EPA PERFORMS

Supervisor/Team Leader Meeting Workbook

Planning Performance

Writing Performance Plans

Constructive Feedback

Developing an IDP

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Introduction

Background

On June 1, 1998, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) implemented a new performance management system— PERFORMS (Performance Planning, Employee Rating, Feedback, Opportunity, and Recognition Management System). The goal of this program is to streamline and simplify the performance management process.

About this Guide

One aspect of PERFORMS is that EPA supervisors and team leaders periodically conduct workgroup meetings with their employees to discuss performance issues. *The EPA PERFORMS Supervisor/Team Leader Meeting Workbook* will assist you, as a supervisor or team leader, when you conduct such a meeting. Use it as a guide for your meeting as you set performance expectations with your workgroup members.

The Workbook materials are modular in format so you can use part or all of the materials with the group. You will find useful information about PERFORMS in the Workbook that you can convey to your workgroup during the meeting. You will lead your workgroup as they see the link between organizational goals and their workgroup's goals, write their Performance Plan, discuss examples of constructive feedback, and develop their own Individual Performance Plans (IDP). The Workbook also offers a number of questions you can ask participants during the discussion. You'll find handouts at the end of each section, including worksheets, samples of performance plans, a sample of an IDP, and blank forms. You may want to select a few of these handouts and make overheads for the meeting.

The Workbook is organized into four sections, including:

▸   Planning Performance — this module will help your workgroup describe the performance that is required of them and how their goals are linked to the goals of the organization.

▸   Writing Performance Plans — this module will help your workgroup complete their individual Performance Plans.

▸   Constructive Feedback — this module will help your workgroup describe constructive feedback.

▸   Developing an Individual Development Plan (IDP) — this module will help your workgroup to complete their Individual Development Plan.

Planning Performance

The purpose of this module is for a supervisor or team leader to convey his/her performance expectations to workgroup participants.

Objectives

At the end of the meeting, your workgroup should be able to describe the performance that is required of each of them and how their workgroup goals are linked to the goals of the organization.

Materials Needed

You will need:
- EPA's ten strategic goals (handout)
- The Performance Planning Process (handout)
- Example of a Roles & Results Matrix: Public Relations Department (handout)
- Roles & Results Matrix Worksheet (handout)

Suggested Time

Topics	Time
EPA's Organizational Goals	10 minutes
Linking Organizational Goals to Individual Goals	10 minutes
Developing Performance Elements	40 minutes
	1 hour (total time)

EPA's Organizational Goals

Time

10 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to briefly review with your team how the
PERFORMS process links to EPA's organizational goals as outlined in the
EPA strategic plan.

Detailed Plan

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. EPA's ten strategic long-term goals	Hand out the copy of EPA's Ten Strategic Goals located at the end of this section.	Which goals do you think our workgroup is most closely aligned with?
2. Organizational goals keep EPA aligned with its strategic direction	Make a list of the workgroup's current projects on a flip chart or whiteboard.	Think about the project(s) we are currently working on...do they support these goals?
3. Organizational goals are the compass by which EPA measures its direction.		Do you feel that your efforts are reflected in EPA's strategic plan?

Linking Organizational Goals to Individual Goals

Time

10 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to briefly review with your workgroup how EPA's organizational goals are linked to the performance goals of the workgroup and to individual goals.

Detailed Plan

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. Organizational goals are systematically linked to individual goals	Write the following on a flip chart: EPA Goals ↓ Workgroup Objectives ↓ Individual Responsibilities	Why is it important that your goals be linked to the workgroup goals and EPA goals?
2. Focus on priorities to begin linking workgroup goals to those of the organization	Write an example of a mission statement or functional statement on the overhead or flip chart.	In what way does this mission statement help us begin focusing our priorities? What other documents or info gathering activities could help us?

Items	Actions	Discussion
3. Individual goals are linked to organizational goals by a process	Hand out the visual that illustrates the Performance Planning Process.	How will this process ultimately benefit you? The workgroup? EPA?

Developing Performance Elements

Time

40 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to present workgroup members with a Roles & Results Matrix and further discuss the third step in the planning process, developing performance elements.

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. Developing Performance Elements	Hand out the Example of a Roles & Results Matrix: Public Relations Department located at the end of this section. Hand out the Roles & Results Matrix Worksheet located at the end of this section. Fill in matrix with input from participants using a generic example applicable to each person in the workgroup.	How does Cathy support the development of the brochures? How does the process of defining workgroup goals in a Roles & Results Matrix help us define the roles for individual members of the group? How can the information in the Roles & Results Matrix help you when completing your individual performance plans?

Performance Planning

Handouts and Worksheets
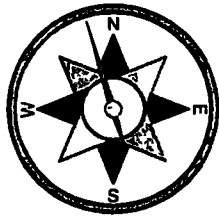
EPA's Ten Strategic Goals

EPA's organizational goals are the compass by which the organization measures its direction. They appear below as outlined in the September 1997 EPA Strategic Plan and can also be found on the Internet at: **http://www.epa.gov/octopage/plantoc.htm**.

EPA's organizational goals are:

1. Clean air

2. Clean and safe water

3. Safe food

4. Prevent pollution and reducing risk in communities, homes, workplaces and ecosystems

5. Better waste management, restoration of contaminated waste sites, and emergency response

6. Reduce global and cross-border environmental risks

7. Expand Americans' right to know about their environment

8. Provide sound science, improved understanding of environmental risk, and greater innovation to address environmental problems

9. Provide a credible deterrent to pollution and greater compliance with the law

10. Provide effective management

The Performance Planning Process

Step 1. Review EPA Goals, Mission, & Strategic Plan	→	Step 2. Determine Measures at Work Unit Level

Step 3. Develop Performance Elements	→	Step 4. Communicate Workgroup's Relationship to The Strategic Plan
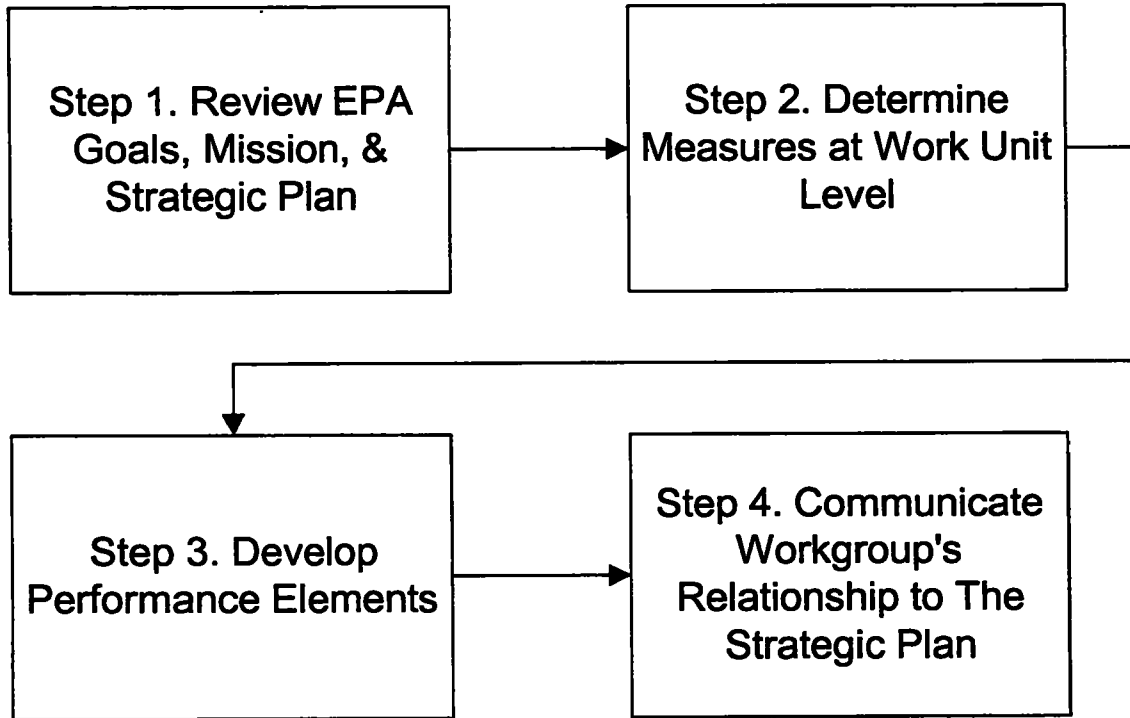
Example of a Role-Results Matrix:
Public Relations Department

Workgroup Members	Workgroup Results	
	Develop Brochures	**Respond to Requests for Additional Information**
Annie	▸ Develop brochure samples ▸ Write text for brochures	▸ Respond to phone calls that request additional information ▸ Complete phone log for additional information requests ▸ Mail out standard packages that corresponds to the request
Bob		▸ Develop new materials in response to requests ▸ Conduct follow-up research needed to complete requests for additional information
Cathy	▸ Develop brochure graphics	▸ Develop graphics for new informational materials
Dave	▸ Design brochure layout ▸ Review brochures ▸ Send to printer	▸ Approve requests for new material development

Roles & Results Matrix Worksheet

EPA Goal: _____

Workgroup: _____

Workgroup Members	Workgroup Results	

Writing Performance Plans

The purpose of this module is for workgroup participants to begin developing their performance plans.

Objectives

At the end of the meeting, your workgroup should be able to complete their individual performance plans.

Materials Needed

You will need:
► Blank performance plan (handout)
► Samples of performance plans (handouts)
► Performance Plan forms (handout)
► Standards Checklist (handout)
► PERFORMS Self-Study Guide

Suggested Time

Topics	Time
What is a Performance Plan?	10 minutes
What Goes Into a Performance Plan?	15 minutes
Writing *Your* Performance Plan	35 minutes
	1 hour (total time)

What is a Performance Plan?

Time

10 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to briefly review with your team that a performance plan is a collaborative effort between supervisors and employees that plans the level of performance expected in the upcoming performance period.

Detailed Plan

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. What is a performance plan?	Hand out blank copies of a performance plan.	
2. When are performance plans due?	Write *Beginning of the performance period* on the flip chart.	How many of you completed a performance plan this past January?
3. Performance Plans as "living documents"		Why would you need to change or update your performance plan?
4. Additional uses of performance plans	Write *Monitoring, Development,* and *Appraisal* on the flip chart.	What other ways can performance plans be used within the PERFORMS process?

What Goes Into a Performance Plan?

Time

15 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to look at samples of performance plans with your workgroup and briefly review the fundamentals of a performance plan, which are the elements, standards, assumptions, and sources of appraisal input.

Detailed Plan

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. Sample Performance Plans	Hand out samples of performance plans to each workgroup participant.	Take a minute and read through the information contained in these performance plans.
2. Review of Performance Elements	Briefly review the definition of performance element. Discuss one of the performance plans.	Is the following element an *accomplishment, activity,* or *behavior?* What distinguishes one from the other?
3. Review of retention standards	Briefly review the definition of retention standards.	
	Pose the following question to participants.	Why is it important to include a retention standard for each element?

Items	Actions	Discussion
	Pass out a Standards Checklist to each participant.	How many of you currently use the Standards Checklist when creating your own standards?
4. Review of assumptions	Briefly review what is meant by assumptions. Discuss a sample performance plan and point to the assumptions listed	How would the assumption listed positively or negatively affect the outcome of the performance element listed?
5. Review sources of appraisal input	Briefly review what is meant by sources of appraisal input. Pose the following question to participants. Write their answers on the flip chart.	What are some examples of appraisal input?

Writing *Your* Performance Plan

Time

35 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is for workgroup participants to begin developing their own performance plans.

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. Getting started		Using your Standards Checklist, begin filling in the performance plan worksheet for your specific position.
2. Filling out the performance plan		Using the performance plan worksheet, begin filling out your performance plan.

Writing Performance Plans

Handouts and Worksheets

Blank Performance Plan

HQ EPA Performance Plan

Name: Office: Year:

Element:
Type of Element: Critical ❑ Additional ❑

Standards and Measurement Sources:

Assumption (if applicable):

Element Rating: Successful ❑   Unacceptable ❑

Element:
Type of Element: Critical ❑ Additional ❑

Standards and Measurement Sources:

Assumption (if applicable):

Element Rating: Successful ❑   Unacceptable ❑

Employee's Signature/Date (Discussion and/or approval of the performance agreement)

Supervisor(s)'s Signature/Date

Sample Performance Plan #1

HQ EPA Performance Plan
Name: Jeff Greenfield Office: Administration & Resources Mgt. Year: January 1 - December 31, 2000

Element: Provide functional computer systems to employees in the office
Type of Element: Critical *X*   Additional ❑

Standards and Measurement Sources:
•Usually within two weeks of receiving the request as shown in the request log
   As verified by the supervisor

Assumption (if applicable): The equipment is in inventory and is not on backorder with the computer company.

Element Rating: Successful ❑ Unacceptable ❑

Element: Maintain computer systems
Type of Element: Critical *X*   Additional ❑

Standards and Measurement Sources:
•Conduct computer maintenance checks on a monthly basis as outlined in the Maintenance SOPs
•Prioritize requests by order of importance as outlined in the Maintenance SOPs
•Process routine requests for computer maintenance to completion, including conducting the maintenance, within two working days as shown in the request log and Maintenance SOPs
•Process high-priority requests for computer maintenance to completion, including conducting the maintenance, usually within one working day as shown in the request log and Maintenance SOPs
   Supervisor spot checks maintenance logs and log of customer complaints.

Assumption (if applicable): All replacement parts are in inventory and adequate human resources are
                available to handle the number of requests received.

Element Rating: Successful ❑ Unacceptable ❑

Employee's Signature/Date (Discussion and/or approval of the performance agreement)

Supervisor(s)'s Signature/Date

Sample Performance Plan #2

HQ EPA Performance Plan

Name: Maria Hernandez   Office: Radiation and Indoor Air   Year: January 1 - December 31, 2000
Science & Risk Assessment Center

Element: Direct team activities for the Northeastern Indoor Air Project, including conducting laboratory and field tests to monitor indoor air quality, identifying air quality risk factors, and determining sources of indoor contaminants to the public.
Type of Element: Critical *X*   Additional ❑

Standards and Measurement Sources:
•Determine project deadlines and required resources
•Meet with team to conduct planning meetings at the beginning of each phase to determine the methodology to be followed for the phase, including determining the sample, data collection and recording methods, and the project reporting system
•Meet with team leader each week to obtain status of the project and to resolve any pending issues
•Monitor the data and methods used to derive the data on a daily basis to identify preliminary trends in the findings by printing a report of the data entered into the database
•Monitor the Project resources on a weekly basis to ensure that the team has the resources required to perform their tasks
Assumption (if applicable): Five team members must be devoted 100% to the Project
Element Rating: Successful ❑ Unacceptable ❑

Element: Propose recommended remediation treatment to resolve indoor Air Quality problems based on the results of the Northeastern Indoor Air Project.
Type of Element: Critical *X*   Additional ❑

Standards and Measurement Sources:
•Provide briefing to selected members of management concerning recommendations for remediation treatment that would effectively resolve the most important air quality problems identified from the results of the Northeastern Indoor Air Project
•Submit final report for the Northeastern Indoor Air Project in plain language format within 20 days of the end of the Project. It should include the following sections: Executive Summary, Findings, and Recommendations for Remediation Treatment
Assumption (if applicable):
Element Rating: Successful ❑ Unacceptable ❑

Employee's Signature/Date (Discussion and/or approval of the performance agreement)

Supervisor(s)'s Signature/Date

Sample Performance Plan #3

HQ EPA Performance Plan

Name: Marshall Walker   **Office:** Solid Waste & Emergency Response   **Year:** January 1 - December 31, 2000

Element: Lead team based on guidance from supervisor on the Informing Yourself About Recycling Project, intended to educate the public about recycling basics.

Type of Element: Critical *X*   Additional ❑

Standards and Measurement Sources:
- Lead a team meeting to identify the most appropriate media to inform the public about recycling basics (e.g., print, posters, TV, radio, or website)
- Assign tasks to team members throughout the project, including researching, writing, editing, and publishing the message.

Assumption (if applicable):

Element Rating: Successful ❑ Unacceptable ❑

Element: Provide weekly status to supervisor about the Informing Yourself About Recycling Project.

Type of Element: Critical *X*   Additional ❑

Standards and Measurement Sources:
- Meet with supervisor on a weekly basis to discuss the status of the projects, including percentage of project completed, work completed/issues resolved during the week, and remaining issues.

Assumption (if applicable): Supervisor is available for the meeting. Supervisor will make alternate arrangements to discuss the status in the event she is unavailable.

Element Rating: Successful ❑ Unacceptable ❑

Employee's Signature/Date (Discussion and/or approval of the performance agreement)

Supervisor(s)'s Signature/Date

Standards Checklist

Avoid Absolute Standards

An 'absolute' standard, one that allows for no errors, is acceptable only in certain circumstances. Where a single failure to meet the retention standard would result in loss of life, injury, breach of national security or great monetary loss, an agency can legitimately defend its decision to require perfection from its employees. In other circumstances, the courts will usually find that the agency abused its discretion by establishing retention standards that allow for no margin of error.

When Writing Standards

Ask yourself the following questions when writing standards. This can help you avoid writing absolute standards.

- ❑ How many times may the employee fail this requirement and still be acceptable?

- ❑ Does the standard use words such as 'all,' 'never,' and 'each'? These words do not automatically create an absolute standard, but they often alert you to problems.

- ❑ If the standard allows for no errors, would it be valid according to the criteria listed above (risk of death, etc.)?

Check Your Standards

Ask yourself the following questions to make sure your standards are effective and meet regulatory requirements. It can help you clarify your standards.

- ❑ Are the standards attainable? Are expectations reasonable?

- ❑ Are the standards challenging? Does the employee need to exert a reasonable amount of effort to reach a fully successful performance level?

- ❑ Are the standards fair? Are they comparable to what is expected of employees in similar positions? Do they allow for some margin of error?

- ❑ Are the standards applicable? Can the appraiser(s) use the standards to appraise performance? Can the appraiser(s) collect measurement data efficiently?

- ❑ Can the elements and standards be communicated and understood? Can employees be expected to understand what is required?

- ❑ Are the standards flexible? Can they be readily adapted to changes in resources or objectives?

Constructive Feedback

T he purpose of this module is for supervisors and team leaders to review with workgroup participants the basic concepts of constructive feedback and how it fits into PERFORMS.

Objectives

At the end of the meeting, your workgroup should be able to describe how constructive feedback fits into PERFORMS.

Materials Needed

You will need:
- Videotape vignettes
- Flip chart or overhead that lists the important elements of constructive feedback
    - Presenting observations in a noncritical manner
    - Reinforcing positive behaviors and correcting unsatisfactory behaviors
    - Reinforcing positive behaviors in order to recognize outstanding performance
- PERFORMS Self-Study Guide

Suggested Time

Topics	Time
What is Constructive Feedback?	10 minutes
Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback	50 minutes
	1 hour (total time)

What is Constructive Feedback?

Time

10 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to briefly review with your team the definition of constructive feedback, which is providing positive and negative information to another in order to improve performance and recognize desired behavior.

Detailed Plan

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. Feedback is the backbone of PERFORMS	Pose the following question to participants. Write their answers on a flip chart.	Why is feedback so essential to the PERFORMS process? Why is it essential to our workgroup's progress?
2. Constructive Feedback	Briefly review the definition of constructive feedback including the important elements of constructive feedback (refer participants to the overhead or flip chart where you've listed the elements)	Within your workgroup, how often do you give and/or receive constructive feedback? What is the situation in which you give or receive feedback? Formal/informal, etc.?

Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback

Time

50 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to focus on creating a team where all employees, including the supervisor and/or team leader, both give and receive constructive feedback on a regular basis. This will be presented to participants in video vignettes that the workgroup can discuss together.

Detailed Plan

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. Tips for providing positive and negative constructive feedback	Play the first video clip of Part One. At the end of the clip, ask the following questions.	Does it matter *who* delivers the feedback as long as the message is the same? How often do you give feedback to one of your colleagues? How do you feel when a colleague gives you feedback?
	Play the second video clip of Part One.	What difference would it have made if the subordinate delivered the feedback a week later instead of right away? Do you feel you can give a supervisor or team leader feedback?

Items	Actions	Discussion
	Play the third video clip of Part One.	Why is it important to *get specific*?
	At the end, ask the following question.	Doesn't an employee just need to know whether they're doing a good job or not?
	Play the fourth video clip of Part One.	What could this employee have done to make sure the report was in on time? What if the situation is not one that the employee can control?
	Play the fifth video clip of Part One.	Why is it important for an employee to elicit feedback from his/her supervisor? Isn't it the supervisor's job to provide feedback? The supervisor had some suggestions for improvement. How well were they phrased?
2. Receiving constructive feedback	Pose the following question to participants.	Is it easier to receive positive or negative feedback?
	Describe to participants that receiving feedback is also a critical aspect of PERFORMS. In your description, illustrate that feedback is GIVE AND TAKE and conversations are TWO WAY. Write these out on the overhead or flip chart.	

Items	Actions	Discussion
3. Active Listening	Ask participants to take out a piece of paper.	Take one minute and write down as many things you can think of that make a person an *active listener*.
	Call on volunteers to share their list. Make note of the tips he/she listed on the overhead or flip chart.	
	Discuss that active listening is vital to understanding performance feedback and that active listening is comprised of a number of key behaviors.	
	Return to the flip chart or overhead list of participant responses. Circle those responses that match the active listening techniques outlined in the Self-Study Guide. Add them if they are not already listed.	Although all of your responses are good active listening tips, there are a few active listening techniques that can help focus your behavior when you are being given performance feedback.
4. Video vignettes of active listening tips	Show the last video vignette that illustrates each of the active listening techniques.	
	At the end of the clip, ask the following question.	What other cues can you give someone who is giving you feedback that you've heard and understood them?

Developing an Individual Development Plan (IDP)

The purpose of this module is to reinforce the importance and value of completing an IDP.

Objectives

At the end of the meeting, workgroup participants should be able to discuss the relationship between PERFORMS and IDPs and why it is important for individuals to complete them.

Materials Needed

You will need:
- *Developing Your Strengths*
- Sample IDP (handout)
- IDP forms (handout)

Suggested Time

Topics	Time
Relationship Between PERFORMS and IDPs	10 minutes
Why Develop Your Strengths?	5 minutes
Completing Your IDP Form	5 minutes
	20 minutes (total time)

Relationship Between PERFORMS and IDPs

Time

10 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to review with workgroup participants the relationship between PERFORMS and IDPs.

Detailed Plan

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. Relationship between PERFORMS and IDPs.	Review how PERFORMS represents EPA's emphasis on professional development and management coaching as keys to organizational success.	
	Review how IDPs identify developmental needs and career objectives.	
	Mention that IDPs are a useful tool for career development and benefit both the employee and organization.	
	Pose the following question to participants.	Why is it important to further develop your strengths as an EPA employee?

Why Develop Your Strengths?

Time

5 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to focus the workgroup's attention on developing their strengths as EPA employees and to the fact that developing a plan increases an employee's value to the organization.

Detailed Plan

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. Why develop your strengths?	Using participant responses from the previous question, "Why develop your strengths," highlight the three reasons for developing strengths that are outlined in *Developing Your Strengths*.	

Completing Your IDP Form

Time

5 minutes

Purpose

The purpose of this section is for workgroup participants to review some tips for completing IDPs using a sample IDP form.

Detailed Plan

Items	Actions	Discussion
1. Completing an IDP.	Hand out sample IDPs to workgroup participants.	
	Pose the following questions to participants. Note their responses on the flip chart or overhead. Discuss responses with participants.	As you review this sample, what areas do you find difficult/easy to complete? Why?

Writing Your IDP

Handouts and Worksheets

SAMPLE IDP
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

NAME: ___Jane Smith_____ **Effective Dates:**___January 1, 2000___

Developmental Goal(s) - *Describe current state, developmental need, rationale, and link to organizational goals/objectives:*

- Jane is an excellent coach. Our branch has 23 team members and only one supervisor, so we have a big opportunity for peer development coaching among our scientists and technicians. We want to develop her skills in this area and use her as a coach.

- Jane's writing ability can be enhanced to improve the national information dissemination function, where the AA-ship has a weakness. She will contribute directly to the newsletter every month with our support.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS /ACTIVITIES	Description/Support Required, Success Measures	Time Frame
Work Assignments 1. Coach at least 10 staff members	• We will schedule time for staff performance coaching • Success will be measured against coaching objectives set and achieved in each (respective) agreement • Bench project assignment back up will be arranged by Team/Branch Manager	All year with at least semiannual progress reports.

2. Edit and produce an AA-ship newsletter to the regulated community
  • Identify key stakeholders
  • Consult with and gain input from all clients
  • Continuously benchmark at least three comparable newsletters
	This will require work-load shifting and staff resource backup to allow Jane sufficient time to devote to this newsletter	Produce first edition by end of second quarter. Continue as appropriate — realistic schedule to be determined in first edition.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS /ACTIVITIES	Description/Support Required, Success Measures	Time Frame
Self Development Activities:		
• Take desktop editing course	WIC course — free	ASAP, in the next 45 days
• Read the "Art of Coaching"	$14.95, Amazon.com	April, 2000
• Attend coaching seminar at NTL	Washington registration requires $300 registration fee.	
• WIC advanced spreadsheet applications course will bring Jane a new set of necessary skills in data management, as her job requires.	Time required to attend WIC course.	February, 2000
Formal programs:		
None required now	We will reassess the need for a course at mid-year	
University of Maryland course in database management information systems for personal computers. This may be necessary if the WIC course fails to be effective.	$385	September, 2000

See Reverse for Signatures

DEVELOPMENT PLANS /ACTIVITIES	Description/Support Required, Success Measures	Time Frame
(Continuation from previous page - if necessary)		

I endorse the above developmental activities and will make resources available to realize them.

Employee Signature	Date	Manager Signature	Date

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

NAME:_____   **Effective Dates:**_____

Developmental Goal(s) - *Describe current state, developmental need, rationale, and link to organizational goals/objectives:*

DEVELOPMENT PLANS /ACTIVITIES	Description/Support Required, Success Measures	Time Frame
Work Assignments		
Self Development Activities:		
Formal programs:		

See Reverse for Signatures

DEVELOPMENT PLANS /ACTIVITIES	Description/Support Required, Success Measures	Time Frame
(Continuation from previous page - if necessary)		

I endorse the above developmental activities and will make resources available to realize them.

Employee Signature Date	Manager Signature Date