



## Performance and Development Discussions – An Overview

### Why do we have performance and development discussions?

- The focus of performance and development in the Department is on supporting regular, quality conversations between managers and employees that:
  - establish behaviour and performance expectations and standards and make sure they are understood (including achieving required levels of performance and addressing performance concerns)
  - allow open, two way discussion about performance and identify any learning and development desires or needs.
- At least one documented discussion per year is expected.
  - Casual and fixed-term employees (with tenure under 12 months) can be excepted from this however regular, informal feedback with these employees is expected.
- Regular, ongoing feedback is also expected throughout the year to support employees to achieve and work through any issues in a timely manner.

### What should discussions cover?

- All formal performance and development discussions should include the following

#### Minimum requirements:

- 1 *performance expectations* and the employee's performance against the key requirements/duties of their role
- 2 *behaviour expectations* and the employee's overall behaviour and contribution to a positive team culture
- 3 *role/work area specific expectations* of particular importance to a specific role or work environment
- 4 *CARE Values*
- 5 the employee's achievements and striving to achieve high levels of performance
- 6 whether *learning and development activities* would assist with the achievement of required outcomes
- 7 mandatory learning completion
- 8 any areas of concern, including a plan for improvement
- 9 schedule a review date to monitor progress.

Other topics such as leave planning can also be discussed.



## What are performance and behaviour expectations?

### Performance

- Expectations are drawn from:
  - Statement of Duties
  - professional standards
  - standardised processes or practices for performing tasks
  - other directions or methods of monitoring, review and assessment eg professional review meetings
  - actions from the last review discussion.

### Behaviour

- Expectations are related to:
  - legislation (such as the code of conduct), regulations, Awards and Agreements
  - the behaviour related policy documents (they address unacceptable behaviour such as bullying, harassment, discrimination and respectful behaviour)
  - all other policy such as conflict of interest, gifts, use of technology, use of alcohol and drugs, privacy
  - professional codes.
- Discussing respectful behaviour and contributing to a positive team is also important. It helps to highlight behaviours that go beyond 'following the rules' and really supports a positive work environment. This includes behaviours such as those that:

- demonstrate respect
- represent effective communication
- show support for others
- lead by example
- acknowledge good performance
- contribute to teamwork.

### Role/work area specific

- There may be expectations that are particularly relevant or important to certain roles or work environments. These should also form part of review discussions. Some examples are:
  - Safeguarding practices for vulnerable people, including children and young people
  - Privacy and confidentiality
  - Cybersecurity
  - Mandatory reporting (legislative)
  - Safety and quality training and development needs

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*Refer to the Improving Behaviour and Performance Fact Sheet for guidance where performance or behaviour is below expected standards and needs targeted efforts for improvement.*

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### What are CARE Values?

- Compassion, Accountability, Respect and Excellence (CARE) are our shared Department-wide values.
- More information to support thinking about and discussing the CARE Values can be found on the intranet.





## What are learning and development activities?

- Learning and development opportunities may take many forms. For example:
  - on-the-job experiences such as activities conducted or provided internally by the Department or by external providers, research or project tasks
  - participation in conferences, seminars, workshops or other similar activities offered by external bodies, associations and colleges
  - mentoring, workplace coaching, shadowing and knowledge sharing by colleagues and managers
  - participation in working groups or committees
  - acting arrangements and higher duties
  - formal study.
- These should be discussed openly, with both managers and employees being flexible when considering different options and the timing of any activity.
- Keep in mind there are a broad range of topics that can enhance performance beyond the practical or professional components of a job. For example – time management, building resilience, dealing with challenging clients, cultural awareness.
- General considerations include:
  - eligibility or approval criteria such as in applicable legislation, Award/Agreement or other similar provision, current duties,

development needs, career aspirations, areas or performance improvement needed and Department /service/business unit objectives

- practicalities such as costs, available funding, operational impacts.

## Record Keeping

- Template examples are provided on the intranet.
- Managers can use these templates or another of their choosing, to document performance discussions as long as the documentation covers the minimum requirements outlined in this Fact Sheet and the Performance Policy.
- Any agreed action or commitment should be documented, including:
  - a timeframe for the action/objectives to be met
  - support provided to the employee to achieve the action.
- Copies of related documents should be provided (and restricted) to the manager and the employee.
  - If required, copies may be provided to the relevant delegate and People and Culture.
  - All parties should be mindful of confidentiality and privacy.
- Managers are required to keep up to date records and report on the number of employees within their area of responsibility who have had documented discussions.





## Related Resources and Support

- Performance Policy
- Preparation for Performance and Development Discussions – Employee Fact Sheet
- Preparation for Performance and Development Discussions – Manager Fact Sheet
- Improving Behaviour and Performance Fact Sheet
- CARE Values intranet page
- CARE in Practice THEO Module
- Behaviour policy documents
- The State Service also provides Managing Performance Guidelines – noting that this Guideline provides general information on all aspects of performance management - the Department's terminology, specific requirements and systems/process must be recognised.
- People and Culture can assist with enquiries about performance and development discussions.

## Contact

If you have questions, please visit the [People and Culture Service Portal](#) on the intranet or call us on **1300 812 535**.

*August 2023*

