



**HUMAN
RESOURCES**

Guide to Managing Employee Performance

GUIDE TO MANAGING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

OUR MISSION

Working together regionally to provide and sustain a safe, secure and healthy community.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

INTEGRITY: We are dedicated to uncompromising honesty in our dealings with the public and each other in conformance with our code of conduct.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: We believe in simple, accurate and clear communication. We encourage the open exchange of ideas and information.

QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICE: The County exists to serve the public. We put the needs and expectations of citizens at the center of everything we do and take pride in delivering services of the highest quality.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Washoe County will be the social, economic and policy leadership force in Nevada and the Western United States.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Stewardship of Our Community
- Proactive Economic Development and Diversification
- Safe, Secure and Healthy Communities
- Regional Leadership Through Engaged Employees

GOALS

- Fiscal Sustainability
- Economic Impacts
- Vulnerable Populations
- Employee Engagement

GUIDE TO MANAGING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

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GUIDE TO MANAGING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

PURPOSE

Performance management is an essential practice for high performing organizations. A balanced performance management system contributes to workforce engagement and success. It enables employee accountability and clarity of responsibilities, links strategic County objectives and the day-to-day actions of employees and focuses on employee development. This performance management system is intended to:

- **Improve employee and organizational performance by defining critical employee performance goals and assessing results achieved.**
 - Individual goals are aligned with those of the work unit, division, department and County strategic priorities and employees focus on doing the right things, the right way.
 - Employees and supervisors jointly develop work goals, clarify job responsibilities and expectations, identify and eliminate obstacles to performance and evaluate results achieved.
- **Encourage on-going dialogue and feedback between managers and employees on performance progress and development needs.**
 - Employees understand the results they are expected to achieve (the *WHAT*) and the competencies they are expected to demonstrate in achieving them (the *HOW*).
 - Employees receive continuous feedback, guidance, coaching and training to improve performance and achieve development goals.
 - Employees and supervisors jointly identify areas for job enrichment, career progression and skill development.
- **Provide managers with knowledge and techniques to effectively manage employee performance.**
 - Employees receive consistent, accurate and fair performance assessment.
 - Complete and accurate documentation justifies and supports decisions and evaluations when acknowledging good performance and managing poor performance.
 - Grievances and wrongful discharge litigation is reduced.

This guide outlines a comprehensive approach to performance management that is intended to increase effectiveness and consistency across the County. It incorporates best practices and approaches to ensure achievement of results, enable a learning organization, foster cooperation and the spirit of excellence in public service. It is designed to provide information needed to effectively and successfully manage individual employee performance.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for performance and development is shared between the organization, the manager and the individual. Ultimate accountability for outcomes rests with the individual.

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WHAT IS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT?

Performance management is an on-going cycle that involves employees, their managers, and the organization in improving individual and County effectiveness in the accomplishment of the organization's mission and goals. The process includes:

- setting performance goals and expectations
- observing and documenting performance and behavior
- providing feedback, coaching and mentoring
- evaluating results achieved measured against results expected
- assessing proficiency in competencies used to achieve results
- assessing development needs and planning for improvement
- providing opportunities for development

Performance management focuses employee effort on contributing directly to the strategic priorities of the County. County success depends upon the success of the workforce charged with doing the right things, in the right way. It requires the cascade of organization strategy to the formulation of goals and objectives for the department, the division, work groups and the individual.

Performance Management begins on an employee's first day on the job. New employees need concrete goals to focus on and want to understand what is expected of them. Good managers communicate these expectations to their new employees and provide on-going coaching and feedback to help ensure success and retention during the probationary period.

Did you know?

Research indicates that employee engagement is enhanced by performing meaningful work, having clear direction, performance accountability and having an efficient, safe, trusting and cooperative environment in which to work.



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Performance Management Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility for performance and development is shared between the organization, the manager and the individual. Ultimate accountability for outcomes rests with the individual.

The Organization	The Manager	The Individual
Sets strategy	Interprets and cascades strategy	Works with manager to set performance goals in line with strategy
Provides training on Performance Management processes and tools	Sets performance goals, standards and measures in line with cascaded strategy	Communicates career aspirations
Measures the quality of performance appraisals	Documents performance and provides feedback and coaching	Works with manager to set development goals
Ensures consistency across the County	Appraises performance and identifies areas for learning and development	Pro-actively seeks out and participates in development activities
Provides development opportunities	Provides access to development opportunities	Seeks on-going feedback and coaching
Provides assessment criteria	Coaches and mentors	Provides critical self-evaluation during appraisal process

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THE PROCESS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Our mission, values and direction provide us with the reasons and the focus for coming to work everyday and providing excellent public service (the **WHY**). The Strategic Objectives and Goals define and drive all the work that we do in support of that vision.

Performance Management begins with the overarching County strategy. As the strategy is cascaded throughout the organization, each department, division, work group and individual sets goals and objectives and works to achieve these strategic results. The results can then be linked back to organizational performance.

The manager is responsible for carrying out the departmental objectives through the work group and the individuals reporting to him or her. The process of performance management consists of an on-going cycle of performance planning, performance monitoring and execution and performance review.

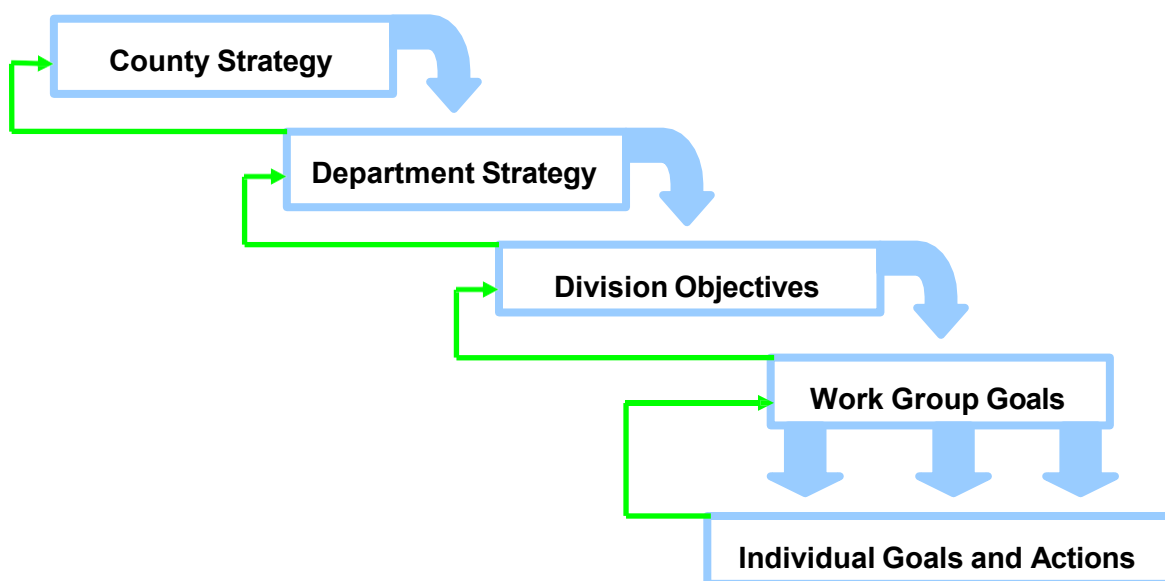
Washoe County Strategic Objectives

Stewardship of Our Community

Proactive Economic Development and Diversification

Safe, Secure and Healthy Communities

Regional Leadership Through Engaged Employees



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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CYCLE:

Performance Planning includes setting individual goals in support of department objectives, setting job performance standards and competency requirements.

Performance Monitoring and Execution is on-going and includes: getting the work done, coaching, training, mentoring, career development, periodic progress discussions, motivating, performance improvement and confronting.

Performance Review and Development Planning includes the formal Employee Performance Review and Development Plan.

Progressive Discipline is the formal procedure for addressing serious behavior issues. It includes a series of progressively serious corrective actions that may result in discharge of employment. This guide does not include the progressive discipline process that is conducted with the Human Resources.



Performance Management is a Cycle NOT an Event!

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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CYCLE: *PERFORMANCE PLANNING*

Performance Planning sets the stage for on-going coaching and monitoring. Performance goals and expectations are established and the skills and abilities needed to accomplish them are communicated.

A successful Performance Management process:



Performance goals and expectations are specific actions and key measures of performance results expected in a position. They are the job related activities that will take place to accomplish the division/ departmental goals. Achievement typically describes the outcome expected and is often expressed in terms of quality, quantity, cost and/or timeliness.

Developing Performance Goals and Expectations

1. List principal activities or assignments needed to accomplish division/ department objectives and measures. *What does the job need to do and why?*
2. Review the job functions and work with incumbents to include key tasks and responsibilities of the position. *What are the tasks? Why does the job exist?*
3. Set expectations that are outcome-focused and can be measured. SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, and Time-bound. *What must be accomplished?*
4. Define measurable results expected (quantity, quality, cost or timeliness). If you can only describe the performance, describe how the work will be judged and what factors will be considered. *What are the value added results of the work?*



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Keys to Developing Performance Goals and Expectations:

- 🔑 Performance goals and expectations are set for the major components, key job responsibilities, tasks and activities of every job at all levels in the organization. Results are linked to overall division, department and County strategy.
- 🔑 Employee participation in the development of goals and expectations for the job increases buy in and contributes to self-management and self-development.
- 🔑 Job performance expectations should be reasonable and attainable by any qualified person doing the job. Expectations may change based on incumbent skills and experience, training and length of time in the job.
- 🔑 Goals and results expected are reviewed during Progress Review sessions and annual Performance Review and Development sessions. They should be reviewed and adjusted, if necessary, when the job or employee working conditions change (e.g. new technology), after training or any time priorities change.
- 🔑 Performance expectations describe the level of performance which new employees must attain to pass probation and which existing employees are expected to maintain. Employees holding the same job at the same level are held to the same performance expectations.

WASHOE COUNTY Employee Performance Review

Goals and Achievements for the Review Period:

Evaluate performance with a narrative that describes if the goal was completed in the expected timeframe, and if it achieved the expected outcome/results.

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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CYCLE: *PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EXECUTION*

As employees work to accomplish their goals, it is necessary for them and the supervisor to track progress and outcomes/results achieved (**the WHAT**) and the specific behaviors and competencies used in execution (**the HOW**). Failure to accomplish goals and achieve results must also be tracked including specific behaviors that may have hindered performance or competencies that were not used and may have contributed to the outcome.

WHAT ARE COMPETENCIES?

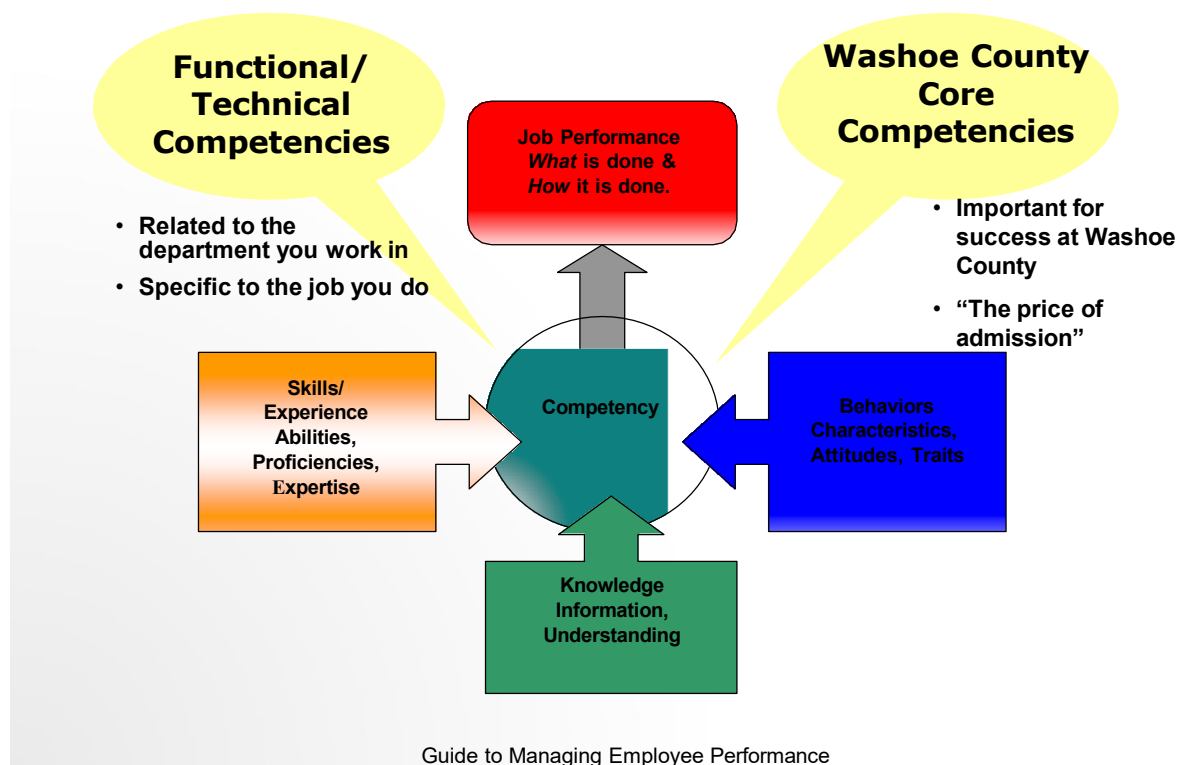
Competencies are the skills, knowledge, attributes, behaviors and abilities that are necessary for success in a job or on a team.

Washoe County Core Competencies describe the knowledge, skills and traits that are critical for all employees and contribute to our success. (See Appendix 2)

In addition to these core competencies, each functional area, job classification and individual job will have competencies that are specific and essential for successful performance and delivery of results. Managers and their employees can work together to determine what competencies are needed and what level of proficiency or capability is expected. To help determine these competencies:

- Collect information on the job from the employee.
- Observe work outputs or work being performed, especially outcomes over which the employee has direct control.
- Review the position description and class specification.
- Consider the contributions the work unit and the position is expected to make.

What are Competencies?



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Assessing Capability Using Competencies

1. Is the employee prepared to succeed in the current role?
 - Do his skills, knowledge and abilities enable him to meet his performance objectives?
 - Could upgrading her proficiency in certain competencies enhance her performance?
2. Is the employee prepared to do the job in the future?
 - Will there be changes in technology, the environment, customers?
 - Does he have the skills and is he ready to meet the needs of tomorrow?
3. Is the employee ready for the next career step?
 - Should she broaden her knowledge?
 - Should he be using a particular skill in a more complex way?
 - Does the next step require more people management and less technical ability?
 - Should she build new skills?

The Performance Review is about assessing the past...

What were the objectives?

How well were results achieved? How were the results achieved?

Performance is an indicator of capability...

What skills were applied? How were they applied?

How might they have been applied for improved results?

Where are we today and what will be needed to prepare for the future?

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Keys to Performance Monitoring:

Performance monitoring enables the supervisor to track performance execution. It is an on-going process of:

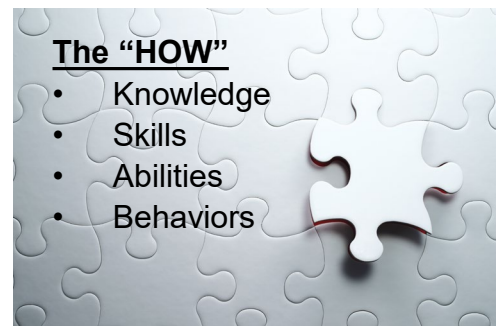
- Observing
- Documenting
- Providing coaching and feedback

The effective supervisor encourages dialogue with employees and ensures they have a clear understanding of their progress toward goals and targets. On-going informal reviews allow employees to implement their plans and make any course corrections that may be required due to shifting priorities or changes in performance (improvement or decline). Supervisors will be able to address any challenges employees may be encountering and employees will understand how they are doing, feel valued for their performance and contributions (recognition) and learn ways to improve performance (development).

Accurate documentation of performance monitoring sessions should include:

- Progress toward goals
- Accomplishments and support needed
- Development needs
- Training attended
- Performance improvement or disciplinary discussion
- Other relevant performance related information

The Performance Puzzle



The steps to on-going performance execution and monitoring are:

The Performance Puzzle

The "WHAT"

- Accomplishment of Goals
- Value-Added
- Results
- Achievements
- Execution of Tasks, Duties, Responsibilities

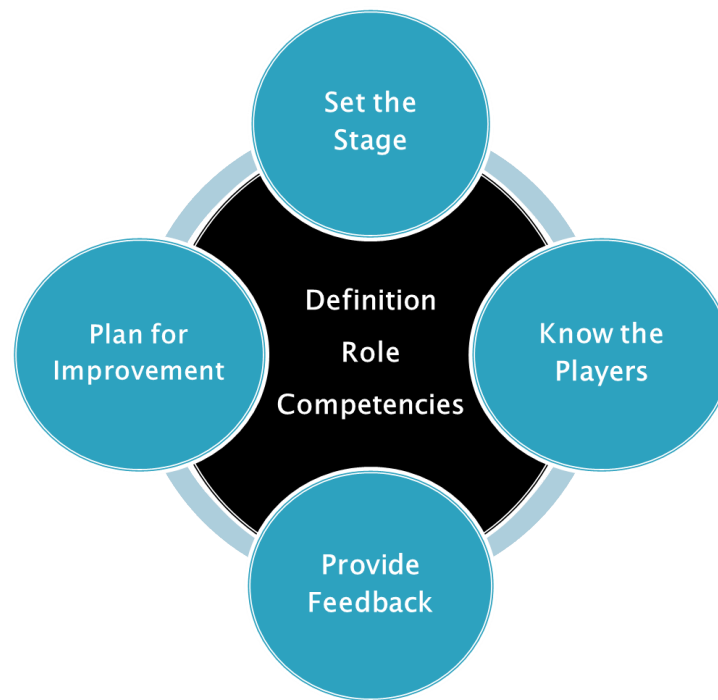
1. Observe and document performance.
2. Provide feedback to the employee throughout the entire performance period. Use appropriate coaching, training and confronting skills.
3. Conduct informal and formal (when appropriate) reviews.
4. Reset goals and targets as necessary; modify individual development plan as needed.
5. Recognize good performance.
6. Correct problem performance.
7. Take disciplinary action when warranted.

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Coaching

The coaching process improves employees performance, development and engagement. Coaching is the process of equipping people with the skills, knowledge, tools and experience they need to develop themselves and become more effective. It's how you develop a relationship with each of your team members, built on common goals and mutual trust. We coach for retention of talent.

Coaching needs dedicated and committed time to build your working relationship. Coaching needs to be applied in an individualized manner. Coaching is a continuous process. Coaching is a part of the core competency of Managing Others for developing organizational talent and leading and inspiring others.



Coaching Competencies

Coaches need coaching competencies in setting performance goals, communicating instructions and assessing employee's strengths and weaknesses. Coaches provide feedback, reward improvement and deal with failure. Coaches work with personal issues and confront difficult situations promptly. Coaches respond to requests and follow through. Coaches listen for understanding while motivating others and building rapport and trust.

Performance management is an on-going cycle that involves employees, their managers, and the organization in improving individual and organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of the organization's mission and goals.

What do we coach?

We coach for performance of duties, tasks and responsibilities. We coach to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to succeed in the department/job. We coach to enhance behaviors, characteristics and traits that contribute to success in the job.

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Coaching Roles

Manager (who is JUST managing) has a vertical perspective, provides insights and perspectives about function/department. Managers have direct authority, responsible for employee's performance and success on the job. Managers offer advice/training on performance, able to provide feedback on an ongoing basis so employees know how they are performing in relation to goals/objectives. Managers foster accountability, are responsible for monitoring performance and progress through evaluations and other formal systems. Managers create productivity by concerned with the employee's success on the job.

Coach has an individual perspective, provides insight and perspective while aligning individual's development goals to organizational goals. Coaches use external mirroring, model effective two-way communication and feedback in order to improve employee's performance. Coaches offer advice to further development, shares confidential and personal feedback but encourages employees to share development plans with others. Coaches foster self insight, concerned with helping the employee grow through introspection and feedback from others. Coaches are concerned with personal growth, that the employee is successful at learning and becoming a more effective leader.

Mentor has a horizontal/systemic perspective, provides insight and perspective that matches the flow of business across different functions or organizational culture. Mentors use indirect authority, not responsible for managing the employee's performance but providing help to further success in the organization. Mentors offer advice to broaden the employee's view, allowed to share information to which the employee is seldom privy, unlock mysteries of the organization. Mentors foster self responsibility, concerned with helping the employee take charge of his/her own growth. Mentors encourage thinking, concerned that the employee gains perspective and is successful at learning.

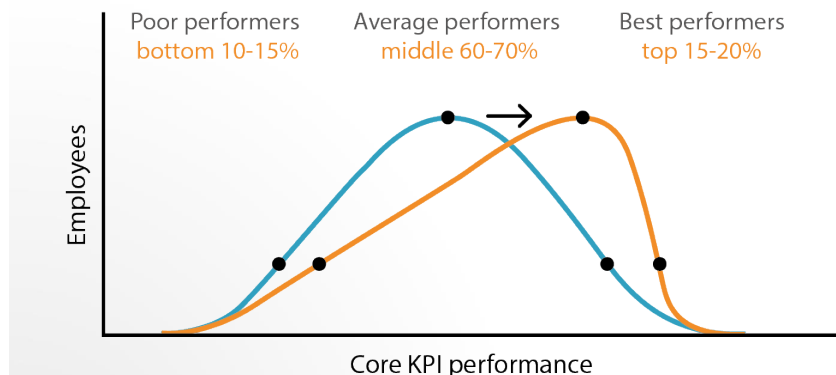
Coaching Roles

MANAGER	COACH	MENTOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Vertical perspective▶ Direct authority▶ Advice to improve performance▶ Fosters accountability▶ Concerns about productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Individual perspective▶ External mirroring▶ Advice to further development▶ Fosters self insight▶ Concerns about personal growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Horizontal/systemic perspective▶ Indirect authority▶ Advice to broaden viewpoint▶ Fosters self responsibility▶ Concerns about thinking

Adapted from original article in Linkage Inc.'s 2000 Best Practices in Organization and Human Resources Development Handbook

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Why do we coach?



Feedback and coaching is the most effective way to affect change and culture among your team. Many times, there are initiatives, policies, directions that are set above our head and there isn't a lot we can do about it. It is our job to make sure our team is the most effective and efficient it can be using the resources we have.

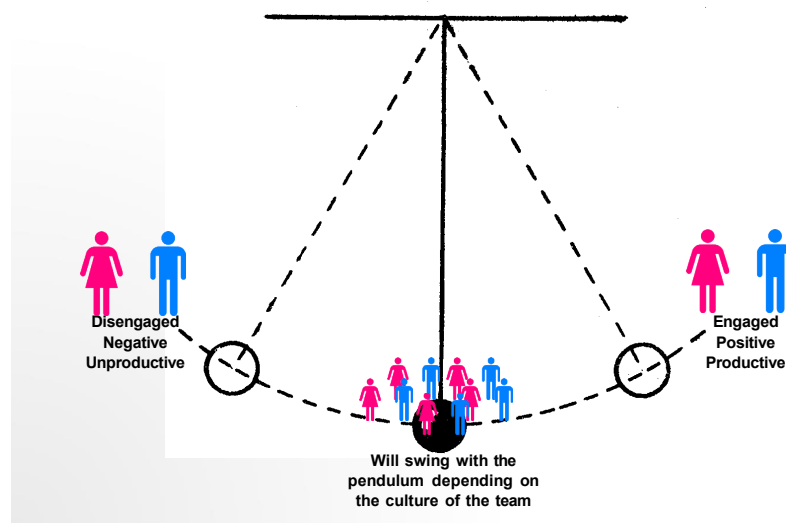
A typical team is made up of a spread that is similar to this one. You have a small percentage of employees that are your top performers no matter what the culture of the team is. They are always engaged, positive and productive and they stay engaged because their personal drive overpowers any environmental influences.

You also have a small percentage of employees that are your low performers. The people in this category may switch depending on environmental factors such as your leadership, but it is safe to assume that there will always be some small group that falls into this category.

Then, the typical team has a larger group (the majority of the team) that falls into the middle. This group can easily be influenced by environmental factors.

Remember the Pareto Rule—80% of a supervisor's time is spent on 20% of the team, the low performers. We struggle to get them to be the middle performers. What if we spent 80% of our time on the top performers? Or the middle performers?

Why do we coach?



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Feedback

Feedback can be offered in many different ways: informal reviews, acknowledging progress toward goals, recognizing good performance and accomplishments, training, offering support and assistance, follow up from meetings, email exchanges or bi-weekly coaching.

Effective Feedback is specific and descriptive. It describe specific behavior - what was said or done well or what could have been said or done differently. Keep the feedback focused on specific behaviors you observe or words you hear. Specific feedback provides clear examples such as “yesterday in our staff meeting, I saw you looking through your notebook, yawning, and drifting off...” rather than “it seems you’re not interested in what we’re doing.” Specific feedback describes behaviors not attitudes and is not subjective or judgmental.

Effective Feedback is helpful and balanced. You should have the receiver’s best interest at heart.

Effective Feedback meets the needs of the receiver. When an employee said he had handled a lot of difficult complaints that day, you said, “That must’ve been tough,” and then moved on. If you had said, “I understand how difficult it is to handle so many complaints and still keep a friendly voice over the phone,” the employee would have felt you were really listening to his problems.

Effective Feedback addresses the impact of the behavior. Including the impact of the observed behavior has on others or on the individual or business which lets the employee know why the feedback is important for them to receive and why the alternative solution would have been better.

Effective Feedback uses active listening. Active listening involves the listener observing the speaker's behavior and body language. Having the ability to interpret a person's body language lets the listener develop a more accurate understanding of the speaker's message. Having heard, the listener may then paraphrase the speaker's words.

Effective Feedback is timely. Feedback has the greatest impact and the greatest likelihood to improve behavior when it is provided as soon as possible after an event. Details about the situations are fresh in the person’s mind and that person can take action on the feedback immediately. Providing feedback as closely aligned to the actual behavior or incident reduces the potential for debating the situation, and supports your intent to have feedback serve a developmental purpose. Do not wait to include it in the Performance Review, employees need to know immediately when a behavior occurs that may negatively reflect on their performance.

Effective Feedback is controlled by the receiver when solicited. Feedback is information about a behavior (activity, task or situation) given to the person who originated that behavior. There are two types of feedback: positive feedback (which reinforcing behavior) and feedback for improvement (where the goal is to change behavior).

Situation/ Goal	Performance/ Behavior	Impact/Gap	Suggestions	Consequences
What is the performance expected? Why is it important?	Specifically, what did the person do/not do?	How did performance fall short, meet or exceed expectations?	What ideas do you have to improve/sustain performance?	What are the likely impacts of improving/not improving performance?
Where/when did behavior occur? What was the context?	What specific behaviors were observed?	What was the impact on results, others, the organization?	What suggestions do you have for behavior change?	What are the likely outcomes of changing/not changing behavior?

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Coaching Remote Teams

Communicate Clearly, Frequently and Empathetically

Prioritize communication to guide your workforce through the new ways of remote work. As some employees begin to re-enter the physical workplace, communication will be far more important. Depending on location, different teams may go back and forth between opening and closing—making it even more critical to communicate clearly and often. Remember, employees have no prior experience about what to do or how to behave during this change and are looking for guidance.

The way you communicate is as important as what you communicate. Show empathy for the challenges your employees are facing, be understanding and practice humanity. Make sure communication is tailored to employees' specific needs. This may require a multi-pronged approach but a personalized strategy will deliver a positive employee experience for the entire workforce.

Reimagine and Facilitate Work/Life Integration

While the workforce at large has gotten used to the convenience of working from home, it does deliver a different type of employee experience. In remote work settings, employees have the advantage of more family time and a new world of work-life integration. Whereas those who are returning to the office have the advantage of a more professional working environment, a deeper connection to workplace culture and access to proper ergonomics.

Each environment delivers a distinct experience for employees, each with its own pros and cons. With a blended workforce, it's important to find balance between both so the entire workforce feels supported and set up for success. Leaders should consider different strategies to help blur the lines of location-based perks. For example, for workers who will remain remote, consider offering support to help employees make home offices workable. Consider offering training on ergonomics for home offices or best practices to handle at-home stressors.

Influencers

Alternatively, for those returning to physical offices, leaders should prioritize and promote similar work-life integration that the remote workforce is privy to. Flexibility and understanding can go a long way for workers who are adjusting to new workplace demands and returning to work.

Lastly, for both onsite and remote employees, leaders should encourage regular check-ins. A blended workforce will have to battle against proper collaboration and team connectivity. While some may be able to catch up in-person at the office, others may be relying on Teams or similar tools. Regardless of the tool or method, teams should collaborate regularly and often. This will not only enable a more connected workforce, but will help boost productivity and build a stronger culture as well.

Promote Wellness and Mental Health in the Face of Fear and Anxiety

Leaders must be ready to address employee health and safety concerns, prioritize employee wellbeing, and remember that the stressors for onsite workers may be different from those in remote settings. While onsite workers may be concerned about physical safety precautions, remote workers may have concerns over region-specific case spikes or at-home anxiety. Both sets of fears are valid, real and should be addressed.

Be sure to prioritize communication around wellness programs that enable employees to care for their emotional wellbeing as well as their physical health. Share wellness and relaxation techniques, which can be calming and reassuring to the workforce. Despite best efforts to make the transition as easy as possible, your workforce may still feel overwhelmed or burned out. Employee burnout can often result in a decrease in productivity, decline in engagement and lack of motivation. If workers are showing signs of this, consider offering time off to recharge.

Prepare Employees to Return to the New Workplace

Be prepared to balance talent management for both a remote workforce and changes to in-office team. When physical changes to office layouts like maintaining social distancing, meeting health and safety requirements such as staggering arrival times, separating desks and improving office-cleaning procedures keeping staff informed is essential. While physical safety measures are critical, we must also have the right technology in place to meet any new workforce demands. Leaders must stay up-to-date on the growing list of local health and safety regulations.

While it may seem daunting to do double-duty managing a blended remote and onsite workforce, it's our time to step up—employees are looking for guidance.

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Mindsets (how future leaders need to think)



Global Citizen

The world is becoming increasingly connected, which means every company has the potential for worldwide employees and customers. The mindset of the Global Citizen means thinking globally and embracing diversity. Leaders need to understand and appreciate new cultures, actively seek out diverse teams, lead employees with different backgrounds, and know how to enter and succeed in new global markets.

Servant

The servant mindset goes against much of the old way of thinking that leaders stay at the top of the company. The mindset of the servant means that you practice humility and that you serve four groups: your leaders if you have them, your customers, your team and yourself.

Chef

Just like chefs balance numerous ingredients to create masterful meals, leaders must balance the two most important ingredients of any business: humanity and technology. That means embracing technology and using it to improve efficiency in the organization while also providing a sense of purpose and caring for human employees. One side can't succeed without the other.

Explorer

Future leaders need to be like explorers of old and embrace the unknown. They need to be open to new ideas and able to change course as the world around them evolves. Just like explorers had to continually learn, leaders need to be super perpetual leaders and practice curiosity.

Coach

Great coaches motivate, inspire and engage their teams while caring about each member as an individual off the field. Likewise, future leaders need to appreciate employees as individuals as opposed to viewing everyone as just workers. The best coaches and leaders develop their people to be more successful than them.

Futurist

Futurists make sure organizations aren't surprised by what the future might bring. The world in which we live and work is constantly changing and full of unknowns. Futurists consider multiple scenarios and think through new possibilities. They stay on top of trends and are connected to their networks.

Technology Teenager

Teenagers seem to always be current on the latest technology, and future leaders must be the same way. They don't need to be experts in the practical application, but they should embrace technology and know how to best leverage it to serve their company. They need to be tech savvy and digitally fluent.

Translator

Translators are master communicators. They listen to understand and do more than just hear what people are saying. They use verbal and non-verbal communication to connect with people and know the best channels to use to cut through the noise and deliver their messages. Listening and communication are two timeless aspects of great leadership yet they are also the two which are changing the most!

Yoda

For decades, leaders have shied away from being emotional. But in the future, leaders need to be emotionally intelligent like Yoda and develop their empathy and self-awareness. Great communicators build connections and aren't afraid to be vulnerable. Empathy is understanding the feelings and perspectives of others. Self awareness is about understanding your strengths and weaknesses and helping others understand yours as well.

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When performance does not meet expectations, the supervisor must address it:

- Assess desired performance vs. actual performance
- Identify contributing factors
- Communicate performance gap and describe the impact
- Discuss possible solutions
- Agree on an action plan
- Provide feedback and coaching
- Support improvement by removing obstacles, providing training or other development opportunities
- Check for positive change
- Provide recognition as appropriate
- Identify if further action is necessary
- Verbal reprimands are not commonly used at the County

- Behavior - The Steps of Progressive Discipline



- Verbal reprimand
- Written reprimand
- Suspension
- Demotion
- Termination

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is recommended when training and coaching efforts have not resulted in the desired change of behavior and employee behavior is unacceptable. A Performance Improvement Plan NOT disciplinary. If an employee fails a PIP, the next step in the process is generally discipline. This document should include:

- Specific job requirements and expectations
- Specific improvement needed
- Consequences if performance improves or does not improve
- Action plan for improvement
- Assistance and support that will be provided
- Timeframe for improvement, typically 60 to 90 days

Begin defining the situation by asking these questions:

- Have performance expectations been clearly communicated?
- Are expectations achievable and reasonable?
- Are the performance problems within the employee's control?
- Are all employees required to adhere to the same standard?
- Is there a reasonable excuse for the performance problem?
- Do you have all the relevant facts? Have you asked for the employee's input?

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Developing and Implementing a Performance Improvement Plan

1. Draft a Performance Improvement Plan - have it reviewed by the HR Analyst assigned to your department.
2. Meet with the employee to discuss and get agreement on the improvement needed and the action plan for improvement.
 - Review the draft improvement plan with the employee.
 - Agree on specific actions, monitoring methods, needed resources and support such as training, supervisory assistance and guidance.
 - Reiterate performance expectations, steps to improve performance, statement of outcome.
1. Revise Plan to incorporate employee input, if appropriate.
2. Hold a final discussion and obtain employee signature.
3. Monitor and follow-up
 - Schedule weekly or bi-weekly meetings to review progress.
 - Evaluate the outcome of the improvement plan.

A good performance improvement plan is clearly communicated, consistently followed and gives the employee an opportunity to correct performance problems. Performance counseling can challenge an employee to meet or exceed established work performance standards. Some benefits to this approach include:

- The employee is given an opportunity to improve performance.
- The relationship between the employee and supervisor is strengthened or, at a minimum, clarified.
- Documentation is filed in the employee's HR personnel file.
- If the employee improves as needed and no further action is necessary, the employee can request that the PIP be removed from the HR personnel file at the time of the next scheduled performance evaluation. This evaluation must indicate an overall "Meets" or "Exceeds" Expectations rating and the employee should make the request through the supervisor who will notify HR.
- Failure on the part of an employee to adhere to a PIP and affect and sustain the desired results or change may result in the next Performance Evaluation with an overall rating of "Below Expectations" and denial of a merit increase and/or the application of Progressive Discipline as the behavior may be deemed chronic.

Guidance for Performance/Behavior

- County Values
- Code of Conduct
- County Policies
- Essential functions
- Core Competencies
- Department Policies

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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CYCLE: *PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING*

Performance Review and Development Planning is a process of:

1. Preparing to write the performance review and development plan
2. Writing a draft of the review and development plan
3. Conducting a performance review and development planning meeting
4. Finalizing the performance review and development plan

Remember - There should be no surprises on the performance review.



Probationary Employees

- 6 month probation - 3rd & 5th month
- 12 month probation - 3rd, 8th & 11th month

Permanent Employees

- Annually - on the employee's anniversary date in class

Washoe County's Employee Performance Review and Development Plan is a communication tool designed to enable the manager and employee to jointly evaluate the achievement of previously set performance and development goals, develop and set performance and development goals for the next review period and identify and solve problems in achieving goals. It utilizes a narrative approach that provides employees with specific examples of performance expectations and achievement as well as developmental feedback. The document is not static and with on-going progress reviews (at least quarterly), it can be modified to reflect changes to goals and performance and increase the likelihood of success.

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The foundation of the Performance Review and Development Planning Process rests in these key concepts:

- 🔑 All employees will be reviewed annually during the month before their merit increment date.
- 🔑 Newly hired employees will be evaluated per County Code 5.219.
- 🔑 A mid-year progress review of the Employee Performance and Development Plan will be conducted. Ideally, the employee should initiate this discussion to ensure they are on track.
- 🔑 Immediate supervisors are responsible for evaluating the performance of each employee under their direct supervision.
- 🔑 Employees should complete a Self-Performance Review and Development Plan prior to the discussion.
- 🔑 Supervisors should complete a draft Employee Performance Review and Development Plan for discussion with the employee.
- 🔑 Supervisors may revise the draft version based upon the discussion with the employee.
- 🔑 The supervisor's manager will review and sign off on the finalized Employee Performance Review and Development Plan.
- 🔑 Any employee receiving a "needs improvement" on any functional competency will have a developmental objective identified and/or be placed on a performance improvement plan.
- 🔑 Employees may express agreement/disagreement on the Employee Performance Review and Development Plan form and/or attach additional comments/documentation. They may discuss the disagreement with the reviewer and others in the chain of command within their department.
- 🔑 Once completed, a copy of the Performance Review is PDF'd by the department and forwarded via email to Human Resources to be scanned into the employee's personnel (AppXtender) file.
- 🔑 The employee may access their completed Performance Reviews through ESS.

The supervisor who meets with direct reports throughout the year and holds Performance Monitoring discussions is able to complete the Performance Review and Development Plan with better information, greater ease, and in a timelier manner. From the employee's perspective, there should be no surprises.

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PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS

Prepare

Preparation for the review and development session includes:

1. Gathering documentation:

- County/Division/Department strategic plans and unit goals
- Current job description, essential job functions, job standards and competencies
- Performance Documentation file
- Employee's Personnel file

2. Gathering input from the employee:

- Ask employee to complete a self-Performance Review and Development Plan using the same form as the actual Performance Review and Development Plan.

3. Gathering input from others:

- Ask for input from other supervisors and managers, employees, and customers the employee has worked with to get additional perspectives.
- Ask the employee if there is someone they would like you to reach out to for additional feedback.
- You may use the Feedback input form attached to Employee Performance Review and Development Plan, Appendix 3.



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Write the Performance Review and Development Plan

1. List all accomplishments and results against previously agreed upon goals and provide a brief narrative that describes the performance.

Was the task/goal completed? Was it completed in the expected timeframe? Were the expected outcomes/results achieved? What outside factors contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of results?

2. Identify WC Core Competencies that contributed to goal achievement or those not used that would have contributed to better results. Provide a narrative that details specific examples.
3. Assess proficiency in specific functional competencies/job requirements and document specific examples to illustrate the rating.
4. Provide any additional comments and identify an overall rating.
5. Identify goals, tasks, responsibilities and results expected for the next review period. Make them SMART goals and link them to department/division goals.
6. Identify the competencies that need to be the focus of developmental effort and goal setting for the upcoming rating period. Focus narrative on behaviors, results and improvement.
7. Identify development objectives for job enrichment/career development.

Conduct Performance Review Session

1. Schedule sufficient time for the meeting with each of your employees and ensure there will be no interruptions.
2. Meet with employee.
3. Using your evaluation and the employee's self-evaluation, discuss goals and objectives, expectations, results, competencies and job requirements for the review period.

Some conversation starters can include:

- *What contributions and accomplishments have you made or skills have you acquired during the appraisal period that you are particularly proud of?*
 - *Tell me more about your assessment of your performance on your goals.*
 - *What obstacles are in the way of achieving your performance goals?*
 - *What can I do to help you be more effective in your job?*
 - *What can be done to help you provide better service to your customers?*
 - *What type of projects would you like to be involved with?*
 - *What do you see as your development needs?*
4. Define performance goals and clarify expectations for the next review period.
 5. Discuss development objectives for the upcoming performance period.

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Finalize Employee Performance Review and Development Plan

1. Make any changes to your draft based on discussion with employee and submit electronically through the ESS/Performance Management system.
2. Performance Review is sent via workflow to employee for electronic signature and comments, if applicable, then forwarded to higher management.
3. Higher management reviews, approves and comments, if applicable, thereby completing the workflow cycle.
4. A copy of the Performance Review is PDF'd by the department and forwarded via email to Human Resources to be scanned into the employee's personnel (AppXtender) file.
5. The employee may access their completed Performance Reviews through ESS.
6. Final Steps:



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Appendix 1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ALIGNMENT: Process of tying employee goals to overall department, division and County strategies.

COACHING: Supervisor acts as a mentor, trainer and instructor by providing ongoing guidance and direction to the employee to maximize his or her knowledge, skills and abilities and enhance career development. Day-to-day coaching builds the relationship between the employee and the supervisor by developing a learning environment where the employee learns from mistakes and receives recognition on a job well done.

COMPETENCE: The level of capability to perform in a job. Competence can include an assessment of what skills were applied, how were they applied and to what degree of expertise or proficiency they were used.

COMPETENCIES: Clusters of skills, attributes, attitudes, knowledge, abilities and behaviors essential to job success and to creating lasting benefit for the organization. More than what is accomplished, competencies focus on how the employee creates value and enhanced sustainability for the organization. Competencies include:

- ❑ Core competencies necessary of all employees to ensure accomplishment of County's mission (i.e. customer service, accountability, etc.) and
- ❑ Functional / Technical competencies that are job specific and relate to the relevant areas of expertise for an employee or group of employees.

CONFRONTING: Supervisor monitors employee performance, identifies problems and works with the employee to determine a corrective course of action. Supervisors encourage action to correct problems or clarify perceptual differences between the supervisor and employee. The intent of confronting is to improve employee performance and is expected to produce a specified pattern of behavior.

CULTURE: The way we do things around here – factors include vision, mission, values, beliefs, management practices, line-staff relationships, power and status, policies and procedures, communication, motivational systems, stories and legends, organizational identity, branding and physical workplace.

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL FILE: Each department maintains an employee file that may contain records such as certificates, records of discussion, etc. These items may not be sent on to HR; however, each employee has the right to see whatever is in their department personnel file. This is not the official personnel file, which is maintained by the Department of Human Resources.

DOCUMENTATION: Note taking to include all significant performance events, successes and areas for improvement. All notes should be objective and based on observable, job related behaviors rather than conclusions, opinions or judgments.

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ENGAGEMENT: The emotional involvement or commitment of an employee to a job, leader or organization that provides motivation for him or her to go beyond what is expected and expend discretionary effort to achieve personal and organizational goals.

FEEDBACK: Constructive, candid and timely information given to employees on a regular basis. It includes exceptional as well as ineffective performance and emphasizes two-way communication between manager and employee.

JOB REVIEW: The determination of skills, knowledge and abilities, as well as the specific tasks, requirements and responsibilities required of a worker for successful performance in a position.

JOB ENRICHMENT: Re-structuring work within the current job description to give employees greater responsibility for their pace, quality and work methods, work environment or variety in their current position.

LEARNING ORGANIZATION: One in which people at all levels, individually and collectively, are continually increasing their capacity and enhancing their capabilities to create and produce results.

MENTORING: A relationship that helps orient an employee to the realities of the workplace, support employee success through sponsorship or influence, or provide cultural insights and develop skill and abilities.

MOTIVATION: The process of combining motives and incentives so that employees willingly do what needs to be done.

PERFORMANCE: How well an employee fulfills the requirements of the job. Performance is a function of the ability (knowledge, skills and experience necessary to achieve results), motivation (effort employee is willing to exert) and systems (process, procedures, technology and resources essential to achieve results).

PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION FILE: Notes kept by supervisors to document performance discussions and feedback sessions with employees. They may be maintained in a supervisor log or journal. Once placed in a file with the employee's name on it, the employee has a right to view it.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN: A specific course of action taken to improve employee performance or to bring about a desired change in job related behavior. The PIP details what is to be done, when and by whom.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES: The primary indicators of success for each element of a job such as quality, quantity, timeliness or manner of performance. Performance measures quantify the performance management process and provide a line of sight between what an individual or team does and the strategy of the division, department and County. They must be objective and SMART, indicate expected results and manner of performance.

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PERFORMANCE REVIEW: A business report on an employee's job performance for a specific period of time that includes:

- A review of actual performance, results and accomplishments,
- Clarification of performance expectations through goal setting and identification of key performance measures in alignment with division and department objectives and mission,
- Outline of individual development goals to meet current and future performance expectations.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW SESSION: Feedback session to discuss and finalize the Performance Review and Development Plan.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: Specific key measures of performance expected in a position, regardless of the person in the job. They describe the job related, objective, behavior based and observable results expected when the job is satisfactorily performed under existing work conditions and are expressed in terms of quality, quantity, cost and timeliness.

PROGRESS REVIEW: A performance discussion held at specific intervals (at least quarterly) to review accomplishments, identify barriers, plan revisions, communicate deficiencies in performance and required improvements and discuss training and development needs.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE: A series of increasingly serious corrective actions taken in compliance with collective bargaining agreements to address behavior that violates rules, regulations or orders from a supervisor and may result in discharge of employment. Employees are not generally disciplined for poor work performance, instead Performance Improvement Plans are used to develop desired performance.

SMART PERFORMANCE GOALS: Goals that are written to be specific, measurable, achievable/attainable, results-oriented/realistic/relevant and time bound. They are linked the division, department and County strategy.

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Appendix 2

CORE COMPETENCIES FOR WASHOE COUNTY EMPLOYEES

Competencies are clusters of skills, attributes, attitudes, knowledge, abilities and behaviors essential to job success and to creating lasting benefit for the organization. Competencies focus on how the employee creates value and enhanced sustainability for the organization.

Our core competencies are based on Washoe County's Vision, Mission and Values. They are critical to personal and organizational success and indicate an employee's commitment to our public service mission. Core competencies apply to all positions and all employees. Statements following each competency explain the performance that is expected to "meet" requirements.

Supervisors will need to develop the Functional/Technical Competencies for specific positions in collaboration with employees.

FUNCTIONAL/TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY:

- **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:** Demonstrates the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job.
- **Organizational/Departmental Knowledge:** Demonstrates a clear understanding of the work environment and follows the processes, procedures, standards, and regulations required to perform work duties and assignments.

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS:

- **Communication:** Expresses information correctly, clearly and effectively in writing and speaking. Actively listens; attends to non-verbal cues and uses clarifying questions to ensure understanding. Keeps management informed of decisions. Uses multiple channels to ensure communication (email, phone, meetings, memos).
- **Customer Service:** Knows who the customer is. Assesses and understands the needs and expectations of internal and external customers. Handles all interactions promptly. Is responsive, pleasant, professional, courteous, approachable, friendly, and easy to do business with. Manages complaints with tact and respect. Takes ownership of problems to find solutions. Acts as an ambassador of the County in all interactions.
- **Personal Relationships:** Shows respect for and supports equal and fair treatment for all races, nationalities, cultures, disabilities, ages, and sexes. Builds trust through direct, honest communication; does not gossip. Understands others' perspectives and resolves conflicts constructively, calmly and diplomatically.
- **Teamwork:** Participates in groups willingly. Works with others to set and achieve group goals. Values and encourages others' input and expertise. Shares resources, information and knowledge. Helps to establish group cooperation, pride and identity. Encourages commitment to County mission and organizational goals. Recognizes others' achievements.

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ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS AWARENESS

- **Action and Results:** Pushes self to deliver on goals. Able to plan, prioritize and execute work. Gets things done efficiently and well. Stays focused and energized under distraction and high workload. Acts with minimal direction and supervision. Manages own and others' time and resources well.
- **County Knowledge:** Understands the complexity of the County, its services and the roles and responsibilities of the whole. Knows the County mission, vision, values and priorities. Knowledgeable about how the organization works and how each job impacts the bottom line.
- **Ethics and Integrity:** Maintains the highest standards of conduct. Can be counted on to do the right thing in line with County values. Is trusted and maintains confidentiality of sensitive information, records and materials. Expresses the truth courageously, appropriately, and in the spirit of helpfulness. Dedicated to acting in the interest of the public's trust. Understands the impact of public perception and acts accordingly.
- **Quality Improvement:** Challenges the status quo and seeks to create and implement improvements leading to more efficient and effective work systems and processes. Identifies problems and uses sound judgment and logic to generate, analyze and evaluate effective and innovative solutions. Uses tools and techniques to execute solutions that meet the requirements of internal and external customers.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Accountability:** Has the motivation and mind-set to make a difference. Is able to recognize and acknowledge reality. Takes ownership of own actions and their impact on others. Believes in own capability to accomplish a task and ability to follow through. Can admit to making mistakes and learns from them.
- **Adaptability:** Is open to and able to effectively cope with change. Handles multiple and changing priorities quickly and comfortably. Anticipates new and changing demands for programs and services. Has tolerance for risk and uncertainty. Is able to modify style to successfully meet organizational priorities.
- **Continuous Learning:** Recognizes own strengths and weaknesses. Seeks feedback and accepts criticism non-defensively. Works to develop knowledge, skills and abilities needed for current job. Anticipates future needs of the organization and pursues learning to meet those needs. Is a quick learner when faced with new problems and information. Uses a variety of methods to learn and develop.

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MANAGING OTHERS (for team leaders, supervisors, managers and above):

- **Decision Making:** Recognizes need for a decision. Able to make a timely decision with available data. Understands impact of decision making on others and can explain position when necessary. Able to alter decision if new information indicates. Exercises sound judgment and makes reasonable decisions that demonstrate critical and strategic thinking. Involves citizens and others in decision making as appropriate.
- **Developing Organizational Talent:** Builds talented staffs to address workforce capability and capacity needs. Hires the best people from inside or outside, develops and retains staff. Takes negative action, including discharge, when necessary. Establishes clear, outcome oriented performance and development goals and expectations. Provides regular feedback, coaching, and recognition. Addresses performance issues promptly and uses discipline appropriately.
- **Financial and Resource Management:** Acts as a trustee of the County's resources. Knows the fundamentals of budgeting, cash flow and tracking of expenditures. Understands financial statements. Uses prudent judgment in the utilization and expenditure of available resources.
- **Leading and Inspiring Others:** Articulates a vision for the future and uses it to drive daily decisions. Converts strategies into effective actions. Inspires a commitment to excellence. Builds relationships and develops strategies to include divergent opinions and overcome adversity. Able to motivate diverse teams to achieve results.
- **Performance Management:** Adheres to the organization's timelines and policy to provide probationary evaluations when an employee is in a probationary status and provides annual performance evaluations thereafter. Establishes clear, outcome oriented performance goals and metrics along with development goals and expectations. Engages in on-going and consistent feedback, coaching, and recognition to all staff. Utilizes established coaching and discipline methods to drive performance management.
- **Planning and Organizing:** Understands scope and difficulty of tasks and projects. Able to set achievable yet challenging goals for self and others. Balances requirements with abilities. Can prioritize, plan and schedule assignments appropriately.
- **Values and Leverages Diversity:** Practices equity and fairness in managing all classes and kinds of people. Makes high quality, diverse appointments and ensures that selection practices provide for inclusion of targeted groups. Supports job restructuring and workplace accommodations. Holds self and others accountable for promoting and achieving diversity in hiring, utilizing and developing staff. Promotes a work environment that is cooperative, family friendly, and accepting of diversity. Obtains input from diverse employee groups to identify broad perspectives on program development and implementation.