Employee Code of Ethics
- o Position Guides or Job Descriptions
- o Task Lists
- o Standard Operating Procedures
- o Employee Handbook
- o Mission Statements
- o Organizational Goals and Objectives
- o Annual Performance Review & Development Plan
- o Managerial Performance Contract

"Telling people why something must be done gives them a reason for wanting to do it!"

EMPLOYEE CODE OF ETHICS

A. I recognize that this code is designed to serve as a guide for the conduct of all employees and as a foundation for a successful employer-employee relationship. In return for my continued employment, therefore, I will respect and support the employer's goals and agree to the following:

- 1. I will conscientiously perform all my assigned duties to the best of my ability.**
- 2. I will maintain a constructive and courteous attitude, respect supervisory authority, and obey supervisory orders.**
- 3. I will willingly cooperate and strive to maintain good working relations with my supervisors and fellow employees. I will not fight or create a disturbance which would have an adverse effect on morale or productions.**
- 4. I will actively support and participate in programs designed to improve work methods and conditions.**
- 5. I will seek to find and employ more efficient and economical ways of getting the job accomplished.**
- 6. I will assist my supervisor in efforts to shape and direct individual employee objectives toward attainment of the organization's goals.**
- 7. I will give a full day's work for a full day's pay.**
 - (a) I will not engage in, or involve co-workers in, private business or profit-oriented endeavors while on official duty time.**
 - (b) I will not sleep on duty.**
 - (c) I will not loaf or otherwise delay or fail to work on my assigned duties.**
 - (d) I will not gamble on duty.**
 - (e) I will not drink intoxicants or ingest any controlled substance that would interfere with the proper performance of any job or result in a danger to the safety of persons or property.**
- 8. I understand I have an obligation to conduct myself off-duty in such a way that no disgrace or disrepute will be brought upon the Department of the Army.**

9. I will not knowingly make false or malicious statements against other employees, supervisors, or officials with the intent to harm or destroy their reputation, authority, or official standing.

10. I will never discriminate unfairly by dispensing special favors or privileges to anyone, whether for remuneration or not, and will never accept, for myself or family, favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of my duties.

B. In addition, I understand the following types of misconduct are of such seriousness that their infraction may result in immediate termination:

- 1. Misuse or abuse of Government property.**
- 2. Threatening or inflicting bodily harm.**
- 3. Theft, fraud, or other intentionally dishonest conduct.**

(Employee's Signature)

(Date)

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS*

<u>FACTOR</u>	<u>INDICATOR FOR SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE</u>
Quality of Work	Occasional errors; usually follows instructions and procedures; learns from mistakes.
Quantity of Work	Normal productivity; output satisfies job requirements; does not detract from volume of work group.
Job Knowledge/Adaptability	Knows own job; has interest in job; adapts to new assignments; does not mind changes.
Human Relations	Cooperates with co-workers and supervisors; works without friction; accepts criticism to avoid future errors.
Initiative	Takes initiative to do what is necessary to get the job done.
Dependability	Satisfactory attendance; generally on time and normally follows call-in procedures.
Customer Relations	Actions and attitudes contribute to good customer relations. Positive feedback, as a result of employee's actions.



* Excerpted from Annual Performance Review and Development Plan (Non-Managerial Personnel).

SUPERVISOR/MANAGERIAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS*

FACTOR

INDICATOR FOR SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

Technical Knowledge and Skills

Has a working knowledge of all phases of job and job related methods, techniques and skills. Keeps current on new developments.

Problem Solving/Decision Making

Thinks in logical, discipline manner. Recognizes problems and generally takes effective action.

Creativity

Looks for more effective ways to get the job done. Often develops and/or recommends innovative procedures to accomplish assignments.

Planning, Organizing and Controlling



Generally establishes realistic goals, procedures and plans to achieve objectives, to include budgeting, resource allocation and monitoring of work programs; complies with internal objectives, to include budgeting, resource allocation and monitoring of work programs; complies with internal controls.

Results Obtained

Generally meets project goals and deadlines. Work is normally of good quality and thorough. Can be depended upon to follow through.

* Excerpted from Annual Performance Review and Development Plan (Non-Managerial Personnel).

SUPERVISOR/MANAGERIAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS*

(Continued)

<u>FACTOR</u>	<u>INDICATOR FOR SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE</u>
Human Relations	Able to work with supervisors, subordinates and others to achieve desired results. Effectively deals with conflict situations and keeps appropriate people informed.
Customer Relations	Actions and attitudes contribute to good customer relations. Positive feedback.
Adaptability/ Flexibility	Adapts to new assignments. Normally accepts and support changes.
Leadership and supervision	Effectively performs personnel management & EEO responsibilities. Instills teamwork; develops subordinates; resolves conflict situations.



*** Excerpted from Annual Performance Review and Development Plan
(Non-Managerial Personnel).**

COACHING



PURPOSE:

- Teach employees how to perform their jobs safely and effectively.
- Overcome performance and conduct problems.
- Direct energies into productive channels.
- Help employees capitalize on strengths and correct the limitations that block effectiveness.
- Help employees make better use of their abilities and develop potential.
- Help employees build commitment to the organization.

TWO TYPES OF COACHING:

To Improve
Good
Performance....

The great majority of employees perform well in their jobs and are the backbone of the organization. Periodic coaching will enable these employees to perform even better in their jobs through specific feedback designed to enhance performance. With this kind of coaching, a supervisor can instill an employee attitude of "I can do it." The only limit to an employee's performance is in the perception of the supervisor and employee. A good coach will eliminate artificial or self-imposed barriers that restrict an employee's performance.

To Solve
Problems....

Coaching is also the expected process for supervisors to informally discuss concerns with employees before those concerns become problems. The objective of this type of coaching is to help the employee recognize when their performance is inconsistent with expectations and to elicit a problem-solving approach to develop a solution. This type of coaching has two goals: first, to get the problem solved; and second, to maintain and enhance a good working relationship. Normally, issues can be resolved at this step before they become major problems. Regardless of the type of coaching, the process begins with having an accurate understanding of a person's job suitability for a position.



Feedback is an essential part of coaching. In addition, supervisors should be prepared to provide resources or other assistance if required.

COACHING (Continued)

TECHNIQUES FOR SUCCESSFUL COACHING:

- **Recognize the purpose of coaching.**
- **Understand your role:**
 - **Coaching is an integral part of the leadership process.**
 - **Be prepared to help people resolve difficulties, understand opportunities and shape their futures.**
 - **Examine your own attitudes about work and people. Recognize that people can grow, that they can be worthy of your respect, and that through mutual efforts, you can come to a relationship of more trust, honest communication, and genuine efforts to help each other in your different roles.**
 - **Realize that your own actions and attitude speak louder than your words. Your coaching will not be effective if your actions say one thing and your words say another.**
 - **Accept the responsibilities and risks involved in trying to help others. It is important to your on success and the performance of your organization.**
- **Understand your employees:**
 - **Be alert to appropriate information you can get from many sources. Seek information that would reveal a person's working style, skills, attitude, perspective, interest, and potential.**
- **Plan your coaching session:**
 - **Clarify your objective -- decide whether it is to help the employee overcome a problem, build upon a strength, develop potential, learn new techniques/skills, and focus your coaching activity accordingly. Find a comfortable, appropriate meeting place that is free of distractions.**
- **Coaching Approach:**
 - **Take time to build a positive feeling between you and your employee. Let the employee know the purpose of the meeting.**
 - **Genuinely involve the person in the discussion and place the responsibility of dealing with growth and improvement on the person -- your responsibility is to act as catalyst and facilitator. Most people need to discover things for themselves and solve their own problems. Help people to explore matters for themselves rather than for you to define the problem. Don't do anything for people that they can and should do for themselves.**

COACHING (Continued)

TECHNIQUES FOR SUCCESSFUL COACHING (Continued):

- Use appropriate counseling techniques:
 - ✓ Communicate your acceptance of the employee as a person.
 - ✓ Discuss your concerns in terms of actual **FACTS**, not **FEELINGS** (I.e., "Your actions have resulted in . . . ", not "I have a feeling that your attitude about your job is deteriorating").
 - ✓ Ask illuminating questions (not judgmental ones).
 - ✓ Decode responses to understand what the person really means. Help the employee define the problem and explore alternatives for doing something about it.
 - ✓ Listen carefully to the employee. Let the employee talk. Your listening connotes your acceptance of the employee. You demonstrate your interest in the person's problems and viewpoints. Do not interrupt, contradict, argue, or explain too early, if at all. Try the echoing technique, where.....if the employee says, "I can't work with Mary any more", you reply....."You can't work with Mary?" This shifts the burden back to the employee to get to the heart of the matter.
 - ✓ Don't preach to the employee, try to impose your conclusions or dictate the future; but do share your insights and reinforce the employee's insights and intentions.
- Remember:
 - Coaching includes providing resources or other assistance, if required. Let the employee know you want to make it possible to do the job to the best of his/her ability and want input on how he/she can perform better (I.e., more training, different equipment, etc.). Ask:
 - ❖ "What are your ideas?"
 - ❖ "How do you think this should be done?"
 - The guiding principle is that individuals will commit more quickly and fully to activities they feel they have had a hand in initiating and designing.
 - Use a spaced repetition learning technique to change poor work habits or to make good performance better. Set short-range, attainable goals and follow-up with specific feedback at scheduled intervals regarding the employee's progress in meeting those goals.
 - **OFFER HELP -- BUT DON'T TAKE RESPONSIBILITY!** Instead, get the employee to commit to taking action.

THE COACHING PROCESS

**TEACHING EMPLOYEES
HOW TO PERFORM THEIR
JOBS EFFECTIVELY**

**State what you
are trying to
teach and why**



Explain the process to be used

Show how it's done

**Observe while employee
practices the process**

**Provide immediate and
specific feedback**

**Is the employee
performing
process
acceptably?**

NO

Coach Again

Reinforce Success

**Express
confidence in
employee's
ability to be
successful.**



POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

PURPOSE:

- To encourage continuation of good performance and conduct by giving positive feedback.

CHARACTERISTICS:

- Simple form of recognition.
- Informal "pat-on-the-back"
- Easy and inexpensive tool to create an immediate and long-lasting impression.
- Appropriate when employees meet or exceed expectations or demonstrate improvement in areas that were previously identified as problems.

TECHNIQUES:

- Use positive reinforcement, not just for "superior" work, but also for "satisfactory" work. The normal practice for most supervisors is to give no feedback or reinforcement for the 80-90 percent of the time that an employee does WELL, because they think that is what the employee is supposed to do. Therefore, most employees are ignored for the majority of their work. Unwillingness to reward or positively reinforce good behavior is probably the single most important reason behind some managers' inability to effect positive change in their employees.
- Reinforce even small successes. This is the best way to ensure improvement will continue. Example: "I'm very impressed Mary, that the number of errors in your entries is down to zero. That's a tremendous improvement, don't you think? I'll bet you're pleased. I know I am."
- When you see an employee doing something you like, make sure to mention it to the employee. You'll be surprised to see how much your employee appreciates your recognition.
- Reinforce the recognized activity as quickly as possible so that the employee knows precisely what behavior is being recognized and what should be repeated. Praise tends to lose luster as time passes. Be consistent, i.e., ALWAYS recognize good performance, not just now and then. Soon the message will get around that, when you do good work, you get recognized, even if it's just with praise or a pat on the back.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT (Continued)

TECHNIQUES (Continued):

- Steer clear of comparisons with other employees. Comparisons can breed destructive rivalry. It's better to say: "I'm very impressed with how quickly you completed the assignment." Rather than: "You beat Dan's speed record in handling your assignment." Should Dan learn about this comment, he might become discouraged and ease up on his efforts; or, he may become excessively competitive at the expense of quality.
- Be consistent, i.e, ALWAYS recognize good performance, not just now and then. Soon the message will get around that, when you do good work, you get recognized, even if it's just with praise or a pat on the back.
- Identify what is praiseworthy. "You've been doing a great job" may be music to an employee's ears, but it is much more effective to key in on the specific reasons for your appreciation. For instance, "Your quick work allowed us to get the club ready on short notice to handle last night's function."
- Catch people doing something right. If your employees don't receive positive feedback when they do a good job, chances are they'll be less likely to repeat that good performance. In Putting the One Minute Manager to Work, Kenneth Blanchard and Robert Lorber cite an example of one manager who uses his customers to help him catch his employees doing something right. He gives customers a book of "praising coupons" to use when an employee treats them the way they want to be treated. The customer simply tears off a coupon, writes on the back the employee's name and what the employee did right, and turns it in at the manager's office.



SUCCESS + REINFORCEMENT = CONTINUED SUCCESS²⁰

FORMAL RECOGNITION

PURPOSE:

- To recognize and commend employees who have done something "ABOVE AND BEYOND" expectations. Examples follow:
 - Taking immediate action in a crisis or emergency situation.
 - Providing special training or assistance to other employees.
 - Suggesting a cost or work saving idea (separate from participating in the Suggestion Program).
 - Displaying excellent customer relations skills.
- To recognize and commend employees who have performed competently, diligently and consistently over a period of time. Examples follow:
 - Maintaining a good attendance or safety record.
 - Showing a spirit of teamwork through specific actions.

TWO TYPES OF RECOGNITION:

1) HONORARY:

- Appropriate for performance that substantially exceeds expectations and warrants more emphasis than positive reinforcement. Examples follow:
 - Letters of appreciation or endorsements forwarding commendations from customers or outside organizations.
 - Department of Army honorary awards or non-Federal awards (AR 672-20).
 - Locally designed honorary awards. Local honorary awards should play a major role in recognizing deserving employees. Installations have the flexibility and should develop various forms of honorary recognition, depending upon their particular needs. Such awards may be accompanied by a plaque, emblem, coin, pin, or some other type of token to commemorate the occasion.

FORMAL RECOGNITION (Continued)



➤ The following examples show different types of honorary recognition that may be appropriate:



Employee of The Month Award
Courteous Service Award
Teamwork Award
Perfect Attendance Award
Certificate of Appreciation
Outstanding Civilian Service Medal
Achievement Medal for Civilian Service
Meritorious Civilian Service Award
Superior Civilian Service Award
Commander's Award for Civilian Service

2) MONETARY:



• Although the positive recognition aspect of the program is designed primarily to reinforce good performance by means of intangible recognition, there are occasions when tangible rewards are appropriate. (See AR 215-3 for detailed information about the various forms of tangible rewards that are available to recognize good performance.)

TECHNIQUES:



- Recognize performance as soon as possible after it occurs. The power of recognition decreases as time passes.
- Match the amount and intensity of the recognition to the behavior or performance being recognized.
- Use appropriate publicity to encourage others to emulate the behavior you are recognizing.
- Don't think that you have to give out costly awards. Inexpensive tokens can mean as much as expensive awards, as long as the recognition is viewed as honest and sincere.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

PURPOSE:

- To let employees know what is expected of them and how well they are meeting those expectations.
- To provide management with necessary data to support a variety of personnel decisions (e.g., salary, award, promotion, training and retention decisions).

RATING PERIOD:

- At a minimum, all regular employees will receive a formal performance appraisal once a year. Installation policies may provide for more frequent ratings in particular situations (e.g., departure of supervisor).

RATINGS FOR FLEXIBLE EMPLOYEES:

- Installations also may include "flexible" employees in the formal performance appraisal process. However, there is no requirement to do so. If "flexible" employees are not included in the formal appraisal system, installations must establish some policy to ensure that "flexible" employees receive feedback on their performance and consideration for salary adjustments (pay-band employees), training, and other performance-related decisions.

APPRAISAL FORMS:

- There are two Annual Performance Review and Development Plans, one for supervisory and managerial personnel and one for non-managerial personnel. Sample forms are enclosed under the subject heading "Records/Forms".
- The appraisal forms for each group were designed to require minimal effort on the part of the rater and yet provide substantive feedback for the employee in each job factor. Performance indicators are listed for the "unsatisfactory", "satisfactory", and "outstanding" levels for each factor. The rater will then do the following:
 - ✓ Places a checkmark in the box which best describes the employee's performance for each factor.
 - ✓ Enters the appropriate number of points for each factor in the "Pts" column.
 - ✓ Totals the points for all the factors.
 - ✓ Places a checkmark by the appropriate "overall rating" block, according to the point total.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS (Continued)

APPRAISAL FORMS (Continued):

- The reverse side of the form includes space for the rater to make any comments and lists appropriate training or developmental activity for the employee.

APPRAISALS FOR SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS:

- At the beginning of the appraisal period, each manager/supervisor and his/her supervisor will be responsible for developing a "contract" which outlines the specific accomplishments expected during the one-year appraisal period. While the contract will be a joint effort between the employee and his/her supervisor, the supervisor has the final say on its contents. This contract, as well as the employee's performance in the other factors listed on the Annual Performance Review and the Development Plan will form the basis for the annual appraisal.

APPRAISALS FOR NON-MANAGERIAL EMPLOYEES:

- Performance requirements should be communicated to employees via methods outlined in the subject heading on "Communicating Expectations". Supervisors are responsible for orally discussing performance expectations with employees at the beginning of each appraisal period. Since good customer service is the backbone of our activities, supervisors should pay particular attention to ensuring that employees understand performance expectations in this area. Employees will be evaluated with respect to quality of work, quantity of work, job knowledge/adaptability, human relations, initiative, dependability, and customer relations.

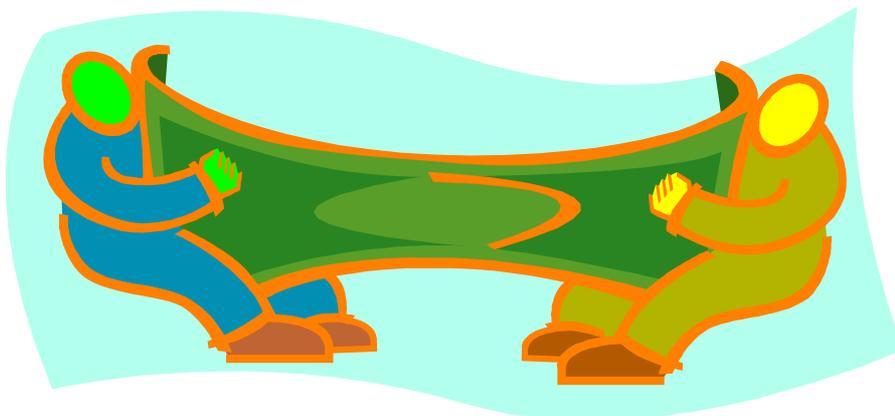
FORMAL:

- Performance evaluation is a continuous process, from informal feedback given by means of coaching and reinforcement, to formal feedback by means of an annual performance appraisal. Therefore, the annual appraisal should not come as any shock to the employee. It merely documents for the record what is already known about the employee's performance.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS (Continued)

RELATED PAY AND OTHER DECISIONS:

- Performance evaluation provides a method to link individual performance with the fulfillment of organizational goals and to reward an employee accordingly. Formal performance appraisal time is an ideal opportunity for the supervisor to review the employee's current salary in light of his/her performance.
- While pay adjustments may be made at any time, at a minimum, supervisors should give pay adjustments consideration at the time they officially rate an employee's performance. This provides both an equitable method of system administration and also an effective means of linking pay to performance. This consideration should be documented in the "Rater's Comments" part of the appraisal form.
- Supervisors do not have to wait until the time of the Annual Performance Appraisal before taking action on unsatisfactory performance. Instead, the supervisor should initiate action (coaching, followed up with more serious action as warranted) as soon as the unsatisfactory performance is known.



FORMAL IMPROVEMENT STEPS

PURPOSE:

- To provide a progressive, non-punitive approach to deal with specific performance or conduct deficiencies which require formal resolution.

CHARACTERISTICS:

- "Adult-to-Adult" communication and problem solving.
- Emphasis on the employee's problem -- not the employee as a problem.
- Focus on future opportunities to correct problems.
- Responsibility for problem correction lies with the employee -- not the supervisor.
- Focus on long-term employee commitment to the organization and his/her responsibilities, rather than short-term compliance.

PROCEDURES:

- Procedural information on how to apply each "Formal Improvement Step", Reminder, Caution Memo, Decision Day is contained in the appropriate subject heading and contains relevant information for handling that step, along with a sample "Employee Discussion Guide" and "Formal Memo" documenting the action.



FIRST FORMAL STEP "REMINDER"



WHEN?:

- Prior "Coaching" has failed to correct the problem, or,
- First level of formal discipline is justified for a first offense.

HOW?:

- Use "Employee Discussion Guide" (sample follows) as a starting point to define the problem and prepare for discussion with the employee.
- Meet with the employee in a comfortable, private location that is free of distraction.
- State the problem and ask the employee whether the facts are accurate. (NOTE: If there is a significant difference of opinion, you may wish to adjourn the meeting and further investigate the matter.)
- Once the facts are agreed to, explain the impact of the behavior or performance on the organization. Remind the employee of his/her responsibility for acceptable performance and conduct and seek a commitment for improvement through a problem-solving approach.
- Jointly discuss how to resolve the problem. Offer help, but don't take responsibility -- that belongs to the employee.
- After agreeing to a plan of corrective action, set a timeframe for follow-up.
- Inform the employee this is the first level of formal discipline and will remain active for **six months**. Let the employee know that you will give him/her a written memo documenting the "Reminder" and his/her commitment to improve.
- Close the meeting on a positive note. Be supportive of the employee's commitment to improve and express confidence in his/her ability to do so.

WHAT PAPERWORK?:

- Complete the rest of the "Employee Discussion Guide" for your records and make a note of the reminder on the "Employee Discussion Log".
- Prepare a memo confirming the "Reminder" (sample follows). Give a copy of the memo to the employee, a copy to the NAF Personnel Unit for the employee's Official Personnel File, and maintain a copy for your records.

FIRST FORMAL STEP REMINDER (Continued)

WHAT PAPERWORK? (Continued):

- When giving a copy of the memo to the employee, the best approach is to have a second meeting to review the memo with the employee. The supervisor might start the meeting by saying, "Johnny, here's the memo I said I would prepare to document the discussion we had yesterday. I'd like you to read it and tell me if it accurately reflects your recollection of our discussion." This approach tends to be a lot more productive than just handing the memo to the employee without any comment. It indicates the supervisor is actually concerned with making sure the memo is accurate. It also sets the tone for a productive problem-solving session, rather than a defensive confrontation.
- If the employee takes issue with anything contained in the memo, ask him/her to explain the concern. If the concern is valid, the supervisor should make the appropriate revision. If the supervisor does not think the employee has a valid point, he/she should so tell the employee and explain the reason. There is nothing to preclude the employee adding a separate statement to the memo if he/she desires.

CONSEQUENCES?:

- A "Reminder" will remain active for **six months** from the date it is given. The maximum number of "Reminders" that may be active at one time is two.
- If the employee maintains a clean record for **six months**, the "Reminder" will be deleted from the record and may not be used to support a higher level of discipline in the future. If a subsequent disciplinary infraction occurs during the active period, the "Reminder" documentation will become part of the record of the subsequent formal disciplinary action.



EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION GUIDE

(Sample Discussion Guide for "Reminder")

Employee: Johnny B. Good

Position Title, Series, Grade/Level: Clerk, NF-302

Type of Employment: Regular Flexible*

Current Problem:

Specific Deficiency: Eleven documents misrouted last week. Three divisions complained and gave me copies that were misrouted to them. Addresses were clearly printed. Johnny should not have had any problem sending them to the correct address.

Desired Expectation: Complaints should be minimal. Occasional mistakes are OK, but these should not occur when addresses are legible.

Impact or Business Reasons Why Employee Must Solve Problem: Misrouted mail causes unnecessary delays and may result in missed suspense and organizations not receiving information in a timely manner.

Consequence to Employee if Problem Continues: Further disciplinary action and removal if problem is not corrected.

Mitigating/Aggravating Considerations:

Overall Work Record: Prior Problems Good Record
Length of Service: 1-12 Mos 1-3 Yrs 4-10 Yrs 10+ Yrs
Recent discussion about this or other problems: No Yes
Is employee currently under a formal improvement step? No Yes

If yes, indicate step, date, and reason for action: _____

Other: On Sep 23, I spoke with Johnny about his tardiness (mornings and returning from lunch), spending time on personal matters, and not paying attention when he distributes mail. One problem after another seems to come up, causing me to believe he isn't giving his job the full attention he should.

* While supervisors may use this guide to assist in defining problems and coaching flexible²⁹ and probationary employees, please note that the formal improvement steps are not applicable for such employees.

EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION GUIDE

("REMINDER" Continued)

Discussion Summary:

Type: Coaching Reminder Caution Memo Decision Day

Date/Time: _____

Items Discussed by Supervisor and Issues Raised by Employee: I explained the problem to Johnny and showed him examples of mail items that had been misrouted. I mentioned the impact his poor performance has on the organization and my concern about the need for him to act responsibly in all areas of his job. We spoke about his prior tardiness. I told him I was happy to see improvement in this area, but I expected him to also improve on his mail duties. I asked him for his explanation of the problem and what he thought he could do to resolve it. He admitted to making the mistakes, but said he couldn't help it, that people were always in a hurry to get their mail and often came in before he was finished. He said he wanted to do a good job, but he couldn't when people were constantly over his shoulder.

Employee Committed to Solve Problem: Yes No

Employee Action Plan: We spoke about possible solutions and agreed to the following: The mail usually arrives between 0815 - 0830, and Johnny should have the distribution made by 0900. I told him I would notify our divisions that they can pick up mail after 0900. Johnny agreed this should give him sufficient time to do his mail duties correctly. We agreed to meet again on 12 Dec to discuss his progress.

Additional Comments: I told Johnny this reminder was the first formal level of discipline, which will remain active for six months, and I will give him a memo in the next couple of days documenting it. If no further problems occur, it will be removed from his record. If the problem continues (or another one occurs during this timeframe), a more serious action will be taken. I explained that it is up to him, and I fully support his efforts to improve.

Follow-up Plans: I will keep closer tabs on Johnny's performance and will meet with him on 12 Dec to give him feedback. I will meet with him sooner if specific problems arise, or to compliment him if I observe improvement.

(Date)

(Employee's Signature)

SAMPLE "REMINDER"

MEMO TO: Johnny B. Good

FROM: Supervisor

SUBJECT: Reminder

- 1. This memo is to document the "Reminder" that I gave you on (date) regarding the performance of your mail duties, in which you misrouted eleven documents during the period 5-9 November. This is of particular concern to me since we had previously discussed (23 Sep), the need for you to improve both in your mail duties and in your reporting to work on time.**
- 2. During our discussion, you stated that you understand your responsibility for acceptable performance and conduct; and you made a positive commitment to improve.**
- 3. I fully expect your cooperation and will remove this "Formal Reminder" from you record, if there are no further instances which require formal discipline during the next six months.**

(Supervisor's Signature)

(Title)

(Date)

SECOND FORMAL STEP

"CAUTION MEMO"

WHEN?:

- Prior "Coaching" and "Reminder" have failed to correct the problem, or,
- Second formal discipline level is justified for a first offense.

HOW?:

- Use "Employee Discussion Guide" (sample follows) as a starting point to define the problem and prepare for discussion with the employee.
- Meet with the employee in a comfortable, private location that is free of distraction.
- State the problem and review the facts. Explain your concern that, not only is the unacceptable performance/conduct a problem, but also the employee's failure to abide by his/her commitment to improve.
- Analyze the reason for failure and jointly discuss new solutions to the problem. Give the employee assistance in devising solutions, if necessary, but don't take responsibility for carrying out those solutions -- this belongs to the employee.
- After agreeing to a new plan of corrective action, set a timeframe for follow-up.
- Inform the employee this is the second level of formal discipline and will remain active for **nine months**. Let the employee know you will give him/her a written memo documenting the "Caution Memo", the solution agreed to, and that you will be asking him/her to sign an agreement of commitment to improve.
- Close the meeting on a positive note. Be supportive of the employee's commitment to improve and express confidence in his/her ability to do so.

WHAT PAPERWORK?:

- Complete the rest of the "Employee Discussion Guide" for your records and make a note of the "Caution Memo" on the "Employee Discussion Log".
- Prepare the "Caution Memo" (sample follows). Give a copy of the memo to the employee, a copy to the NAF Personnel Unit for the employee's Official Personnel File, and maintain a copy for your records.



SECOND FORMAL STEP

"CAUTION MEMO" (Continued)

WHAT PAPERWORK? (Continued):

- When giving a copy of the memo to the employee, the best approach is to have a second meeting to review the memo with the employee. The supervisor might start the meeting by saying, "Johnny, here's the memo I said I would prepare to document the discussion we had yesterday. I'd like you to read it and tell me if it accurately reflects your recollection of our discussion." This approach tends to be a lot more productive than just handing the memo to the employee without comment. It indicates that the supervisor is actually concerned with making sure that the memo is accurate. It also sets the tone for a productive problem-solving session, rather than a defensive confrontation.
- If the employee takes issue with anything that is contained in the memo, ask him/her to explain the concern. If the concern is valid, the supervisor should make the appropriate revision. If the supervisor does not think the employee has a valid point, he/she should so tell the employee and explain the reason. There is nothing to preclude the employee adding a separate statement to the memo if he/she desires.

CONSEQUENCES?:

- A "Caution Memo" will remain active for **nine months** from the date it was originally given. The maximum number of "Caution Memos" that may be active at one time is one. Therefore, if another problem occurs, in either performance or conduct during the active period of a "Caution Memo", discipline must be escalated to the next level.
- If the employee maintains a clean record for **nine months**, the "Caution Memo" will be deleted from the record and may not be used to support a higher level of discipline in the future. If a subsequent disciplinary infraction occurs during the active period, the "Caution Memo" documentation will become part of the record of the subsequent formal disciplinary action.



EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION GUIDE

(Sample Discussion Guide for "Caution Memo")

Employee: Johnny B. Good

Position Title, Series, Grade/Level: Clerk, NF-302

Type of Employment:

Regular

Flexible*

Current Problem:

Specific Deficiency: Six complaints of misrouted mail; three occasions (4,5, and 7 Dec), when mail was not distributed until 0930; three instances of tardiness in reporting for work (3 Dec, 10 minutes; 4 Dec, 8 minutes; 5 Dec, 5 minutes), and four occasions reporting late from lunch (3 Dec, 15 minutes; 4 Dec, 10 minutes; 5 Dec, 8 minutes, and 6 Dec, 20 minutes).

Desired Expectation: Mail complaints should be minimal (no more than 1-2 justified complaints per month). Attendance should be regular and prompt. Expect Johnny to be at work every day, on time, and to return from lunch promptly on time.

Impact or Business Reasons Why Employee Must Solve Problem: Others have to do his work, co-workers complain of favoritism since Johnny is frequently late (morale problem), other departments' work is held up.

Consequence to Employee if Problem Continues: More serious disciplinary action and removal if problem is not corrected.

Mitigating/Aggravating Considerations:

Overall Work Record: Prior Problems

Good Record

Length of Service: 1-12 Mos

1-3 Yrs

4-10 Yrs

10+ Yrs

Recent discussion about this or other problems: No

Yes

Is employee currently under a formal improvement step? No

Yes

If yes, indicate step, date, and reason for action: Reminder, 12 Nov. Performance Problem - Misrouted Mail

Other: Recent problems occurred, despite the fact that I gave Johnny a "Reminder" on 12 Nov. and he made a commitment to correct the problems.

* While supervisors may use this guide to assist in defining problems and coaching flexible³⁴ and probationary employees, please note that the formal improvement steps are not applicable for such employees.

EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION GUIDE

("CAUTION MEMO" Continued)

Discussion Summary:

Type: Coaching Reminder Caution Memo Decision Day

Date/Time: 12 Dec, 1500 hours

Items Discussed by Supervisor and Issues Raised by Employee: I explained the continuing problem and my particular concern that Johnny had failed to honor his 12 Nov commitment to resolve the problem. I went over the specific instances that had occurred since the 12 Nov "Reminder". Johnny said I am always on his back and he couldn't see what the big deal was, and he could not agree that it created a problem for the office. I told him I was sorry he could not agree that this was a serious problem, but the fact remains that these problems must be corrected, and that if it continued, I would have to take measures for a more serious disciplinary action. Johnny said that he would agree to correct the problem. I said I was glad to hear that and fully support his efforts. I asked him what he thought he should do to live up to his agreement.

Employee Committed to Solve Problem: Yes No

Employee Action Plan: Johnny agreed to correct his personal situation that was making him late and to take more care with his mail duties. We both agreed to meet once a week for the next month to keep close tabs on how he is progressing.

Additional Comments: I explained to Johnny that this was the second step of formal discipline and that I would give him a formal "Caution Memo" in the next couple of days to document this step and his commitment to improve. The "Caution Memo" will remain active for nine months. If no further problems occur, it will be removed from his record. If these problems continue, or another one occurs during this timeframe, a more serious action will be taken.

Follow-up Plans: Adhere to weekly discussion with Johnny.

(Date)

(Employee's Signature)

SAMPLE "CAUTION MEMO"

MEMO TO: Johnny B. Good

MEMO FROM: Supervisor

SUBJECT: Caution Memo

1. This is a memorandum of "Caution" regarding your responsibility to improve in the performance of your mail duties and in your tardiness. Following are the events we discussed during our meeting on 9 December:

a. During the period of 3-7 December, you misrouted three documents to XYZ Division that should have been sent to ABC Division; two documents to ABC Division that should have sent to the Director's office; and one document to EFG, instead of QRS.

b. On three occasions (4, 5 and 7 December), you were late in distributing the mail. On each of these dates, you did not distribute the mail until 0930, thirty minutes after the required deadline.

2. We have had prior discussions about your performance and conduct on 23 September, and I gave you a formal "Reminder" about your performance on 12 November. When I met with you to discuss the formal "Reminder", you gave me your commitment to improve your performance, and you have not done so.

3. As I explained to you during our discussions, it is critical that you improve. You have given me your commitment to correct the tardiness problem and to pay close attention to the performance of your job so that the mail is distributed accurately and on time.

4. I am confident that you will be able to correct these problems, and I am counting on you to do so.

(Supervisor's Signature)

(Title)

(Date)

THIRD FORMAL STEP

"DECISION DAY"

WHEN?:

- Prior "Coaching", "Reminder", and "Caution Memo" have failed to correct the problem, or,
- Third formal discipline level is justified for a first offense.

HOW?:

- Use "Employee Discussion Guide" (sample follows) as a starting point to define the problem and prepare for discussion with the employee.
- Meet with the employee in a comfortable, private location that is free of distraction.
- State the problem and review the facts. Explain there is a serious question about the employee's willingness or ability to fulfill his/her responsibilities as an employee. Since solutions were jointly developed and implemented, their lack of success indicates that perhaps no solution will work. Consequently, the employee must determine how committed he/she really is to working for the organization. Does the employee really want to be employed by an organization with these expectations? Perhaps he/she is better suited to work elsewhere. This question can only be answered by the employee. The supervisor should clearly explain the following situation to the employee:
 - ✓ If employment is to continue, the employee must perform responsibly and fulfill the employer's expectations.
 - ✓ If he/she cannot or will not commit to this, employment will be terminated. The choice is the employee's.
- In view of this, inform the employee to stay away from work tomorrow. Let the employee know that he/she does not have to worry about pay -- they will be paid for that day. However, this is a serious matter, and you want the employee to think about whether he/she wants to continue working for your organization. Inform them that you expect them to report to you the following day and let you know their decision. If the employee decides they cannot or do not want to continue work, fine, they can resign. If they decide to continue, fine. However, tell them you will want a firm commitment from him (in writing) that they will fulfill all of his/her work responsibilities and that the problem will be resolved.
- If the employee's decision is to sever employment, inform the employee of the procedures for resignation.

THIRD FORMAL STEP

"DECISION DAY"

(Continued)

HOW? (Continued):

If the employee decides to keep working, you should help the employee focus on finding workable solutions. Inform the employee that this is the final level of formal discipline and that another problem requiring formal discipline during the active life **(one year)** of a "Decision Day" will result in removal from the organization. Let the employee know that you will give him/her a written memo documenting the "Decision Day", the solution agreed to, and that you will be asking him/her to sign a statement affirming his/her intent to live up to all of the employer's expectations.

- Close the meeting on a positive note. Be supportive of the employee's commitment to improve and express confidence in his/her ability to do so.

WHAT PAPERWORK?:

- Complete the rest of the "Employee Discussion Guide" for your records and make a note of the "Caution Memo" on the "Employee Discussion Log".
- Prepare the memo documenting the "Decision Day" (sample follows). Give a copy of the memo to the employee, a copy to the NAF Personnel Unit for the employee's Official Personnel File, and maintain a copy for your records.
- When giving a copy of the "Decision Day" memo to the employee, the best approach is to have a second meeting to review the memo with the employee. The supervisor might start the meeting by saying, "Johnny, here's the memo I said I would prepare to document the discussion we had yesterday. I'd like you to read it and tell me if it accurately reflects your recollection of our discussion." This approach tends to be a lot more productive than just handing the memo to the employee without comment. It indicates that the supervisor is actually concerned with making sure that the memo is accurate. It also sets the tone for a productive problem-solving session, rather than a defensive confrontation.
- If the employee takes issue with anything that is contained in the memo, ask him/her to explain the concern. If the concern is valid, the supervisor should make the appropriate revision. If the supervisor does not think the employee has a valid point, he/she should so tell the employee and explain the reason. There is nothing to preclude the employee adding a separate statement to the memo if he/she desires.

THIRD FORMAL STEP "DECISION DAY" (Continued)

CONSEQUENCES? (Continued):

- A "Decision Day" will remain active for **one year** from the date it was originally given. Because it is a total performance and conduct decision and commitment on the employee's part, only one "Decision Day" is allowed. No other formal levels of discipline may be administered during the active period of a "Decision Day". Any unacceptable performance/conduct that warrants formal discipline at any level would be cause for removal.
- If the employee maintains a clean record for **one year**, the "Decision Day" Memo will be deleted from the record (after the expiration of the active period) and may not be used to support the removal of the employee.

Before Decision Day!



After Decision Day!



EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION GUIDE

(Sample Discussion Guide for "Decision Day")

Employee: Johnny B. Good

Position Title, Series, Grade/Level: Clerk, NF-302

Type of Employment: Regular

Flexible*

Current Problem:

Specific Deficiency: Three instances of tardiness in two weeks (14 Feb, 10 minutes; 17 Feb, 4 minutes; 25 Feb, 15 minutes), and attempted use of NAF postage to send personal package (24 Feb). Cost to mail package would have been \$7.82.

Desired Expectation: Mail complaints should be minimal -- no more than 1-2 justified complaints per month). Attendance should be regular and prompt. Expect Johnny to be at work every day on time, and to return from lunch promptly. Under no circumstances is it acceptable to use Government supplies/equipment/funds/time for personal use.

Impact or Business Reasons Why Employee Must Solve Problem: Others have to do his work. Co-workers complain of favoritism since Johnny is frequently late (resulting in a morale problem). The work of other departments is held up. Use of Government postage for personal reasons is not allowed, and results in higher costs for the soldier.

Consequence to Employee if Problem Continues: Removal.

Mitigating/Aggravating Considerations:

Overall Work Record: Prior Problems Good Record

Length of Service: 1-12 Mos 1-3 Yrs 4-10 Yrs 10+ Yrs

Recent discussion about this or other problems: No Yes

Is employee currently under a formal improvement step? No Yes

If yes, indicate step, date, and reason for action: Caution Memo, 10 December, Performance and Tardiness

Other: Problem has continued, despite prior coaching, "Reminder" and "Caution Memo". Johnny has failed to live up to his commitment to improve.

* While supervisors may use this guide to assist in defining problems and coaching flexible and probationary employees, please note that the formal improvement steps are not applicable for such employees.

EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION GUIDE

("DECISION DAY" Continued)

Discussion Summary:

Type: Coaching Reminder Caution Memo Decision Day

Date/Time: 25 Feb, 1600 Hours

Items Discussed by Supervisor and Issues Raised by Employee: I discussed with Johnny his continuing tardiness problem and yesterday's incident in which he had attempted to use Government postage on a personal package. I told him he had also failed to live up to his commitment to improve and his continued tardiness and attempt to use Government postage for personal use raises the question of whether he really wants to work here. Johnny said this was the first time with respect to the use of Government postage and he didn't think that should be an issue, that his pay was too low for what he had to do. I reminded him that his commitment involved living up to all of the organization's rules and that he knew it was not OK for him to use the postage for personal use. I explained that I wanted him to think about his job with us and whether or not he wants to continue working here. If so, this means abiding by all the rules and standards of our organization. I told him I will place him on a "Decision Day" tomorrow with pay, to give him an opportunity to seriously consider what he wants to do. Johnny said it didn't sound like he had any choice in the matter. I told him he didn't have a choice about tomorrow's "Decision Day", but that he does have a choice about his future, and that he should give me his decision the day after tomorrow.

Employee Committed to Solve Problem: Yes No

Employee Action Plan: Johnny returned to duty on 27 Feb and informed me that he wants to keep his job. He said he was sorry about past problems and wants to start anew and will keep his record clean.

Additional Comments: I explained to Johnny that this was the last step of the formal improvement process and that I would give him a memo documenting the "Decision Day" and his commitment to improve. The "Decision Day" will remain active for twelve months. If no further problems occur during this timeframe, it will be removed from his record. If problems continue, or another one occurs, the next step will be removal.

Follow-up Plans:

(Date)

(Employee's Signature)

SAMPLE "DECISION DAY" MEMO"

MEMO TO: Johnny B. Good

MEMO FROM: Supervisor

SUBJECT: Decision Day

1. This memo is to confirm that on 26 February, you were given a "Decision Day" off with pay. This action was taken for the following reasons:

a. You were tardy in reporting for work on 14 Feb (10 minutes late), 17 Feb (4 minutes late), and 25 Feb (15 minutes late).

b. On 24 Feb, you attempted to send a personal package to your sister, using official time and Government funds to do so. Had you succeeded in sending your package, the cost to the Government would have been \$7.82.

The above incidents are not the first time you have demonstrated performance and conduct deficiencies. We had a prior discussion on 23 Sep about your tardiness, spending time on personal matters, and not paying enough attention when you distribute the mail. On 13 Nov, I issued you a "Reminder" because of your mistakes in distributing the mail, and on 9 Dec, I issued you a "Caution Memo" for tardiness and mistakes in routing the mail

2. When you returned to work on 27 Feb, you assured me that you were committed to living up to performance and conduct expectations. As I explained to you during our discussion on 25 Feb, and again upon receiving your total commitment, any failure to adhere to performance or conduct expectations during the twelve months following this "Decision Day" may result in your immediate removal.

3. I am confident you can meet your total commitment that you have signed on the bottom of this memo, and I am counting on you to do so.

(Date)

(Supervisor's Signature)

EMPLOYEE DECISION AND COMMITMENT:

I have decided to keep my job. I understand however, that to do so, it is my responsibility to adhere to the performance and conduct expectations for my job. I also understand that any violation or failure to meet any one of these expectations during the period 27 Feb 91 through 26 Feb 92, will result in the immediate termination of my employment. After that date, I must continue to have an acceptable record to maintain my job. Accordingly, I make a commitment and affirm my intent to live up to my responsibilities as an employee.

(Date)

(Employee's Signature)



PENALTIES FOR MISCONDUCT

The following table may be used as a general guide in taking formal improvement actions under the Cooperative Improvement Program. This list of offenses and suggested actions may not successfully meet the demands of all situations and, therefore, is to be considered suggestive only. The fact that an offense is not listed does not mean a penalty cannot be imposed if the offense is committed. If an offense is not listed in this table, a reasonable penalty can be determined through comparison with those listed. Final decision as to the action to be taken will rest with the responsible administrative officials.

Note the guidelines for second and third offenses are not applicable if the employee already has an active "Caution Memo" or "Decision Day". In such cases, formal discipline would escalate to the next higher step or removal, as appropriate.

<u>Infraction</u>	<u>First Offense</u>	<u>Second Offense</u>	<u>Third Offense</u>
1. Insubordination (refusal to obey orders, impertinence, like offense)	Reminder, Caution Memo or Separation	Caution Memo, Decision Day or Separation	Decision Day or Separation
2. Fighting or creating a disturbance resulting in an adverse effect on morale, production, or maintenance of proper discipline.	Caution Memo	Decision Day	Separation
3. Sleeping on duty (where safety of personnel or property is not endangered).	Caution Memo	Decision Day	Separation
4. Sleeping on duty (where safety of personnel or property is endangered).	Decision Day or Separation	Separation	
5. Drinking intoxicants on duty or reporting for duty intoxicated to a degree which would interfere with proper performance of duty, be a menace to safety of persons or property, or be prejudicial to the maintenance of discipline (see note #1).	Decision Day or Separation	Separation	

PENALTIES FOR MISCONDUCT (Continued)

<u>Infraction</u>	<u>First Offense</u>	<u>Second Offense</u>	<u>Third Offense</u>
6. Absence without leave (any (any absence from duty that has not been authorized and for which pay must be denied).	Reminder	Caution Memo or Decision Day	Decision Day or Separation
7. Dept complaints (neglecting or avoiding payment without sufficient excuse or reason).	Counseling (See AR 690-700, Chapter 735, Appendix E)		
8. False statements, misrepresentation, or fraud in completing application for employment or promotion, or in other records submitted to the Department of The Army. Apparent oversights and errors, where satisfactorily explained, may be excused, where not otherwise disqualifying.	Decision Day or Separation	Separation	
9. Loafing (willful idleness or deliberate failure to work on assigned duties).	Reminder or Caution Memo	Caution Memo or Decision Day	Decision Day or Separation
10. Theft	(See Note #2)		
11. Gambling on duty	Reminder or caution memo	Decision Day	Separation
12. Notorious misconduct off-duty (with regard to off-duty conduct, all employees have an obligation to conduct themselves so that no disgrace or disrepute will be visited on The Department of the Army.	Decision Day or Separation	Separation	
13. Failure to observe any written regulation or order prescribed by appropriate authority.	(See next page)		

PENALTIES FOR MISCONDUCT (Continued)

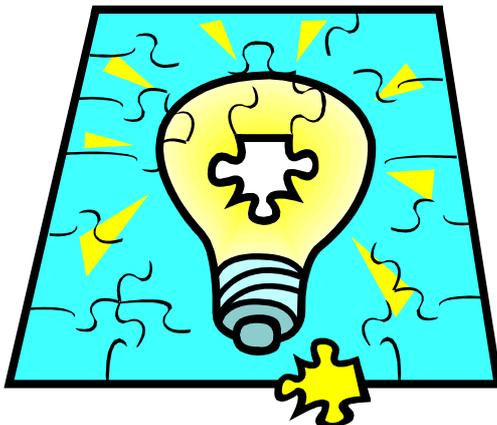
<u>Infraction</u>	<u>First Offense</u>	<u>Second Offense</u>	<u>Third Offense</u> Separation
a) Violation of administrative regulations where safety of persons is endangered, or funds or property is jeopardized.	Caution Memo or Decision Day	Decision Day or Separation	
b) Violation of administrative regulations where safety of persons is not endangered or funds or property is not jeopardized.	Caution Memo	Decision Day	Separation
c) Refusal to testify in a properly authorized inquiry or investigation conducted by representatives of The Department of the Army, except where such refusal is based upon grounds of self-incrimination.	Decision Day or Separation	Separation	
14. Immoral or indecent conduct.	Decision Day	Separation	
15. Knowingly making false or malicious statements against other employees, supervisors or officials with the intent to harm or destroy the reputation, authority or official standing of those concerned.	Caution Memo or Decision Day	Separation	
16. Transferring, selling, or introducing intoxicants on Government premises, except where authorized (See note #1).	Caution Memo or Decision Day	Decision Day or Separation	Separation
17. Off-duty misconduct of such major significance that the employee cannot fulfill his/her job responsibilities. Off-duty misconduct that has an adverse affect upon The Department of the Army (See Note #2).	Decision Day or Separation	Separation	

PENALTIES FOR MISCONDUCT (Continued)

<u>Infraction</u>	<u>First Offense</u>	<u>Second Offense</u>	<u>Third Offense</u>
18. Unauthorized use of an official motor vehicle (See Note #4)	30-day Suspension or Separation	Separation	
19. Threatening or inflicting bodily harm or physical resistance to competent authority.	Decision Day or Separation	Separation	

NOTES:

1. Actions involving these offenses should be evaluated in consonance with the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Control Program.
2. Penalty imposed will be determined primarily by value of articles stolen, whether property was recovered, and employee's explanation. Since employees are often engaged in handling cash, foodstuffs, and liquor, incidents of theft or drinking on duty must be treated as major offenses. Therefore, these offenses can result in separation for a first offense.
3. Removal is mandatory when United States citizen employees in foreign areas commit offenses against host Government laws. Such conduct reflects unfavorably upon the United States and affects the accomplishment of the Army mission.
4. Code 31 U.S.C. 1349 provides for a suspension of not less than 30 days as a minimum penalty.



REMOVAL

Removal is not a step of the formal improvement process. It is the result of an employee's refusal or inability to meet performance and/or conduct expectations.

REMOVAL SITUATIONS:

- When an employee fails to show required improvement during the active period of a decision day.
- When an employee commits an offense so serious that normal progression through formal improvement levels is not warranted.

PROCEDURES FOR EFFECTING REMOVAL:

- Supervisor forwards DA Form 4017 through supervisory channels to NAF CPU with appropriate documentation to support the action.
- When removal is warranted, the employee will be issued a written notice which:
 - ✓ States the specific reason for the action.
 - ✓ Informs the employee of the right to review the material relied on as a basis for the action.
 - ✓ Informs the employee of the right to grieve the action and the appropriate time limits.
 - ✓ Provides the employee a minimum of seven calendar days' notice. However, in those cases which an employee's retention on active duty might result in damage or loss of property or funds, be detrimental to the interest of the activity, or be injurious to the employee, fellow workers, or the general public, advance notice of 24 hours is sufficient.

ALTERNATIVES TO REMOVAL:

- In certain situations, change to a lower grade/level may be a more viable option than removing an employee for poor performance. For example, these alternatives may be appropriate when the employee can perform work at a lower level. OR when management is willing to retain the employee in the same pay band job under lower performance expectations.

EMERGENCY ACTIONS

Situations may arise that require immediate removal of an employee from employer premises, due to serious and inappropriate behavior, or when an employee is not ready, willing, nor able to work. This type of action is considered an "emergency action", and is not equivalent to a disciplinary action. The following examples are types of situations which might, depending upon the facts of the case, constitute an "emergency action":

- Theft
- Reporting to work unable to perform the requirements of the job
- Fighting
- Violation of alcohol or drug policy
- Any incident that might cause injury or damage to persons or property
- Refusal to follow a direct work assignment

In these emergency situations above, the supervisor will document the events surrounding the emergency, conduct an investigation of the incident as quickly and efficiently as possible, and determine if subsequent disciplinary or removal action is warranted.

Employees who are removed from the work place in such situations may be placed on annual leave, sick leave, leave without pay, or administrative leave, as appropriate.



GRIEVANCE/REVIEW RIGHTS

BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES:

- **Formal disciplinary actions (Reminder, Caution Memo, and Decision Day) and annual performance appraisals may be grieved if covered under the negotiated grievance procedure.**
- **Time limits and procedures are spelled out in the negotiated grievance procedure of the applicable collective bargaining agreement.**

NON-BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES:

- **Formal disciplinary actions may be grieved if covered under the grievance procedure in AR 215-3.**
- **Employee performance ratings other than unsatisfactory are excluded from the agency grievance procedure.**



RECORDS/FORMS

FORMS:

- **Employee Discussion Log (Figure 1).** The purpose of this form is to record significant events/actions regarding an employee's performance/conduct. It is maintained by the supervisor for the duration of the individual's employment.
- **Employee Discussion Guide (Figure 2).** The purpose of this form is to assist the supervisor in preparing for employee discussions. It is also useful as a worksheet for any memo that may be subsequently given to the employee to document a formal improvement level.
- **Annual Performance Review and Development Plan (Non-managerial Personnel) (Figure 3)**
- **Annual Performance Review and Development Plan (Supervisory and Managerial Personnel) (Figure 4)**
- **Managerial Performance Contract (Supervisory and Managerial Personnel) (Figure 5)**

RECORDS:

- The following chart summarizes the various records that would normally be retained in each instance:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Employee Discussion Log</u>	<u>Employee Discussion Guide</u>	<u>Supporting Documentation</u>	<u>Formal Memo</u>	<u>DA Form 3434</u>
Coaching	*	*	*	No	No
Annual Appraisal	Yes	*	Appraisal Form	*	No
Recognition	Yes	No	Yes	*	*
Reminder	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Caution Memo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Decision Day	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Emergency Action	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Removal	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

* If applicable.

RECORDS/FORMS (Continued)

RECORDS (Continued):

- Installations are responsible for establishing local procedures for maintaining formal discipline memos. At the expiration of their active period, however, all memos of formal discipline will be removed from employee files and placed in a deactive file. Memos placed in the deactive file will only be used for defensive purposes by the Employer.

IMPORTANCE OF ADEQUATE DOCUMENTATION:

- Documentation for disciplinary actions should be kept with the possibility in mind that the action may ultimately be reviewed by an outside third party.
- Adequate supporting documentation is essential if we want to prevail before a third party. Good documentation should have the following characteristics:
 - **FACTUAL:** The more specific facts the documentation contains, the stronger management's case will be.
 - **NON-JUDGMENTAL:** In documenting a disciplinary case, the supervisor should limit him or herself to things that are known for sure, as opposed to making judgments about the employee's intentions or motives. For example, the activity would have a strong position if the documentation specified: "on four occasions, the employee was absent without leave", and factual information about the employee's absences was documented. The activity would be in a weak position if the activity only showed: "the employee had a poor attitude regarding attendance" as the documentation.
- Documentation should also reflect the employee's agreement to change. In this way, management can demonstrate that, not only was the employee fully aware of the problem, but he/she failed to live up to their agreement to correct the problem.

EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION GUIDE

Figure 2

Employee: _____

Position Title, Series, Grade/Level: _____

Type of Employment: Regular Flexible*

Current Problem:

Specific Deficiency: _____

Desired Expectation: _____

Impact or Business Reasons Why Employee Must Solve Problem: _____

Consequence to Employee if Problem Continues: _____

Mitigating/Aggravating Considerations:

Overall Work Record: Prior Problems Good Record

Length of Service: 1-12 Mos 1-3 Yrs 4-10 Yrs 10+ Yrs

Recent discussion about this or other problems: No Yes

Is employee currently under a formal improvement step? No Yes

If yes, indicate step, date, and reason for action: _____

Other: _____

* While supervisors may use this guide to assist in defining problems and coaching flexible and probationary employees, please note that the formal improvement steps are not applicable for such employees. 53

EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION GUIDE

Continued

Discussion Summary:

Type: Coaching Reminder Caution Memo Decision Day

Date/Time: _____

Items Discussed by Supervisor and Issues Raised by Employee:

Employee Committed to Solve Problem: Yes No

Employee Action Plan:

Additional Comments:

Follow-up Plans:

(Date)

(Employee's Signature)

Figure 3

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NON-MANAGERIAL PERSONNEL)				
NAME	JOB TITLE		GRADE/LEVEL	
EMPLOYING ACTIVITY		RATING PERIOD		
		TO	FROM	
<p>INSTRUCTIONS: Place a checkmark in the box which best describes employee's performance for each factor. Enter points for each factor in the "POINTS" column. Add points for all factors and enter total in the "TOTAL" block. Place a checkmark by the appropriate "OVERALL RATING" according to the point total.</p>				
FACTOR	1	2	3	POINTS
<p>1. QUALITY OF WORK: Consider accuracy, errors and mistakes, adherence to instructions and procedures.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Pays little or no attention to details; does not follow instructions or procedures.</p>	<p>Occasional errors, usually follows instructions & procedures; learns from mistakes.</p>	<p>Exceptionally precise, & accurate; consistently follows procedures; suggests improvements.</p>		
<p>2. QUANTITY OF WORK: Consider amount, volume of output, use of workday under normal conditions.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Output too low to retain without improvement; excessive idleness; poor use of time.</p>	<p>Normal productivity; output satisfies job requirements; does not add/deduct from volume of work group.</p>	<p>Extraordinary volume of output; highly efficient; generally adds to output of co-workers.</p>		
<p>3. JOB KNOWLEDGE/ ADAPTABILITY: Consider job knowledge, interest in work, willingness and ability to acquire new skills.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Unacceptable level of job knowledge; lacks interest in work; resists change in assignments.</p>	<p>Knows own job; moderate interest; adapts to new assignments; neutral about changes.</p>	<p>Superior knowledge & skills; highly interested; adjusts quickly to new assignments; suggests improvements.</p>		
<p>4. HUMAN RELATIONS: Consider relationship with fellow employees and supervisors, response to teamwork and constructive criticism.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Uncooperative in efforts to get job completed; resents constructive criticism.</p>	<p>Cooperates with coworkers & supervisors; works without friction; accepts criticism to avoid conflict.</p>	<p>Goes out of way to encourage harmonious working environment; inspires others; appreciates help; takes effective action.</p>		
<p>5. INITIATIVE: Consider willingness to move on to other tasks or do what is necessary to get the job done; self-starter; self-improvement efforts.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Needs to be shown what to do.</p>	<p>Does what needs to be done.</p>	<p>Always takes the initiative to find the most useful task to do.</p>		
<p>6. DEPENDABILITY: Consider attendance, tardiness, observance of call-in procedures, scheduling of leave.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Unsatisfactory attendance; reminded continuously about tardiness & call-in procedures.</p>	<p>Satisfactory attendance; generally on time & normally follows call-in procedures.</p>	<p>Excellent attendance; on time for work; always follows call-in procedures.</p>		
<p>7. CUSTOMER RELATIONS: Consider courtesy, attitude, Willingness to help the customer.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>Actions & attitudes often harm customer relations & cause complaints.</p>	<p>Actions & attitudes contribute to good customer relations; positive feedback.</p>	<p>Actions & attitudes greatly enhance good customer relations without exception.</p>		
OVERALL RATING:			TOTAL	
<p>Unsatisfactory <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Marginal <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Excellent <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Outstanding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 55</p>
<p>(7-8 Points)</p>	<p>(9-12 Points)</p>	<p>(13-15 Points)</p>	<p>(16-19 Points)</p>	<p>(20-21 Points)</p>

Figure 4

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SUPERVISORY AND MANAGERIAL PERSONNEL)				
NAME	JOB TITLE		GRADE/LEVEL	
EMPLOYING ACTIVITY	RATING PERIOD:	TO	FROM	
INSTRUCTIONS: Place a checkmark in the box which best describes employee's performance for each factor. Enter points for each factor in the "POINTS" column. Add points for all factors and enter total in the "TOTAL" block. Place a checkmark by the appropriate "OVERALL RATING" according to the point total.				
FACTOR	1	2	3	POINTS
1. <u>TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable level of job knowledge; little interest in keeping abreast of latest methods/techniques.	<input type="checkbox"/> Has a working knowledge of all phases of job & related methods, techniques, & skills. Keeps current on new developments.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional knowledge of all phases of job. Viewed as "expert". Keeps informed of latest developments in field, as well as external events that may impact on activity.	
2. <u>PROBLEM SOLVING/DECISION MAKING:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrives at premature conclusions; fails to recognize critical problems; often unwilling to make decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Thinks in logical, disciplined manner; recognizes problems & generally takes effective action.	<input type="checkbox"/> Seeks innovative solutions; always makes effective decisions, even under pressure; willing to make decisions involving risks.	
3. <u>CREATIVITY:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> No interest in creativity or innovation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Looks for more effective ways to get job done; often develops and/or recommends innovative procedures to accomplish assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/> Examines problems from unique perspectives; exercises original thinking, ingenuity & initiative. Always looks for better way.	
4. <u>PLANNING, ORGANIZING, & CONTROLLING</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fails to anticipate requirements necessary to achieve objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally establishes realistic goals; procedures & plans to achieve objectives to include: budgeting, resource allocation & monitoring of work programs; complies with internal controls.	<input type="checkbox"/> Anticipates potential problems & plans for contingencies; has in-depth understanding of forces at work & takes advantage of situational opportunities.	
5. <u>RESULTS OBTAINED</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Seldom meets deadlines, goals; does not follow through.	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally meets project goals, deadlines; work is normally of Good quality & thorough; can be depended upon to follow through.	<input type="checkbox"/> Always meets goals & deadlines; achieves significant end results (e.g., increased revenue, customer service improvements); generates new ideas & directions.	x 2 =
6. <u>HUMAN RELATIONS</u> (Superiors, Peers & Subordinates)	<input type="checkbox"/> Often uncooperative; dealings with others characterized by friction.	<input type="checkbox"/> Able to work with supervisors, subordinates, & others to achieve desired results; effectively deals with conflict situations & keeps appropriate people informed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Masterful at interpersonal relationships; excellent oral communication skills; instrumental in establishing harmonious working environment.	
7. <u>ADAPTABILITY/FLEXIBILITY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Resists changes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Adapts to new assignments; normally accepts & support changes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Responds to political aspects of situations; recognizes subtleties & shadings in problems; always accepts, supports, & even initiates changes.	
8. <u>LEADERSHIP AND SUPERVISION</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually allows organization to run itself; has to be reminded of supervisory responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Effectively performs personnel management & EEO responsibilities; instills teamwork; develops subordinates; resolves conflict situations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Involves people & gains their personal commitment; stimulates subordinates; develops good innovators.	
9. <u>COMMUNICATIONS</u> (Written and Oral)	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications often inadequate; fails to keep superiors informed; has to be reminded to exchange information with employees.	<input type="checkbox"/> Effectively organizes & presents thoughts in clear manner; timely informs people of significant matters; regularly conducts information meetings with employees.	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive & convincing; conducts meetings in a manner that generate increased mutual understanding & respect; communications leave a positive impression.	
10. <u>CUSTOMER RELATIONS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Actions & attitudes often harm customer relations & cause complaints.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Actions & attitudes greatly enhance good customer relations without exception.	
OVERALL RATING:				57
Unsatisfactory (7-8 Points) <input type="checkbox"/>	Marginal (9-12 Points) <input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfactory (13-15 Points) <input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent (16-19 Points) <input type="checkbox"/>	Outstanding (20-21 Points) <input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL				

SAMPLE

MANAGERIAL PERFORMANCE CONTRACT

Name: _____

Job Title: _____ Grade/Level: _____

Name and Location of Employing Activity: _____

Appraisal Period: From: _____ To: _____

The following goals and objectives are established for the above appraisal period. Achievement of these goals and objectives will be used in evaluating performance under Factor 5, Results Obtained, of the Annual Performance Review and Development Plan (Supervisory and Managerial Personnel).

Goals and Objectives:

(Supervisor's Signature)

(Employee's Signature)

(Date)

(Date)

INTERFACE WITH OTHER SYSTEMS

The following guidelines apply in equating the formal disciplinary levels of the CI Program with the levels of punitive discipline:

Cooperative Improvement (CI)

Reminder
(Active Six Months)

Caution Memo
(Active Nine Months)

Decision Day
(Active Twelve Months)

Punitive Discipline

Written Reprimand

First Disciplinary
(Suspension)

Second Disciplinary
(Suspension)

In transitioning employees from punitive discipline to the CI Program, supervisors should review records of employees who received disciplinary action under the old system and convert the previous discipline to the corresponding level of the CI Program.

The supervisor should discuss this conversion with employee and provide him/her with a written notice of the conversion, along with the active time limit of the applicable CI level. For example, if an employee received a written reprimand two months before coming under the CI Program, that reprimand would be converted to an "Active Reminder" with four months remaining before it is deactivated.

