United States General Accounting Office

GAO

December 1999

Performance Appraisal System for Band I, II, and III Employees

163101

SP-00-2

Contents

Appendixes

Abbreviations

ADP	automated data processing
EIC	evaluator-in-charge
EO	equal opportunity
GAGAS	generally accepted government auditing standards
GAO	General Accounting Office
LAN	Local Area Network
OCR	Office of Congressional Relations

Introduction

Purpose of the Performance Appraisal System

The primary purpose of the performance appraisal system for Band I, II, and III employees is to provide a systematic and uniform method to evaluate the job performance of GAO evaluators, auditors, and specialists on the basis of job-related criteria. The appraisal is an integral part of the performance management cycle and should be used to

- help employees understand their responsibilities and how their work supports GAO's core values and contributes to GAO's strategic objectives and goals;
- prepare honest performance assessments based on accurate and consistent application of the performance standards;
- provide candid and specific feedback to employees on how well they are meeting expectations and on ways to improve performance;
- help supervisors and managers recognize and deal with performance problems; and
- provide a basis for performance-based actions.

Contents of This Manual

This manual describes the performance management cycle at GAO, sets forth GAO policies and procedures for providing performance appraisals, and provides guidance for assessing employees and completing the appraisal forms. Very importantly, this manual advises employees about the dimensions and performance standards that will be used to assess their performance. All employees should carefully read the relevant dimensions and standards for their band level set forth in chapter 3. An employee who does not understand any aspect of the dimensions and standards should request clarification from his/her supervisor or manager.

Supersession

This manual supersedes the *Performance Appraisal System for Band I, II, and III Employees*, dated October 1997.

The Performance Management Cycle

The performance management cycle includes setting and communicating expectations, monitoring performance and providing feedback, and preparing and delivering the performance appraisal.

Setting and Communicating Expectations

Performance expectations include **what a ratee will do, when the ratee will do it, and how well it should be done.**

What the ratee will do and **when it is done** are determined by assigned work. **How well a ratee performs** is measured by the written performance standards set forth in this manual for each band level (see chapter 3).

When setting expectations, the rater should specifically explain how the ratee's work supports GAO's core values and contributes to strategic objectives and goals. Oftentimes products, time frames, scope, or methods may not be fully known at the beginning of assignments. When this occurs, expectations should be revised or clarified as more information is obtained or when circumstances negate or substantially modify prior agreements.

Expectations should be set at the beginning of the rating cycle or the start of a new assignment. The expectation-setting meeting should be clearly identified as such. When the ratee and the rater are the same band level (i.e., both at Band II), the second level supervisor (i.e., Band III) should discuss and review the ratee's expectations. While the rater has the ultimate responsibility to determine ratee expectations, expectation discussions should be a dialogue. The rater should solicit input from the ratee, and the ratee is responsible for seeking clarification of any matters that are not understood.

GAO Form 209, "Expectation-Setting Record" (see appendix I) has been developed to help guide and document the formal expectation-setting process. A signed copy of GAO Form 209 for each ratee must be completed and filed in the geographic home unit. The ratee's signature indicates that expectations have been communicated.

Three types of information should be covered during the expectation-setting session: (1) job/role information, (2) performance standards, and (3) contributions to GAO's core values, strategic objectives, and goals. The level of detail appropriate for the expectation-setting discussion will depend on the ratee's prior knowledge con-

cerning the assignment, the ratee's experience level, and the information available to the rater about the assignment.

Job/Role Information. The rater should provide as much assignment-specific information as available, such as the ratee's role, assignment objectives, assignment scope and methods, anticipated products, and time frames. It is expected that the rater will amplify and clarify initial expectations during subsequent on-the-job discussions with the ratee. Further meetings to clarify expectations should be held when changes have been so substantial as to constitute a new assignment.

Performance Standards. Each ratee must know the performance standards and critical elements of his or her position. A critical element is a job dimension, such as planning, that is of sufficient importance that unacceptable performance in that component constitutes unacceptable performance of the job and may be the basis for reduction in band or removal. Therefore, a rater should confirm that the ratee understands

- the dimensions on which he or she will be assessed,
- that all dimensions are critical, and
- that his or her performance will be assessed based on the standards set forth in this performance appraisal manual.

The rater should instruct the ratee to become familiar with the performance standards. If a ratee does not understand the standards, he or she is responsible for seeking clarification from the rater.

Contributions to GAO's Core Values, Strategic Objectives, and Goals. In addition to individual assignment responsibilities, the rater should remind the ratee how his or her work supports GAO's core values and contributes to GAO's strategic objectives and goals. To the extent possible, raters should specify by example how a ratee's work can directly affect unit teamwork, matrix management, communications, products, dollar savings, timeliness, and cycle-time reduction, as well as quality, client satisfaction, and other goals set forth in GAO's *Strategic Plan.*

Monitoring Performance and Providing Feedback

Once expectations are established, the rater should monitor performance and provide candid and specific feedback to the ratee on his or her performance. Honest and relevant feedback can reinforce good performance or help improve performance that is below expectations. Feedback should facilitate the ratee's understanding of current strengths and developmental needs and how his or her performance could be improved. However, feedback is not solely the responsibility of the rater. The ratee is responsible for actively seeking and receiving feedback.

Feedback should take place before the end of the appraisal period. Although feedback need not occur in a formal progress review session, one or more progress review sessions may be beneficial to verify a shared understanding of expectations and the progress toward meeting them. A progress review session is especially appropriate and recommended when the rater has concerns about a ratee's performance.

When monitoring performance, the rater is encouraged to keep brief notes on the ratee that reflect both positive accomplishments and instances where developmental needs are present. This facilitates more accurate and complete performance appraisals.

Conducting the Appraisal Session

Instructions for preparing the appraisal are in chapters 3, 4, and 5. After the appraisal is completed by the rater and reviewed and signed by the designated reviewer, the rater must provide a copy of the appraisal to the ratee. Appraisal discussions should include the basis for the appraisal.

At or after the appraisal session, the ratee signs and dates the appraisal form. By signing, the ratee does not necessarily indicate agreement with the appraisal but acknowledges that he or she has received and read it. The ratee may submit comments within 5 calendar days after the appraisal session. These comments are not limited to the space on the form. Ratee comments become a permanent part of the appraisal. The appraisal becomes final 5 calendar days after the appraisal session, unless the rater extends the comment period. If the comment period is extended, the appraisal is final at the time the comments are due.

Policies and Responsibilities

This chapter describes who should be appraised, when appraisals are due, who prepares and reviews the appraisals, and grievance procedures for ratees who are dissatisfied with their appraisals.

Who is Appraised and When Appraisals Are Due

Generally, appraisals for staff in bands I Full-Performance Level, II, and III are to be prepared annually, with the appraisal period beginning October 1 and ending September 30. If an employee has been on duty at least 30 staff-days during the annual appraisal period, then the employee generally should be appraised. Exceptions to an annual appraisal include the following:

- Appraisals should be prepared at the end of an assignment lasting more than 30 staff-days for Band I Developmental Level staff. Band I Developmental Level staff must be appraised at least once each 6 months to support pay assessment decisions.
- If unit management believes it is appropriate, appraisals may be prepared when there is a change in rater or assignment during the appraisal year. For more guidance see the section entitled also "More Than One Supervisor During a Rating Period."
- Appraisals may be prepared whenever supervisors and/or managers have performance concerns. See GAO Order 2432.1, "Dealing With Unacceptable Performance," for guidance as to when this is appropriate.

Who Prepares the Appraisal

Usually, the ratee's immediate supervisor should prepare the performance appraisal form. This is the same person who sets expectations and assigns and reviews work. There may be circumstances that make it more appropriate or desirable for another person to assume the rating responsibility. The designation of a rater other than the immediate supervisor should be done at the beginning of an assignment.

When the ratee and the supervisor are the same band level (i.e., both at Band II), the second-level supervisor (i.e., Band III) should discuss the proposed rating with the rater and concur on the rating. If the second level supervisor and rater do not agree to the proposed rating, the second level supervisor assumes responsibility for the rating dimension(s) in disagreement. The employee will only receive the appraisal reflecting the rating of the second-level supervisor.

More Than One Supervisor During a Rating Period

If a ratee has worked for more than one supervisors during the appraisal year, then the supervisors should decide who will prepare the rating. The rating preparation should be a collaborative process with each supervisors providing input on the ratee's performance. In cases when a supervisor has worked with the ratee for such a short period of time that he or she does not have a basis for assessing the ratee's performance, the rating should be prepared based on the assessment of the other rater.

Staff on Congressional Assignments

When congressional staff assignments are expected to be short (4 months or less), the designated rater in the home unit will prepare the performance appraisal and should obtain information from the supervising congressional staff member concerning the ratee's performance. When the assignment is expected to continue for a major portion of the appraisal period (more than 4 months), typically the Office of Congressional Relations (OCR) arranges for a supervisory congressional staff member to prepare the appraisal using the GAO forms and standards. In this instance, OCR reviews the appraisal, provides any additional comments, and forwards it to the ratee's home unit. However, if OCR is unable to arrange for the congressional staff member to prepare the performance appraisal, then the home unit should reach agreement with OCR on who will prepare the ratee's performance appraisal.

Who Reviews the Performance Appraisal

Except when the rater is the unit head, the appraisal must be reviewed, approved, and signed by a reviewing official before it is presented to the ratee. The reviewing official is designated by GAO and/or unit management and must be at a higher band than the ratee. The reviewing official's duties include:

- Ensuring that the rater accurately and consistently applied the performance appraisal standards.
- Reviewing the performance level ratings, the narrative prepared by the rater, and the standards for each of the dimensions on which the employee was rated.
- Ensuring that the narrative supports the assessment and provides specific and relevant examples of performance for each dimension on which the employee was rated "outstanding," "exceeds expectations," "below expectations," or "unacceptable."

- Discussing review comments with the rater and when appropriate, providing the rater with perspectives based on personal knowledge of the employee's performance.

When a disagreement cannot be resolved, the reviewer may assume responsibility for the rating on the dimension(s) where there is disagreement. In such instances, the reviewer (1) obtains approval from the next higher responsible official (if the reviewer is not the unit head) and documents the reasons for the change and (2) changes the appraisal. The appraisal form presented to the employee will only include the ratings approved by the reviewer.

Role of In-Line Managers

Managers with in-line responsibilities who are not the official raters or reviewers still have an important role to play in the performance appraisal process. These managers such as Issue Area Directors, Associate Directors, Band IIIs, or other group/unit managers, are encouraged to provide input to the rater and reviewer concerning their perspectives of the employee's performance relative to the standards. This input should be provided before the rating is presented to the employee.

Grievance Procedures for Performance Appraisals

Ratees who are dissatisfied with their performance appraisal may file a formal grievance per GAO Order 2771.1, "Administrative Grievance Procedure." When multiple units are involved in a performance appraisal grievance process, the involved unit managers will confer regarding who will serve as the deciding official.

Performance Dimensions and Standards

There are three basic elements of each appraisal: (1) performance dimensions, (2) performance standards, and (3) the 5-level rating scale. This chapter identifies the performance dimensions to be rated, specifies detailed standards against which performance will be evaluated, and provides guidance to assist raters in determining the appropriate performance level.

Performance Dimensions

Performance dimensions indicate the major areas for which an employee will receive a rating. The dimensions cover the major activities and responsibilities of each band level and were developed based on extensive job analyses and input from managers and staff.

All of the dimensions are considered critical for successful performance in GAO's banded positions. The dimensions for each band level are listed in the following table.

Table 1: Job Dimensions by Band

Band ID	Band IF	Band II	Band III
Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning
Data Gathering and Documentation	Data Gathering and Documentation	Data Gathering and Documentation	Implementing Projects
Data Analysis	Data Analysis	Data Analysis	Communications
Written Communication	Written Communication	Written Communication	External Relations
Oral Communication	Oral Communication	Oral Communication	Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Performance Management
Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Equal Opportunity	Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Equal Opportunity	Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Equal Opportunity	Organization Management
	Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling (as assigned)	Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling (as assigned)	

Performance Standards

Performance standards are statements that describe behaviors, outputs, or results that are typical of various levels of performance. A complete set of standards for each of the four band levels (Bands ID, IF, II, and III) are located at the end of this chapter.

For FY 2000, the standards have been updated to incorporate guidance and policy changes implemented during the past year. The standards have been reviewed and approved by the Comptroller General, the Principal Assistant Comptroller General, and the Assistant Comptroller General for Quality and Risk Management. Additionally, a cross section of managers and staff reviewed and provided comments on the standards.

5-Level Rating Scale

The five rating levels are as follows:

1 = Unacceptable
2 = Below Expectations
3 = Meets Expectations
4 = Exceeds Expectations
5 = Outstanding

Detailed standards have been developed for three performance levels – **outstanding, meets expectations,** and **unacceptable.** The standards for each of the various performance levels are listed in columns directly below those performance levels in accordance with the following format:

It is very important to focus on the three qualifiers—*frequently, usually, and almost always*—when deciding which level best describes an employee's performance in a dimension. As described in the following paragraphs and the subsequent standards, the difference between Meeting Expectations and Outstanding often depends on whether the employee "usually" performs at this level or whether the employee "almost always" performs at this level.

An **Unacceptable (1)** rating is warranted when, in the judgement of the rater, an individual's performance is ***frequently*** characterized by behaviors, outputs, and/or results described in the standards listed under Unacceptable. Generally, ***frequently*** is defined as happening "on numerous occasions." In some cases, however, the behavior or result could be so egregious and potentially harmful to the product, work environment or agency reputation that relatively few instances would be sufficient to warrant this rating. An Unacceptable rating means the ratee's performance was so deficient as to warrant removal from the band or GAO.

A **Meets Expectations (3)** rating is earned when, in the judgement of the rater, an individual's performance ***usually*** is characterized by behaviors, outputs and/or results described in the standards listed under Meets Expectations. In general, ***usually*** is defined as happening regularly and routinely or happening much more often than not. Meets Expectations means that the ratee has performed at a fully successful manner at his/her band level according to GAO standards.

An **Outstanding (5)** rating is justified when, in the judgement of the rater, an individual's performance ***almost always*** is characterized by behaviors, outputs and/or results described in the standards listed under Outstanding. Generally, ***almost always*** is defined as happening nearly all the time or invariably. Outstanding means that the ratee's performance almost always far exceeded expectations.

Ratings at the **Below Expectations (2) and Exceeds Expectations (4)** levels are warranted when, in the judgement of the rater, an employee's performance is characterized by a mix of behaviors, outputs, and/or results described in the standards listed under more than one level, and thus the overall performance falls between levels. Thus, for an Exceeds Expectations rating, a ratee's predominant performance for the period should exceed the Meets Expectations level but not fully reach the Outstanding level. Similarly, for a Below Expectations rating predominant performance exceeds the Unacceptable level but does not reach the Meets Expectations level.

Additional Guidelines

When reviewing the standards and determining the appropriate "check marks" for each dimension, the rater should be mindful of the following:

- While standards may appear similar or even identical across the various bands, raters are expected to take into account the assigned duties and responsibilities appropriate to the various band levels.
- The standards are not all inclusive; instead they are illustrative of the most important behaviors, outputs and results expected at each level of performance.
- Because assignments vary, ratees need not have demonstrable performance for all dimensions listed; however, ratees who do work in a dimension must be assessed in that dimension.
- If a ratee was not assigned sufficient work in a dimension (for example, Supervision, Appraisal and Counseling) to be rated, the rater should note this under "no basis for evaluation."

When writing narrative to support the "check marks," raters should provide specific examples and not simply repeat the wording of the standard.

Performance Standards: Band I-Developmental Level

Band I-Developmental Level Performance Standards

1. Planning

Learning and incorporating GAO's core values (accountability, integrity and reliability) in all work steps and products (that is, producing work products that are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair and balanced as well as timely, accurate, useful, clear and candid). Becoming familiar with GAO's Strategic Plan and proposing work steps and methods to support and further its goals, objectives and strategies. Helping to determine appropriate methodologies and resources needed to satisfy a work assignment. Participating in the design of work that will lead to improved government operations—such as the potential for dollar savings and/or non-financial benefits—and contributes to congressional decision-making. Identifying information sources, alternative approaches, and constraints. Coordinating work to avoid conflict and duplication and sharing knowledge to enhance product quality. Bringing to management's attention potential project problems and identifying work that is not likely to lead to productive results. Learning and adhering to GAO's policies, including generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) and congressional protocols (effective January 2000). Planning own work time, and contributing to plans for assignment segments. Using project-planning tools.

Frequently:

Demonstrates little awareness of GAO's core values or strategic objectives, or congressional protocols.

Has not learned GAO policies, or quality standards.

Does not consider relative work priorities, contingencies, or time constraints.

Does not meet agreed upon deadlines.

Requires above normal supervision.

Does not inform or coordinate with others to resolve delays or problems.

Overlooks issues with potential for dollar savings or other benefits.

Usually:

Displays and applies knowledge and understanding of GAO's core values, strategic objectives, and congressional protocols.

Has learned, and applies GAO policies and quality standards.

Plans and manages own work, applying a level of effort consistent with tasks.

Completes assigned work on time.

Requires normal supervision in planning work.

Identifies project constraints or risks and informs others to mitigate problems.

Helps to identify issues with potential for dollar savings and other benefits.

Almost Always:

Demonstrates in-depth knowledge and understanding of GAO's core values and strategic objectives and congressional protocols.

Understands and appropriately applies GAO policies and quality standards.

Uses innovative planning tools, establishes priority of tasks and manages work activities accordingly.

Completes work on time or early.

Achieves assignment objectives and produces high quality products with little close supervision.

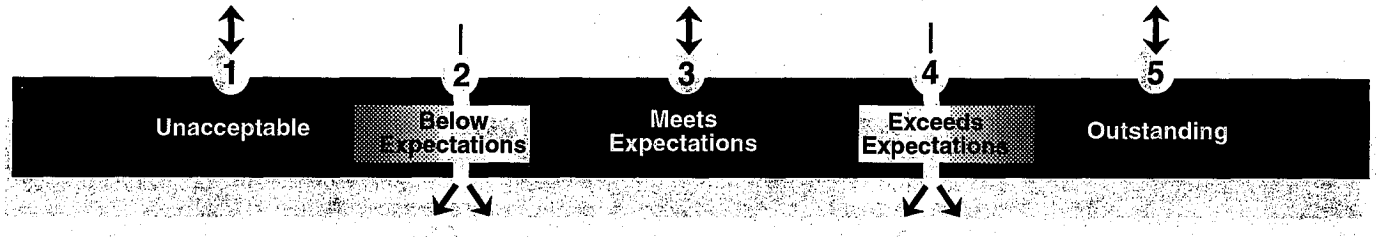
Coordinates work with others and suggests strategies to prevent delays and problems.

Identifies issues and helps to plan work that is likely to achieve financial savings or program improvements.

Band I-Developmental Level Performance Standards

2. Data Gathering and Documentation

Collecting and documenting in a timely manner relevant data to assure that all GAO products are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced. Researching and identifying data sources and data collection strategies. Identifying missing data and ensuring that data are current and accurate and are sufficient to support findings, conclusions and recommendations. Learning and applying automated tools to collect, share, organize and manipulate data. Following GAO policies and procedures when preparing all forms, and project or administrative documentation.



Frequently:

Submits unreliable documentation, or fails to obtain missing data.

Uses inappropriate data collection methods, which adversely affect product quality.

Does not distinguish between data sources to develop a finding.

Gathers more data than needed; gathers irrelevant data.

Does not complete work on time; work requires extensive supervisory review.

Submits poorly organized workpapers; making analysis difficult.

Resists using ADP resources to get work done.

Is unaware of or ignores GAO policies and procedures designed to ensure reliability and completeness of computer-based data.

Does not recognize need to seek help from supervisor.

Does not contribute required documentation for the files and/or prepares inaccurate or incomplete administrative documentation.

Usually:

Identifies appropriate data sources; obtains relevant and reliable data within specified time frame.

Uses appropriate data collection methods to produce quality products.

Distinguishes between data sources to develop a finding.

Avoids time and expense of gathering extraneous information.

Completes high quality work on time with normal supervisory review.

Assembles, indexes and organizes workpapers to facilitate analysis and product preparation.

Uses ADP resources effectively to obtain, create, store, share and access data.

Applies GAO policies and procedures to ensure reliability and completeness of computer-based data and analysis.

Seeks help from supervisor when needed.

Contributes required documentation for the files and with minimal revision.

Almost Always:

Identifies and obtains most relevant and accurate data resulting in high quality products.

Uses data collection methods that expedite data gathering.

Makes clear distinctions among data sources to develop the most significant finding.

Gathers all essential information and is proactive in suggesting innovative ways to expedite analysis.

Completes high quality work on time or early with little supervisory review.

Organizes workpapers to readily identify critical data, expedite analysis and facilitate product preparation.

Makes innovative uses of ADP resources to complete work and learns new technology.

Applies GAO policies and procedures to ensure the reliability and completeness of computer-based data and analysis.

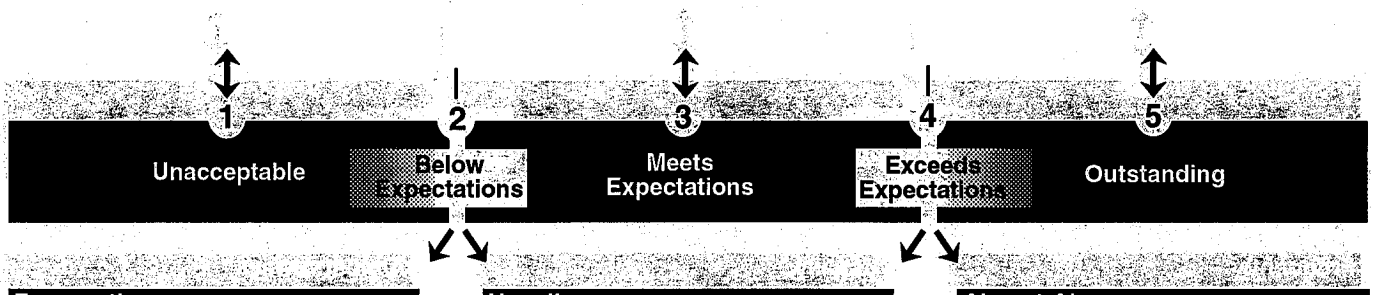
Recognizes problems and devises solutions, getting concurrence from supervisor.

Contributes complete and accurate documentation for the files and helps peers meet GAO requirements.

Band I-Developmental Level Performance Standards

3. Data Analysis

Producing timely and highly quality data analysis to provide support for professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced products. Organizing, tabulating, contrasting, and synthesizing data or information to produce findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Using computer tools to support analysis. Applying professionally accepted analytical techniques (e.g., information synthesis, content analysis, statistics, econometrics, operations research, and modeling). Determining validity, reliability, and quality of data and the adequacy of evidence to support findings or conclusions.



Frequently:

Does not complete assigned analytic work on time.

Suggets an inappropriate research methodology, analysis strategy or software package; cannot justify decisions.

Uses improper, overly complex or too simplistic techniques for the job. Analyses require many changes.

Summarizes or reports statistical analyses incompletely, incorrectly, or in a confusing manner.

Fails to recognize problematic data, identify evidence gaps or determine what, if any, additional evidence is needed.

Fails to appropriately consider evidence, laws, regulations, or GAO standards; draws conclusions based on incomplete, inaccurate, or outdated information.

Requires continuous supervision or coaching. Does not seek help.

Usually:

Completes assigned analytic work on time.

Helps to identify an appropriate research methodology, analysis strategy, or software package that helps to produce technically sound, high quality products.

Uses appropriate analyses techniques and analyses require minimal change.

Summarizes or reports statistical analyses correctly and in a way that others can understand.

Assesses the quantity and quality of evidence and follows up, when needed.

Appropriately considers evidence, laws, or GAO standards; draws conclusions based on complete, accurate, and up-to-date information.

Requires an average amount of supervisory review or coaching. Seeks help when needed.

Almost Always:

Completes assigned analytic work on time or early.

Identifies an appropriate and efficient analysis strategy or innovative research methodologies that help produce technically sound, high quality products.

Uses the most appropriate analyses techniques; analyses require few if any changes.

Summarizes or reports statistical analyses correctly and completely in a way that all others can easily understand.

Is consulted by peers to examine data or analyses to identify and correct weaknesses.

Does original or unique work when analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and developing recommendations, especially for complex or sensitive evaluations.

Able to work independently, requiring little supervision to complete analysis; identifies and resolves problems, keeping supervisor appropriately informed.

Band I-Developmental Level Performance Standards

4. Written Communication

Preparing or helping to prepare written products that are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair and balanced. Preparing written products that address the project objectives and satisfy the client's needs and adhere to GAO's policies and quality standards. Preparing, or helping to prepare in collaboration with others, a variety of written products including assignment plans, interview write-ups, workpapers, workpaper summaries, report segments, technical appendixes, data collection instruments, internal and external correspondence, and administrative documentation. Using automated capabilities to develop, review, and process GAO products.

Frequently:

Prepares products that are poorly written, containing grammatical, spelling and syntax errors.

Prepares products that do not conform to GAO's policies or quality standards.

Does not meet agreed-upon deadlines; fails to seek help from supervisor when needed.

Prepares documents that do not provide sufficient details, contain factual errors, or include misleading information. Extensive corrections required.

Prepares summaries that are disorganized or diverge from agreed upon outline, fail to clearly present key issues. Extensive revisions are required.

Writes conclusions and recommendations that are not substantiated by supporting information.

Does not use automated capabilities to improve on-the-job and message-related communication.

Usually:

Uses correct grammar, spelling, syntax and appropriate vocabulary level in preparing all products.

Prepares products in accordance with GAO's policies and quality standards.

Completes written products on time.

Prepares documents that are complete, objective, concise, accurate and meet expectations for coverage. Some corrections required.

Prepares summaries that discuss relevant issues and are well-organized, concise, logical and meet expectations for clarity. Summaries require moderate revision.

Incorporates related issues into summaries and develops supportable conclusions and recommendations.

Uses automated capabilities to improve on-the-job and message-related communication; incorporates graphics when appropriate.

Almost Always:

Uses correct grammar, spelling, syntax in preparing written products; has a command of vocabulary and a writing style well above the norm for peer level.

Prepares products in accordance with GAO's policies and quality standards.

Completes high quality written products on time, even under tight deadlines.

Prepares documents that are accurate, objective, concise and complete in every respect. Few, if any, corrections required.

Prepares well-organized, well-structured and logical summaries, presents multiple issues clearly and concisely so that findings, conclusions and recommendation are easy to understand. Requires minimal revision.

Incorporates all relevant issues into summaries and develops fully supported conclusions and recommendations.

Makes optimal use of automated capabilities to improve on-the-job and message-related communication; incorporates innovative graphics that enhance communication.

Band I-Developmental Level Performance Standards

5. Oral Communication

Focusing oral communication on audience needs and agreed upon purpose. Communicating results of work both internally and externally. Assuring that presentations are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced. Communicating upward, downward, and laterally so that information flows freely and shared understanding occurs. Communicating openly, honestly, and respectfully with others in GAO. Meeting with, and representing GAO to agency personnel, congressional staffs, and others, such as professional organizations.

Frequently:

In interviews, misstates questions or includes extraneous content in interviews.

Asks inappropriate questions for the interview or discussion; fails to gather complete information.

Speaks timidly and fails to hold attention of audience, fails to clearly convey the message; rambles or stumbles in response to some questions.

Is disrespectful and/or discourteous resulting in stymied communications.

Allows bias into presentations, leading to perception that speaker is not communicating in a fact-based, fair and balanced manner.

Gives a poor impression of GAO by being unprepared for meetings.

Usually:

Asks clear and logical questions. Responds objectively to comments. Observes appropriate time frames. Summarizes interviews and clarifies issues.

Analyzes ongoing discussions, asks appropriate follow-up questions; elicits needed information.

Speaks clearly and logically when making presentations, presents pertinent information, responds to questions readily and accurately; appears confident and uses appropriate movements or visual aids.

Communicates openly, honestly and respectfully with all.

Adheres to GAO core values in making presentations.

Is well prepared for meetings.

Almost Always:

Asks questions and states issues clearly so that misunderstandings do not occur.

Discusses relevant subjects as well as related issues, within the allotted time.

Speaks clearly, logically, and confidently; tailors presentation to audience concerns and time requirements, responds accurately and appropriately to questions.

Communicates openly, honestly and respectfully with all.

Is an articulate persuasive speaker, whose presentations demonstrate a thorough understanding of and commitment to GAO core values.

Is well prepared for meetings and uses demonstration techniques, audio-visual aids, or briefing materials expertly.

Band I-Developmental Level Performance Standards

6. Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Equal Opportunity (EO)

Demonstrating and promoting a positive attitude and commitment to accomplishing objectives. Working cooperatively and sharing information throughout GAO to achieve mission requirements and other common goals. Promoting teamwork, which includes helping each other, meeting commitments, seeking out others' comments and suggestions, communicating openly and candidly, and encouraging others to participate in discussions. Surfacing to management issues that negatively affective your work environment. Actively participating in job meetings and discussions. Establishing and maintaining effective and constructive working relationships with all stakeholders and others both inside and outside GAO. Observing equal opportunity principles and treating others fairly.

Frequently:

Impedes accomplishing assigned objectives, fails to support group decisions, puts own interests ahead of the group's.

Exhibits negative attitude toward assignments and coworkers adversely affecting group morale.

Does not work cooperatively, or help others.

Fails to acquire training or skills needed to achieve personal or team goals.

Reacts to constructive feedback with hostility or defensiveness; attempts to shift blame for mistakes.

Does not respect others when expressing disagreements, disparages others' contributions, acts in a condescending manner.

Creates conflicts in work group; makes distinctions of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation and expresses an unwillingness to work with certain people.

Usually:

Collaborates with coworkers and others in meeting commitments and accomplishing assigned work on time. Shares information freely.

Demonstrates a positive attitude toward assignments and coworkers.

Shows a willingness to expend necessary effort to help others and accomplish team objectives.

Develops or builds on skills to enhance personal contributions and achieve team objectives.

Responds constructively to feedback.

Respects others when expressing disagreements.

Maintains effective working relationships working harmoniously with coworkers. Treats others fairly regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Almost Always:

Sets an example for others by meeting all commitments through exemplary teamwork and cooperation with others.

Demonstrates a positive attitude toward assignments and coworkers and willingly accepts additional or difficult assignments.

Seeks out opportunities to help others meet team goals.

Seeks training and developmental experiences to enhance knowledge and skills needed for short and long-range goals.

Is responsive and open to feedback; seeks suggestions on ways to improve.

Addresses conflicts effectively; expresses own views candidly yet respectfully; promotes consensus building.

Actively works to promote harmony with coworkers without distinctions on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation; actively supports EO programs or activities.

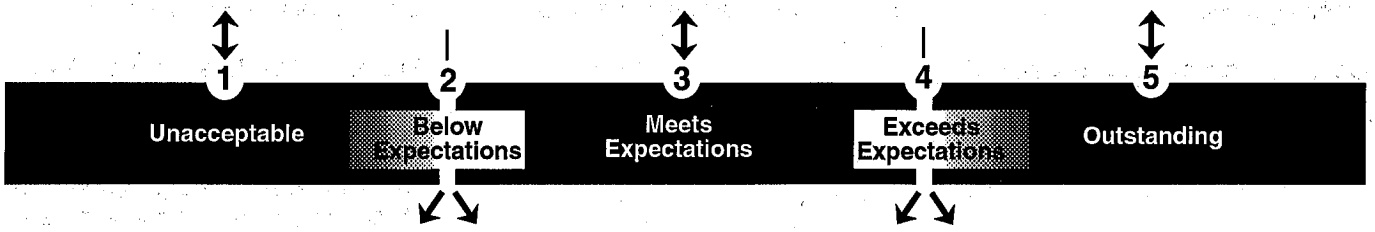
Performance Standards: Band I-Full Performance Level

Band I—Full Performance Level Performance Standards

1. Planning

Understanding and incorporating GAO's core values (accountability, integrity and reliability) in all work steps and products (that is, producing work products that are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair and balanced as well as timely, accurate, useful, clear and candid). Being responsible for planning one or more assignment segments and/or developing technical or subject matter knowledge to assist in planning assignment segments. Developing work plans that respond to Congressional mandates and requests as well as support goals, objectives and strategies of GAO's Strategic Plan. Contributing to the design of work that will lead to improved government operations—such as the potential for dollar savings and/or non-financial benefits—and contribute to congressional decision-making. Helping to determine appropriate methodologies and resources needed to complete the assignment. Identifying information sources, alternative approaches and constraints.

Working collaboratively with others in GAO to avoid planning conflicts or duplicative work. Sharing knowledge within work units and with others in GAO to enhance product quality. Adhering to GAO's policies, including generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) and congressional protocols (effective January 2000). Helping determine and plan the most appropriate methods of communication to meet the client's needs. Planning own work time, and helping peers, as appropriate. Being proficient in the use of project-planning tools.



Frequently:

Demonstrates little knowledge of relevant policies and congressional protocols.

Does not meet agreed upon deadlines. Requires above normal supervision.

Plans work that conflicts with core values (for example, plans address only one side of an issue).

Suggestions to plans do not consider strategic plan objectives, relative work priorities, contingencies, and costs relative to benefits.

Prepares incomplete or impractical assignment segment plans that do not include steps for achieving financial savings or program improvements or for assessing relevant technical issues; plans require significant revision.

Overlooks appropriate methodologies or suggests research approaches that would not meet assignment objectives.

Usually:

Displays knowledge of policies and processes and congressional protocols.

Completes work on time. Requires normal supervision.

Understands and applies GAO's core values in planning work.

Helps develop plans that reflect strategic plan objectives and relative work priorities.

Develops plans that are complete, and include steps for achieving financial savings or program improvements and for assessing relevant technical issues; plans require few revisions.

Proposes and applies appropriate methodologies. Recognizes assignment constraints and proposes alternatives.

Identifies relevant information sources.

Almost Always:

Demonstrates thorough knowledge of applicable policies and processes, and congressional protocols.

Completes work on time or early. Achieves assignment objectives and produces high quality products with little close supervision.

Understands and applies GAO's core values in planning work and helps others do likewise.

Makes significant contributions to plans that incorporate strategic plan objectives and goals, reflect priority of work, address coordination issues and skill needs, and consider contingencies.

Develops plans that are complete and include steps likely to achieve financial savings or program improvements and to assess relevant technical and state-of-the-art issues; plans do not require substantive changes.

(Continued on Next Page)

Band I—Full Performance Level Performance Standards (Continued)

1. Planning

Frequently:

Overlooks or fails to identify important relevant information sources.

Drafts plans that include inaccurate time frames and resource estimates.

Does not properly or effectively use planning tools.

Does not inform or coordinate with others to resolve delays or problems.

Usually:

Drafts plans with reasonable time frames and resource estimates.

Demonstrates knowledge of and uses planning tools.

Coordinates with peers and other staff to minimize delays and duplication.

Almost Always:

Considers alternative methodologies and recommends the most appropriate approach to enhance assignment quality and meet objectives.

Identifies most relevant and important sources of information.

Prepares plans that minimize downtime and accurately estimate resource needs.

Demonstrates thorough knowledge of planning tools. Helps peers learn to use them.

Seeks and shares information needed to avoid duplication.

Band I—Full Performance Level Performance Standards

2. Data Gathering and Documentation

Collecting and documenting in a timely manner relevant and high quality data to assure that all GAO products are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced. Researching and identifying data sources and data collection strategies. Identifying missing data and ensuring that data are current, accurate, and sufficient to support findings, conclusions and recommendations. Learning and applying automated tools to collect, share, organize and manipulate data. Following GAO policies and procedures when preparing all forms, and project or administrative documentation.

Frequently:

Submits unreliable documentation or fails to obtain missing data.

Uses inappropriate data collection methods, which adversely affect product quality.

Does not complete work on time; work requires extensive supervisory review.

Submits poorly organized workpapers, making analysis difficult.

Resists using ADP resources to accomplish work.

Fails to follow GAO policies and procedures to ensure reliability and completeness of computer-based data.

Does not seek help from supervisor or peers.

Prepares summaries without fully documenting materials; extensive supervisory revisions required.

Does not contribute required documentation or accurate documentation for the files.

Usually:

Identifies appropriate data sources; obtains relevant and reliable data within specified time frame.

Uses appropriate data collection methods to produce quality products.

Completes work on time with normal supervisory review.

Assembles, indexes and organizes workpapers to facilitate analysis and product preparation.

Uses ADP resources to effectively obtain, create, store, share and access data.

Applies GAO policies and procedures to ensure reliability and completeness of computer-based data and analysis.

Seeks help from supervisor or peers when needed.

Uses only fully documented material to prepare summaries; few supervisory revisions required.

Contributes complete and accurate documentation for the files.

Almost Always:

Identifies and obtains most relevant and reliable data that results in high quality products.

Uses data collection methods that expedite data gathering.

Completes high quality work under challenging deadlines with minimal supervisory review.

Organizes workpapers to readily identify critical data, expedite analysis and facilitate product preparation.

Makes innovative use of ADP resources to complete work and learns new technology.

Applies GAO policies and procedures and considers industry/professional guidance to ensure the reliability and completeness of computer-based data.

Is sought out by peers when they need help.

Uses only fully documented and relevant material to prepare summaries; few, if any, supervisory revisions required.

Contributes complete and accurate documentation for the files and helps peers meet GAO requirements.

Band I—Full Performance Level Performance Standards

3. Data Analysis

Being responsible for the quality of data analysis on an assignment segment. Analyzing data to provide support for professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced products. In a timely manner, organizing, tabulating, contrasting, and synthesizing data or information to produce findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Using computer tools to support analysis. Applying professionally accepted analytical techniques (e.g., information synthesis, content analysis, statistics, econometrics, operations research, and modeling). Determining validity, reliability, and quality of data and the adequacy of evidence to support findings or conclusions.

Unacceptable:

Requires continuous supervision and instruction to complete work, does not seek help.

Proposes an inappropriate research methodology, analysis strategy or software package; cannot justify decisions.

Uses an improper, overly complex, or too simplistic technique for the job, extensive supervisory revisions required.

Does not complete work on time.

Summarizes, or reports analyses incompletely, incorrectly, or in a confusing manner.

Fails to recognize problematic data, identify evidence gaps or determine what evidence is needed.

Fails to appropriately consider evidence, laws, regulations, or GAO standards; draws conclusions based on incomplete, inaccurate, or outdated information.

Meets Expectations:

Requires an average amount of supervisory review or coaching to complete work. Seeks help when needed.

Recommends an appropriate research methodology, analysis strategy, or software package that helps to produce high quality products; can support recommendation.

Uses appropriate analyses techniques, few supervisory revisions required.

Completes analysis on time.

Summarizes or reports analyses correctly and in a way that others can understand.

Follows up when the quantity and quality of evidence is not satisfactory or sufficient.

Appropriately considers evidence, laws, or GAO standards; draws conclusions based on complete, accurate, and up-to-date information.

Outstanding:

Requires little or no close supervision to complete analyses and resolve problems.

Recommends an appropriate and efficient analysis plan or innovative research methodologies that help produce technically sound, high quality products.

Uses the most appropriate analyses techniques, few, if any, supervisory revisions required.

Completes difficult or complex analysis even under challenging deadlines.

Summarizes or reports complex analyses correctly and completely and in a way that others can easily understand.

Is consulted by peers and others to examine data or analyses to identify and correct weaknesses.

Does original or unique work when analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and developing recommendations.

Band I—Full Performance Level Performance Standards

4. Written Communication

Preparing or helping to prepare written products that are professional, objective, fact based non-partisan, non-ideological, fair and balanced. Preparing written products that address the project objectives, satisfy the client's needs and adhere to GAO policies and quality standards. Preparing or helping to prepare in collaboration with others, a variety of written products including assignment plans, interview write-ups, workpapers, workpaper summaries, report segments, chapters, technical appendixes, complete reports or testimony, data collection instruments, internal and external correspondence, administrative documentation of all types, including performance appraisals, and speeches and professional articles. Using automated capabilities to develop, review, and process GAO products.

Frequently:

Prepares documents that do not conform to GAO policies, meet GAO quality standards, and/or reflect a basic understanding of GAO's core values.

Submits written products that require extensive revision.

Does not meet agreed-upon deadlines.

Prepares summaries that are disorganized or diverge from agreed upon outline, fail to clearly present key issues.

Writes conclusions and recommendations that are not substantiated by supporting information.

Does not use automated capabilities to improve communication.

Designs incomplete or biased data collection instruments that make subsequent analysis difficult.

Is not constructive or helpful when commenting on others' products.

Usually:

Prepares documents that are complete, accurate and timely and conform to GAO policies, meet quality standards, and reflect GAO's core values.

Submits written products that require minimal revision.

Delivers written products on time.

Prepares summaries that discuss relevant issues and are well-organized, concise, logical and meet expectations for clarity.

Incorporates related issues into summaries and develops supportable conclusions and recommendations.

Uses automated capabilities to improve communication; incorporates graphics when appropriate.

Designs understandable and properly constructed data collection instruments that facilitate subsequent analysis.

Provides constructive suggestions that help ensure compliance with GAO policies when commenting on others' written products.

Almost Always:

Prepares documents that are accurate, objective, timely, complete in every respect and conform to GAO policies, quality standards and core values.

Submits written products that require few, if any, revisions.

Delivers high quality written products on time or early, even under challenging deadlines.

Prepares summaries that are well-organized and logical, present multiple issues clearly and concisely and are easily incorporated into final products.

Incorporates all relevant issues into summaries and develops fully supported conclusions and recommendations.

Makes optimal use of automated capabilities to improve communication; incorporates innovative graphics to enhance communication.

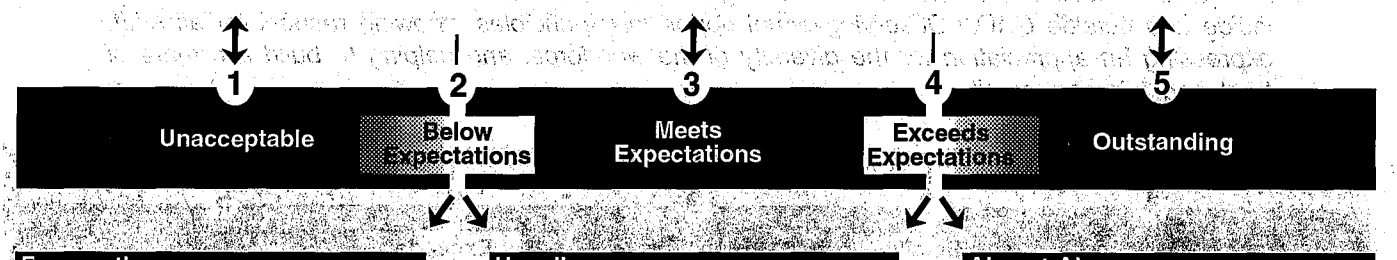
Designs high-quality data collection instruments that facilitate and expedite subsequent analysis.

Detects flaws, offers suggestions and proposes solutions to problems when commenting on others' written products.

Band I—Full Performance Level Performance Standards

5. Oral Communication

Focusing oral communication on audience needs and agreed upon purpose. Communicating results of work both internally and externally. Assuring that presentations are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced. Communicating upward, downward, and laterally, so that information flows freely and shared understanding occurs. Communicating openly, honestly and respectfully with others in GAO. Meeting with and representing GAO to agency personnel, congressional staffs and others, such as professional organizations.



Frequently:

Misstates or asks inappropriate questions during interviews; fails to gather complete information.

Asks antagonistic questions or monopolizes the discussion at meetings.

Presents information in an illogical, unorganized manner; presents technical information in a manner that clients cannot understand, leading to client dissatisfaction.

Makes one-sided presentations, does not communicate in a fact based, fair, and balanced manner.

Does not accurately represent GAO's position.

Speaks timidly, needs assistance when presenting information, fails to convey the message.

Has difficulty responding to questions about fundamental aspects of the assignment.

Is disrespectful or discourteous in dealing with others.

Does not keep supervisors adequately informed about work status and issues which might affect assignment outcome.

Usually:

Asks clear and logical questions during interviews, responds objectively to comments, observes time frames, gathers complete information, summarizes interview and clarifies issues.

Contributes to meetings, discusses assigned issues objectively, listens to others and responds appropriately to questions and comments.

Presents information, including technical issues, in a clear, concise, and well organized manner.

Makes presentations that are fact based, fair, and balanced.

Represents GAO's position accurately, avoids disclosing sensitive/tentative matters.

Makes presentations that are clear and concise, alters presentations when appropriate, facilitates interaction with the audience.

Responds accurately and appropriately to questions related to the assignment.

Communicates with everyone in a respectful manner, facilitating information exchange.

Informs supervisors about issues relating to the assignment.

Almost Always:

Asks questions and states issues clearly so that misunderstandings do not occur.

Contributes to meetings, discusses relevant information, answers questions, elicits views of others, and handles interruptions.

Presents information, including technical data, in a clear and succinct manner that clients can understand.

Consistently makes fact based, fair, and balanced presentations in a professional style.

Represents GAO's position accurately, weighs consequences of responses before speaking, does not disclose sensitive matters, distinguishes fact from opinion.

Makes presentations that fully convey the message, alters presentations appropriately, effectively uses aids and involves the audience.

Responds accurately, appropriately and with ease to questions or comments related to the assignment.

Communicates in a respectful and open manner; is a role model for good two-way communication.

Communicates with supervisors and peers regularly and in a timely manner about all significant issues.

Band I—Full Performance Level Performance Standards

6. Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Equal Opportunity (EO)

Demonstrating and promoting a positive attitude and commitment to accomplishing objectives. Working cooperatively and sharing information throughout GAO to achieve mission requirements and other common goals. Promoting teamwork by helping others, meeting commitments, seeking out others' comments and suggestions, communicating openly and candidly, encouraging others to participate in meetings and discussions. Surfacing to management issues that negatively affect the work environment. Actively participating in job meetings and discussions. Establishing and maintaining effective and constructive working relationships with all stakeholders and others both inside and outside GAO. Observing equal opportunity principles, showing respect for all staff, expressing an appreciation for the diversity of the workforce, and helping to build a climate of trust and fairness for all.

Frequently:

Impedes accomplishing assigned objectives, fails to support group decisions, puts own interests ahead of group interests.

Displays a negative attitude toward assignment and coworkers; does not offer constructive solutions to concerns.

Does not help coworkers or work cooperatively, belittles others' suggestions, does not help peers, hesitates to take on additional or difficult work.

Fails to acquire training or skills needed to achieve personal or team goals.

Reacts to constructive feedback with hostility or defensiveness; attempts to shift blame for mistakes.

Does not respect others when expressing disagreements, disparages others' contributions, acts in a condescending manner.

Does not work cooperatively with staff outside own unit, does not share information or provide help that would advance GAO's goals.

Usually:

Collaborates with coworkers and others in meeting commitments and accomplishing assigned work on time, shares information freely.

Demonstrates a positive attitude and good interpersonal skills. Raises concerns in a constructive manner and offers potential solutions.

Assists others, shows willingness to expend necessary effort to complete assignment.

Develops or builds on skills to enhance personal contributions and achieve team objectives.

Responds constructively to feedback, seeking ways to improve skills.

Respects others when expressing disagreements; provides encouragement to others; maintains effective working relationships.

Works cooperatively with and supports staff across GAO, shares information across organizational lines.

Treats others fairly regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Almost Always:

Sets an example for others by meeting all commitments through exemplary teamwork and cooperation with others.

Demonstrates a positive attitude and commitment, seeks opportunities to help others meet team goals, and helps resolve concerns or problems.

Helps others without being asked, goes the "extra mile" to complete assignment, accepts additional or difficult assignments.

Seeks training and developmental experiences to enhance knowledge and skills needed for short and long-range goals.

Is responsive and open to feedback, seeks suggestions on ways to improve.

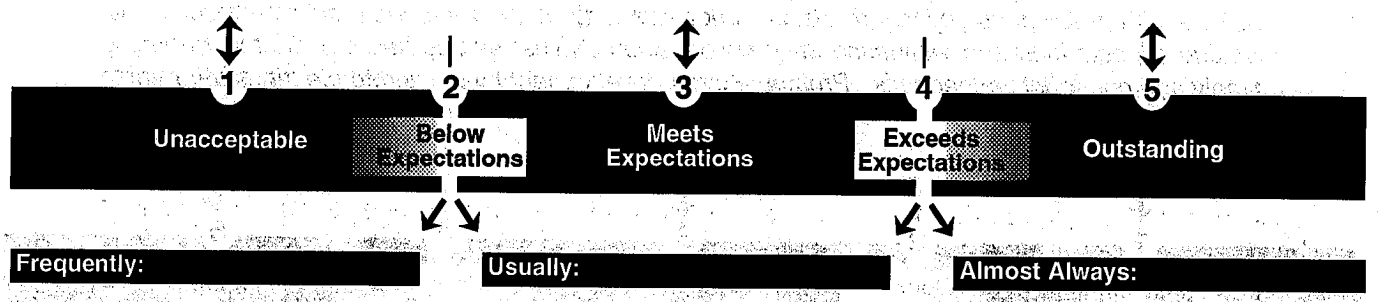
Respects others when expressing disagreements; promotes consensus building; pursues appropriate recognition of others and the team.

Collaborates and shares information across organizational lines, understands value to be gained by sharing information.

(Continued on Next Page)

Band I—Full Performance Level Performance Standards (Continued)

6. Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Equal Opportunity (EO)



Frequently:

Creates conflicts in work group; makes distinctions of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation and expresses an unwillingness to work with certain people.

Usually:

Almost Always:

Actively works to promote harmony with coworkers without distinctions on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation; actively supports EO programs or activities.

Band I—Full Performance Level Performance Standards

7. Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling

To the extent that opportunities arise, providing direction and guidance to assigned staff to achieve assignment objectives. Delegating work assignments and monitoring performance. Helping staff learn GAO's policies, quality standards, and core values through on-the-job training and coaching. Setting expectations and evaluating staff performance against established standards. Providing timely and constructive feedback. Promoting staff development by helping to identify staff training needs.

Frequently:

Fails to reinforce GAO's policies, quality standards, and core values.

Stymies professional growth of staff by not delegating tasks; or tasks are assigned so unevenly that morale is adversely affected.

Fails to monitor staff progress timely or delays taking corrective action when problems arise.

Takes ineffective or inappropriate action to deal with performance or conduct problems; refers matters to superiors without trying to resolve them.

Sets unclear or confusing expectations.

Fails to provide performance feedback as needed during the rating period.

Does not properly apply performance standards in assessing performance.

Ignores staff training needs; cancels staff's participation in training unnecessarily.

Usually:

Reinforces GAO's policies, quality standards and core values through day-to-day supervision.

Makes reasonable assignment decisions so that employees' skills are enhanced; ensures that work is evenly distributed.

Uses project plans and planning tools to monitor progress; makes any necessary adjustments before assignment is adversely affected.

Deals directly and objectively with performance or conduct problems, seeks advice and takes appropriate action.

Sets clear expectations, revising them when necessary.

Provides appropriate performance feedback and counseling.

Evaluates job performance accurately using established performance standards; is able to distinguish among different levels of performance.

Helps identify training needs and supports staff participation in training programs.

Almost Always:

Fully communicates and effectively reinforces GAO's policies, quality standards and core values through day-to-day supervision. Always keeps staff well informed.

Makes work assignments that significantly enhance employees' skills and fully meet developmental needs; ensures that all staff are effectively utilized.

Sets clear expectations; monitors staff progress; anticipates and resolves problems without affecting deadlines, provides assistance to staff and reassigns work as needed.

Identifies performance or conduct problems early and takes appropriate action; keeps managers fully informed.

Sets clear expectations that incorporate GAO's values and strategic objectives, and the employees' input, when feasible.

Provides constructive, specific, and honest performance feedback; effectively counsels and encourages employees.

Understands the performance standards, and consistently applies them accurately. Produces ratings that can be relied upon in making human capital decisions.

Supports and encourages staff development activities; counsels staff on importance of training; acts as a mentor.

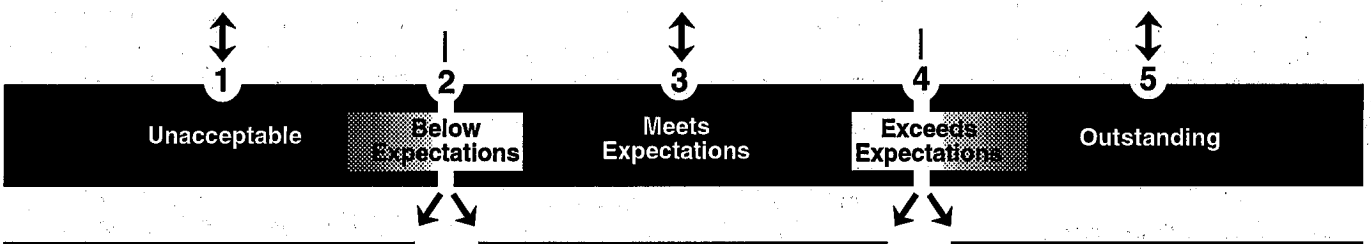
Performance Standards: Band II

Band II—Performance Standards

1. Planning

Understanding and applying GAO's core values (accountability, integrity and reliability) in the design and implementation of all plans and work steps so that resulting reports, briefings, and other work products are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair and balanced as well as timely, accurate, useful, clear and candid. Being responsible for planning a complete assignment or a major assignment segment and/or developing technical or subject matter expertise and bringing that knowledge to bear in helping plan one or more assignments. Understanding and scrupulously adhering to GAO's congressional protocols (effective January 2000). Developing work plans that respond to Congressional mandates and requests and supporting goals, objectives and strategies of GAO's Strategic Plan. Designing assignment plans that will, when appropriate, lead to improved government operations—such as the potential for dollar savings and/or non-financial benefits—and contribute to congressional decision making. Determining, or helping determine, appropriate methodologies and resources needed to satisfy the client's request. Identifying information sources, alternative approaches and constraints. Ensuring that assignment plans conform to GAO policy, including generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS).

Working collaboratively with others in GAO to avoid planning conflicting or duplicative work. Sharing knowledge within work unit and with others in GAO. Helping management determine and plan for the most appropriate methods of communication to meet the client's needs. Avoiding, or recognizing and terminating unproductive work. Planning own work time, and helping assigned staff do likewise. Being proficient in the use of project-planning tools.



Frequently:

Does not demonstrate knowledge of, or properly apply, relevant GAO policies, and congressional protocols when helping to plan jobs.

Does not meet agreed upon deadlines.

Plans work that conflicts with core values (for example, plans address only one side of an issue).

Submits job plans that overlook strategic plan objectives and goals or do not consider costs in relation to benefits.

Fails to set priorities and consider contingencies causing waste of resources and lost time.

Does not recognize the need to modify plans.

Usually:

Understands and appropriately applies GAO policies and congressional protocols when helping to plan jobs.

Completes work on time.

Understands and appropriately applies GAO's core values in planning work.

Submits job plans that support the strategic plan goals and objective and consider costs in relation to benefits.

Prepares complete, practical and achievable assignment plans that include steps with the potential for financial savings or program improvements, and for assessing relevant technical issues; plans require limited substantive revisions.

Recognizes and brings to management's attention the need to modify plans.

Almost Always:

Demonstrates mastery of GAO policies and congressional protocols and helps others comply with these requirements.

Completes work on time or early.

Understands and appropriately applies GAO's core values in planning work and helps others do likewise.

Identifies issues and submits job plans that make substantive contributions to achieving strategic plan goals and objectives; carefully weighs costs versus benefits in devising strategy.

Recognizes the need to modify plans and presents alternatives to management.

(Continued on Next Page)

Band II—Performance Standards (Continued)

1. Planning

Frequently:

Submits incomplete or impractical assignment plans that do not include steps for achieving financial savings or program improvements or for assessing relevant technical issues; plans require significant revision.

Suggests research approaches that are inconsistent with professional standards.

Overlooks or fails to identify important relevant information sources.

Estimates time frames and resource needs inaccurately.

Demonstrates little knowledge of planning tools.

Does not take advantage of work done by others when planning assignments; does not share own work or knowledge to assist others in designing work.

Usually:

Constructs appropriate research approaches, considering professional standards and generally recognized analytical techniques.

Recognizes appropriate methodology and suggests modifications to facilitate meeting assignment requirements.

Identifies important and relevant information sources.

Accurately estimates resource needs and timeframes.

Appropriately uses project planning tools.

Uses available work done by others to avoid unnecessary duplication and shares own knowledge with others.

Almost Always:

Prepares comprehensive assignment plans that fully address the client's interests and include steps likely to yield financial savings or program improvements and to assess relevant technical and state-of-the-art issues; plans require few revisions.

Researches new approaches and proposes the best one; proposes approaches that reflect an advanced level of competency; identifies all important sources of information.

Suggests new or unique methodology, when necessary, that has practical application, and facilitates meeting assignment requirements.

Identifies most important and relevant information sources.

Is exceptionally proficient at estimating resource needs and time frames.

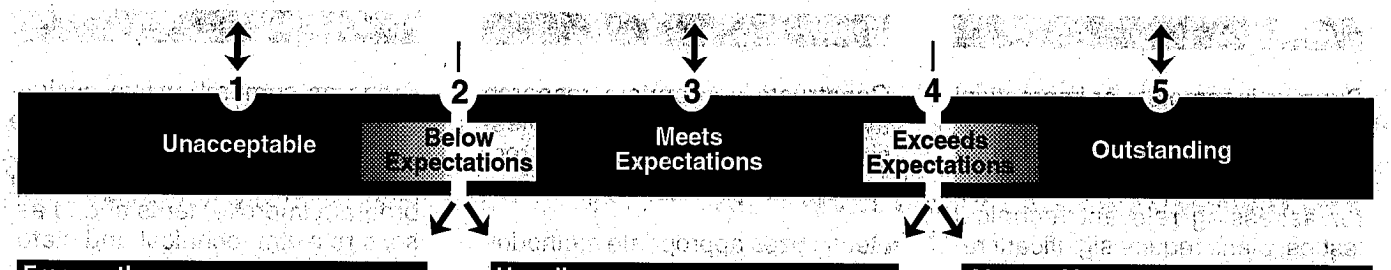
Uses and encourages others to make use of project planning tools.

Coordinates work with others and suggests innovative ways to prevent delays and problems. Is proactive in seeking out others in GAO who can contribute to work; willingly offers to share own information to further GAO objectives.

Band II—Performance Standards

2. Data Gathering and Documentation

Being responsible for data gathering and documentation on one or more assignments or assignment segments. Collecting and documenting relevant data (and providing assigned staff necessary on-the-job training in data gathering techniques and documentation) to ensure that all GAO products are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced. Researching and identifying data sources and data collection strategies. Identifying missing data and ensuring that data are current and accurate and are sufficient to support findings, conclusions and recommendations. Learning, applying and teaching assigned staff to use automated tools to collect, share, organize and manipulate data. Ensuring that GAO policies and procedures are followed when preparing all forms and project or administrative documentation.



Frequently:

Requires close supervisory monitoring and review in accomplishing this task.

Uses inappropriate data collection methods; submits unreliable documentation or fails to obtain missing data.

Does not complete work on time; work requires extensive review.

Submits poorly organized workpapers; making analysis difficult.

Resists using ADP resources and does not encourage staff to use automated means to get work done.

Fails to follow GAO policies and procedures to ensure reliability and completeness of computer-based data.

Does not contribute required or accurate documentation for the files.

Prepares summaries without fully documenting materials, many substantive changes required.

Performs careless or limited reviews of assigned staffs' data gathering and documentation efforts.

Usually:

Requires little direct supervision in accomplishing this task.

Identifies appropriate data sources; uses appropriate data collection methods to obtain relevant and reliable data.

Completes work on time with only limited revisions and rework.

Assembles, indexes and organizes workpapers to facilitate analysis and product preparation.

Uses ADP resources effectively to obtain, create, store, share and access data.

Applies GAO policies and procedures to ensure reliability and completeness of computer-based data and analysis.

Contributes complete and accurate documentation for the files.

Uses only fully documented material to prepare summaries.

Thoroughly reviews assigned staff's or others' (as appropriate) data gathering and documentation efforts.

Almost Always:

Can be relied upon to produce high quality results without supervision.

Identifies data needed to support conclusions; uses data collection methods that result in high quality products; helps others gather data.

Completes high quality work with few, if any, revisions, under challenging deadlines.

Organizes workpapers to readily identify critical data and to expedite analysis and reporting.

Makes innovative use of ADP resources and learns new skills.

Understands importance of ensuring reliability, of computer-based data and seeks out innovative ways to test information for accuracy.

Contributes complete and accurate documentation for the files; helps others do likewise.

Uses only fully documented and relevant material to prepare summaries; few, if any changes required.

Performs comprehensive reviews and verifies assigned staff's and (as appropriate) others' data gathering and documentation efforts.

Band II—Performance Standards

3. Data Analysis

Being responsible for the timely delivery of quality data analysis on one or more assignments or assignment segments. Ensuring that all appropriate data are analyzed so that resulting products meet GAO's core values (that is, products are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced). Organizing, tabulating, contrasting, and synthesizing data or information to produce findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Using computer tools to support analysis. Applying professionally accepted analytical techniques (e.g., information synthesis, content analysis, statistics, econometrics, operations research and modeling). Determining validity, reliability, and quality of data and the adequacy of evidence to support findings or conclusions. Ensuring the quality of data analysis done by assigned staff and others, as appropriate.

Frequently:

Requires continual supervision and instruction to complete work.

Chooses an inappropriate research methodology, analysis strategy or software package; cannot justify decisions.

Uses an improper, overly complex, or too simplistic technique for the job.

Does not complete work on time.

Produces analyses that require many changes.

Summarizes, or reports analyses incompletely, or in a confusing manner.

Fails to recognize problematic data, identify evidence gaps or determine what evidence is needed.

Does not appropriately consider evidence, laws, regulations, or GAO standards; draws conclusions based on incomplete or inaccurate information.

Does not review assigned staffs' or others analytic work constructively or promptly; misses major flaws in analyses; makes irrelevant comments.

Usually:

Requires an average amount (for peer level) of supervisory review or coaching.

Chooses an appropriate research methodology, analysis strategy, or software package; can defend decisions.

Uses appropriate analytical techniques for the job.

Completes analysis on time.

Produces analyses that require minimal change.

Summarizes or reports analyses correctly and in a way that others can understand.

Determines if the quantity and quality of evidence is satisfactory and sufficient, and, if not, follows up.

Appropriately considers evidence, laws, or GAO standards; draws conclusions based on complete, accurate, and current information.

Reviews assigned staffs' or others analytic work constructively and promptly; identifies flaws, if any, and ensures corrections are made.

Almost Always:

Requires little or no close supervision to complete analyses and resolve problems.

Chooses an appropriate analysis plan and innovative research methodologies that produce technically sound high-quality products.

Uses the most appropriate analyses techniques; analyses require few if any changes.

Completes high quality analysis of complex issues on time, even under challenging deadlines.

Produces analyses that require few, if any, changes.

Summarizes complex analyses correctly and completely so others can easily understand.

Is consulted by peers and others to examine analyses to help identify and correct weaknesses.

Does original or if necessary unique work, analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and developing recommendations.

Reviews assigned staff or others analytic work thoroughly, constructively, and promptly; suggests different perspectives and approaches.

Band II—Performance Standards

4. Written Communication

Being responsible for preparing and reviewing in a timely manner written products for one or more assignments or assignment segments. Ensuring that written products are drafted so that they meet GAO core values (that is, products are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair and balanced). Preparing and reviewing written products so that they address the project objectives, satisfy the client's needs, and adhere to GAO polices and quality standards. Preparing and reviewing, in collaboration with others, a variety of written products including planning documents, interview write-ups, workpapers, workpaper summaries, complete reports or major segments of reports, testimony, technical appendixes, internal and external correspondence, and administrative documentation such as performance appraisals. Using automated capabilities to develop, review, and process GAO products. Helping assigned staff and others, as appropriate, improve the quality of their written products.

Frequently:

Prepares documents that do not conform to GAO policies and meet GAO quality standards, and/or fail to reflect a basic understanding of GAO's core values.

Requires considerably more intervention by supervisor than expected for peer group to correct/revise written products.

Does not meet agreed-upon deadlines.

Produces summaries with insufficient details or factual errors; includes misleading information.

Prepares summaries that are disorganized or diverge from agreed upon outline, fail to clearly present key issues and are unconvincing.

Writes conclusions and recommendations that are not substantiated by supporting information.

Does not use automated capabilities to improve communication.

Fails to complete reviews of assigned staff's or others' written products on time, does not provide constructive or helpful assistance.

Usually:

Prepares documents that are complete, accurate and timely and conform to GAO policies, meet quality standards, and reflect understanding of GAO core values.

Requires an average amount (for peer level) of supervisory review and coaching, with minimal revisions to basic structure and message.

Delivers well-written products on time.

Prepares summaries that discuss relevant issues and are well-organized, concise, logical and meet expectations for clarity.

Summarizes related issues and develops supportable conclusions and recommendations.

Uses automated capabilities to improve communication; incorporates graphics when appropriate.

Provides timely, constructive suggestions when reviewing assigned staff's or others' written products; suggests changes that help ensure compliance with GAO policies guidance.

Almost Always:

Prepares documents that are accurate, objective, timely, complete in every respect and conform to GAO policies, quality standards and core values.

Has an excellent command of the language and a writing style well above the norm for peer level. Few, if any, corrections are required.

Delivers high quality products on time, even under challenging deadlines.

Prepares summaries that are well-organized and logical, present multiple issues clearly and concisely and are easily incorporated into final products.

Summarizes all relevant issues and develops fully supported conclusions and recommendations.

Makes optimal use of automated capabilities to improve communication; incorporates innovative graphics to enhance communication.

Detects flaws when reviewing assigned staff's or others' written products, provides timely insights to help improve product quality; and ensures problems are corrected.

Band II—Performance Standards

5. Oral Communication

Focusing oral communication on audience needs and agreed–upon purpose. Assuring that presentations meet GAO's core values (that is, they are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced). Communicating upward, downward and laterally so that information flows freely and shared understanding occurs. Communicating openly, honestly, and respectfully with others in GAO and helping to create an open and constructive work environment. Conducting and attending meetings with, and briefings of, congressional clients, GAO officials, agency officials and others. Communicating with congressional clients in keeping with congressional protocols (effective January 2000). Keeping supervisors informed. Dealing with the media in accordance with GAO policy.

Frequently:

Fails to follow congressional protocols in communicating with congressional staffs.

Presents information in an illogical, unorganized manner; makes one-sided presentations, leading to the perception that the speaker is not communicating in a fact-based, fair and balanced manner.

Does not accurately represent GAO's position.

Delivers presentations in a style inappropriate for the purpose, listener, or time; reads the presentation and uses gestures, audiovisual aids or materials poorly.

Allows meetings to drift, has difficulty responding to questions, and leaves meetings without achieving desired results.

Presents technical information in a manner that clients cannot understand, leading to client dissatisfaction.

Is disrespectful and discourteous in dealing with GAO officials and staff and others.

Usually:

Understands and follows congressional protocols in communicating with congressional staffs.

Presents information that is clear, concise, and well-organized; takes steps to assure that all presentations are professional, objective, fact based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced.

Weighs consequences of responses before speaking, distinguishes fact from opinion, avoids disclosing sensitive/tentative matters; listens and responds to questions and issues at hand.

Delivers presentations suitable for the purpose, audience, and allotted time; refers to notes appropriately; uses gestures, audiovisual aids, or materials.

Keeps meetings on track, invites questions and responds appropriately, and summarizes information shared and agreements reached.

Presents technical information clearly.

Communicates with everyone in a respectful manner, facilitating information exchange.

Almost Always:

Understands and scrupulously adheres to congressional protocols and is able to fully explain GAO's policy.

Presents clear, concise, and well-organized information; consistently assures that all presentations are professional, objective, fact based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced.

Accurately presents GAO's position, clearly distinguishes between fact and opinion; avoids disclosing sensitive or tentative matters; listens well, responds appropriately, and remains calm in adverse situations.

Makes presentations with clarity and ease; is very persuasive even before skeptical or hostile audiences; gains acceptance when presenting controversial findings.

Adjusts meeting to audience and time needs, responds directly to questions, encourages others to participate, and ensures participants' understanding at conclusion of meetings.

Presents technical issues in a clear and succinct manner that clients can understand, regardless of the complexity of the subject matter.

(Continued on Next Page)

Band II—Performance Standards (Continued)

5. Oral Communication

Frequently:

Does not follow GAO media policy.

Does not keep supervisors adequately informed about job status and issues which might adversely affect assignment outcome.

Usually:

Follows GAO media policy, seeking guidance when needed.

Keeps supervisors adequately informed about all signficant issues relating to assignments.

Almost Always:

Is a role model for good two-way communications; communicates in respectful open manner in dealing at all levels.

Follows GAO media policy, seeking guidance when needed.

Sufficiently communicates with supervisors and clients so as to avoid "expectation gaps."

Band II—Level Performance Standards

6. Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Equal Opportunity

Demonstrating and promoting a positive attitude and commitment to accomplishing objectives. Providing leadership to a team, or being a key contributor to a team. Displaying a wide range of interpersonal skills to facilitate collegial working relationships and successful accomplishment of team goals and objectives. Promoting teamwork by helping others, meeting commitments, seeking out others comments and suggestions, communicating openly and candidly, and encouraging others to participate in meetings and discussions. Developing and using techniques for problem solving, decision-making, and recognizing individual performance as well as exemplary teamwork. Working cooperatively and sharing information throughout GAO in support of matrix management within the agency.

Establishing and maintaining effective and constructive working relationships with all stakeholders and others both inside and outside GAO. Showing respect for all staff, including appreciation for the diversity of the workforce. Observing and ensuring that others on team observe principles of equal opportunity and fairness and helping to build a climate of trust.

Frequently:

Impedes accomplishing team objectives through poor interpersonal behaviors; for example, is discourteous, uncooperative, disrespectful, or argumentative.

Displays a negative attitude; does not offer constructive solutions to concerns.

Does not help coworkers; hesitates to take on additional or difficult work.

Does not seek out or acquire training or skills needed to achieve personal or team goals.

Reacts defensively to constructive feedback; blames others for mistakes.

Acts in a condescending or overly critical manner; disparages others contributions.

Does not work cooperatively with staff outside own unit; does not share information and provide help that would advance GAO's goals.

Usually:

Takes steps necessary to accomplish team objectives; collaborates with others; is considered an effective team player.

Demonstrates a positive attitude and good interpersonal skills; raises concerns in a constructive manner and offers potential solutions.

Willingly assists team members and others to expedite achievement of objectives; shows willingness to expend necessary effort to complete task at hand.

Responds constructively to feedback, seeking out ways to improve own skills.

Maintains effective working relationships; respects others; provides formal and informal encouragement and recognition.

Works cooperatively with, and supports, staff across GAO; understands value to be gained by sharing information throughout GAO.

Almost Always:

Is a role model as a team leader or team member; sets an example for others in accomplishing GAO objectives through teamwork.

Demonstrates a positive attitude and commitment to GAO's work and its staff.

Seeks out opportunities to help others without being asked; willing to go the "extra mile" to achieve team objectives.

Is open and responsive to feedback; identifies and attends training and development opportunities to enhance performance.

Employs excellent interpersonal skills in dealing with others; promotes a constructive and productive work environment.

Adds value to GAO products by collaborating and sharing information across organizational lines.

Is exemplary in treating all staff fairly, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

(Continued on Next Page)

Band II Level—Performance Standards (Continued)

6. Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Equal Opportunity

Frequently:

Makes distinctions of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Does not assign work in a fair or equitable manner, expresses an unwillingness to work with certain people.

Creates friction in dealings with others, does not consider GAO's viewpoint when advocating a point of view.

Usually:

Adjusts to different working styles, approaches and perspectives; treats coworkers fairly regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Assigns work in a fair and equitable manner; is able to work well with all people.

Builds professional relationships both within and outside of GAO; considers GAO's interests when advocating a point of view.

Almost Always:

Assigns work in a fair and equitable manner, is sought out by peers and others for advice and assistance, is widely respected by colleagues, and mentors and serves as a role model for junior staff.

Builds professional relationships both within and outside GAO, helps others establish professional contacts, considers GAO's interests when advocating a point of view.

Band II—Performance Standards

7. Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling

Providing direction and guidance to assigned staff to achieve assignment objectives. Delegating work assignments and monitoring performance. Helping staff learn GAO's policies, quality standards, and core values through on-the-job training and coaching. Setting expectations and evaluating staff performance against established standards. Providing timely and constructive feedback. Promoting staff development by helping to identify staff training needs.

Frequently:

Fails to reinforce GAO's policies, quality standards, and core values.

Stymies professional growth of staff by not delegating tasks; or tasks are assigns tasks so unevenly that morale is adverse affected.

Fails to monitor staff progress timely or delays taking corrective action when problems arise.

Takes ineffective or inappropriate action to deal with performance or conduct problems; refers matters to superiors without trying to resolve them.

Sets unclear or confusing expectations.

Fails to provide performance feedback as needed during the rating period.

Does not properly apply performance standards in assessing performance.

Ignores staff training needs; cancels staff's participation in training unnecessarily.

Usually:

Reinforces GAO's policies, quality standards and core values through day-to-day supervision.

Makes reasonable assignment decisions so that employees' skills are enhanced; ensures that work is evenly distributed.

Uses project plans and planning tools to monitor progress; makes any necessary adjustments before assignment is adversely affected.

Deals directly and objectively with performance or conduct problems, seeks advice and takes appropriate action.

Sets clear expectations, revising them when necessary.

Provides appropriate performance feedback and counseling.

Evaluates job performance accurately using established performance standards; is able to distinguish among different levels of performance.

Helps identify training needs and supports staff participation in training programs.

Almost Always:

Fully communicates and effectively reinforces GAO's policies, quality standards and core values through day-to-day supervision. Always keeps staff well informed.

Makes work assignments that significantly enhance employees' skills and fully meet developmental needs; ensures that all staff are effectively utilized.

Sets clear expectations; monitors staff progress; anticipates and resolves problems without affecting deadlines, provides assistance to staff and reassigns work as needed.

Identifies performance or conduct problems early and takes appropriate action; keep managers fully informed.

Sets clear expectations that incorporate GAO's values, and strategic objectives, and the employees'; input, when feasible.

Provides constructive, specific, and honest performance feedback, effectively counsels and encourages employees.

Understands the performance standards, and consistently applies them accurately; produces ratings that can be relied upon in making human capital decisions.

Supports and encourages staff development activities; counsels staff on importance of training; acts as a mentor.

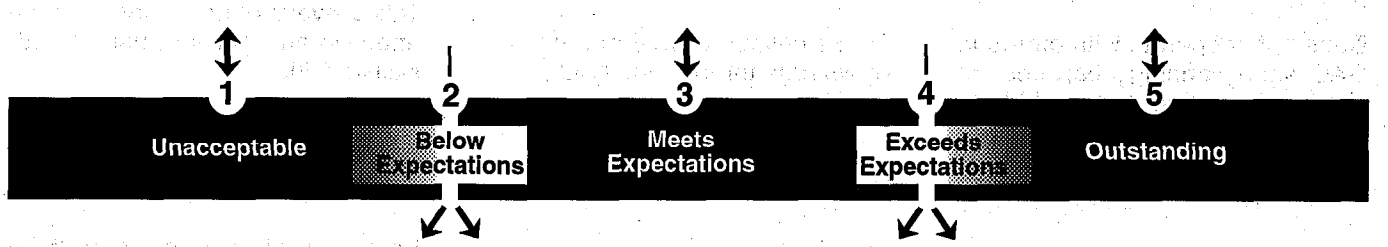
Performance Standards: Band III

Band III—Performance Standards

1. Planning

Taking a leadership role by applying GAO's core values of accountability, integrity and reliability in all planning efforts. Developing work plans that respond to congressional mandates, requests, and support GAO's strategic goals. Keeping abreast of issues in assigned areas in order to identify trends and forecast emerging issues. Implementing matrix management principles by working collaboratively and sharing knowledge throughout the agency.

Identifying issues and incorporating work steps that ensure projects are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair and balanced; lead to timely, accurate, useful, clear and candid products; and, to the extent appropriate, result in measurable financial benefits and/or improved government operations. Establishing appropriate project timeframes and reasonable resource requirements. Initiating and/or reviewing design matrices and job plans to ensure consistency with GAO's core values, policies, including generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS), and congressional protocols (effective January 2000). Ensuring appropriate consideration of costs/benefits and risk management approaches in planning and design. Assisting others throughout GAO in planning work by serving as a focal point for an issue area, technical field, or subject matter.



Frequently:

Develops unrealistic or vague plans, fails to consider contingencies or relevant technical issues.

Fails to apply core values to job planning and job design.

Plans work that does not support strategic plan goals and objectives.

Uses ineffective or inefficient methodologies and techniques.

Overlooks issues with potential for dollar savings and/or nonfinancial benefits.

Has difficulty setting priorities resulting in waste of resources and lost time.

Plans require substantial revision.

Fails to adhere to GAO policies, standards, or congressional protocols in planning work.

Gives little attention to cost/benefits considerations when planning work.

Usually:

Develops realistic and complete plans, including anticipating contingencies and assessing relevant technical issues.

Applies GAO's core values in planning and designing jobs.

Plans work that supports strategic goals, objectives, and strategies.

Incorporates appropriate methodologies and audit tools and techniques.

Plans fully consider opportunities for financial and nonfinancial accomplishments.

Plans require limited revisions.

Adheres to all relevant GAO policies, and congressional protocols, in planning/designing jobs.

Considers costs/benefits and risk management principles when planning work.

Almost Always:

Develops realistic and complete plans, including anticipating contingencies and assessing relevant technical and state-of-the-art issues.

Applies GAO's core values in planning and designing jobs.

Optimizes the achievement of strategic plan goals, objectives, and strategies.

Proposes innovative approaches and techniques for doing work.

Maximizes the likelihood of financial and nonfinancial benefits and results.

Plans require very few, if any, revisions.

Fully understands and adheres to all relevant GAO policies and congressional protocols.

Balances costs and likely benefits and effectively employs risk management techniques.

(Continued on Next Page)

Band III—Performance Standards (Continued)

1. Planning

Frequently:

Estimates timef rames and resource needs inaccurately.

Does not make effective use of available staff skills/abilities.

Does not cooperate with others in GAO when planning jobs; does not share information that could help others in planning work.

Usually:

Accurately estimates time frames and resource needs.

Makes use of available staff skills/ abilities.

Works collaboratively and shares knowledge throughout GAO.

Almost Always:

Accurately estimate time frames and resource needs, minimizing each through good planning and effective use of available staff.

Takes every opportunity to make effective and efficient use of staff skills/abilities.

Anticipates future needs of Congress and incorporates those needs into plans.

Fosters matrix management by being a role model for others in working collaboratively and supportively throughout GAO.

Band III—Performance Standards

2. Implementing Projects

Leading, carrying out, and directing others to carry out projects that produce high quality, timely work that is responsive to client needs. Overseeing technical soundness and effective communication of projects, using appropriate methods and analytic tools. Ensuring that GAO's core values of accountability, integrity and reliability are emphasized and applied throughout assignments. Understanding and scrupulously adhering to GAO's new congressional protocols (effective January 2000) in all facets of assignments, and ensuring that subordinate staff understand and adhere to same. Establishing and maintaining high-productivity goals and applying dedicated effort to meeting those goals. Managing multiple assignments simultaneously, thereby minimizing downtime. Making effective use of appropriate job management tools in order to meet commitment dates within cost estimates. Adhering to plans, objectives, policies, quality dimensions and GAGAS to ensure timely delivery of products that are professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair and balanced.

Maintaining a positive, results-oriented approach to client work. Assessing progress, resolving problems, advising on project status, and following-up to ensure client satisfaction. Taking appropriate steps to minimize client "expectations gaps." Making effective use of staff and information technology resources to achieve assignment objectives. Fostering and supporting matrix management approaches to job assignments by sharing knowledge and working cooperatively across organization lines to effectively accomplish objectives and solve problems. Bringing to bear knowledge of subject matter, methods and analytic approaches to ensure adequacy of products' conclusions and recommendations, where applicable. When necessary, monitoring contractor support to ensure quality and timeliness.

Frequently:

Fails to apply GAO's core values, for example, allows personal bias to influence conclusions.

Does not adhere to, or ensure that assigned staff adheres to, congressional protocols.

Misses deadlines and overruns cost estimates.

Produces products that require significant revisions.

Produces products that do not conform to GAO policies or standards.

Produces work that does not support plans, or meet agreed-upon objectives.

Fails to keep clients and/or supervisors properly informed.

Usually:

Applies GAO's core values.

Adheres to, and ensures that assigned staff adheres to, congressional protocols.

Meets deadlines and produces work within cost estimates.

Produces products that require only limited revision.

Produces products that conform to GAO policies and standards.

Produces products that support plans and agreed upon objectives.

Keeps clients and supervisors informed about job progress.

Utilizes available skills and resources effectively.

Almost Always:

Is a good role model in applying GAO's core values to all aspects of work.

Has firm grasp of congressional protocols and is proactive in helping staff understand and apply protocols.

Completes work on time or early and within cost estimates.

Produces products that require few, if any, revisions.

Demonstrates full understanding of GAO policies and quality standards and adheres to such in developing products.

Prepares high-quality products that directly address plans and objectives.

(Continued on Next Page)

Band III—Performance Standards (Continued)

2. Implementing Projects

Frequently:

Does not utilize available skills and resources effectively.

Uses inappropriate analytic methods or misinterprets data.

Is uncooperative in working with others and sharing information.

Does not effectively use appropriate automated tools and technology.

Draws conclusions and makes recommendations unsupported by evidence.

Does not review work promptly.

Usually:

Uses appropriate methodologies and audit approaches and accurately interprets data.

Identifies key issues when fulfilling assignments.

Reviews work of assigned staff promptly.

Is a proficient user of GAO technology.

Cooperates with others and shares information in carrying out assignments.

Almost Always:

Avoids expectation gaps by keeping clients and supervisors well-informed.

Is innovative and effective in using available staff skills and resources.

Uses most appropriate methodologies and audit approaches and accurately interprets data.

Is proactive in working cooperatively with others and regularly shares information in carrying out assignments.

Produces results that help meet GAO's goals and objectives.

Completes high-quality reviews promptly.

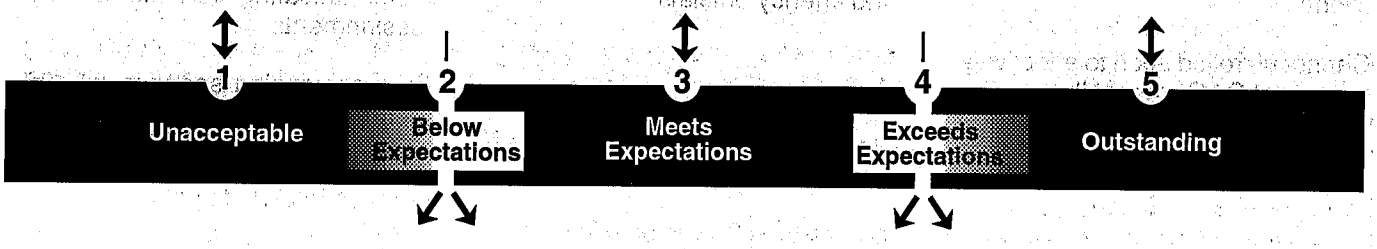
Is a leader in using GAO technology.

Band III—Performance Standards

3. Communications

Communicating effectively orally and in writing. Overseeing the development of timely, accurate, useful, clear and candid reports and testimonies that meet GAO's values, policies and standards of quality. Assuring that presentations and products incorporate GAO's core values by being professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair and balanced. Conducting useful, cogent and timely briefings with GAO officials, congressional clients, and agency officials. Dealing appropriately with the news media. Communicating with congressional clients in keeping with congressional protocols (effective January 2000).

Serving as a critical communication link between senior management and staff to ensure that staff receive timely information on policies, management initiatives and priorities necessary to do their jobs. Fostering two-way communications to ensure that information flows freely and shared understanding occurs. Communicating in an open and honest way that supports mutual respect and cooperation with other GAO staff. Fostering an open constructive communications environment, where staff comments and questions are welcome.



Frequently:

Produces written products that require extensive revision for grammar, omissions, irrelevancies and/or organization.

Makes presentations and produces products that are not professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair or balanced.

Cannot be relied upon to review, and revise as necessary, products developed by staff.

Is inadequately prepared and cannot respond to relevant questions at meetings/briefings.

Chooses inappropriate methods to communicate information.

Makes unclear, unfocused or disorganized oral presentations.

Does not communicate important job or organizational information to staff in a timely manner.

Communicates with staff in a disrespectful manner.

Usually:

Produces products that are clear, well organized, and require only limited revision.

Makes presentations and produces products that adhere to GAO's core values, quality dimensions and communications policies.

Reviews/revises products submitted by staff to ensure conformance with GAO policy and standards.

Is well-prepared and responsive in briefings and oral presentations.

Uses appropriate communication methods.

Maintains awareness of job and organizational information and communicates same to staff in timely manner.

Deals with staff in respectful, open manner, fostering two-way communications.

Adheres to congressional protocols in communicating with congressional clients.

Almost Always:

Presents complex material in logical, well-organized, concise manner, and virtually ready for release.

Makes presentations and produces products that meet the highest GAO standards and reflect in-depth commitment to GAO's core values and quality dimensions.

Uses exceptional teaching and coaching skills to help staff improve their products.

Chooses the optimal communications strategy to meet audience needs.

Gives briefings and oral presentations that are authoritative and demonstrate a thorough command of material.

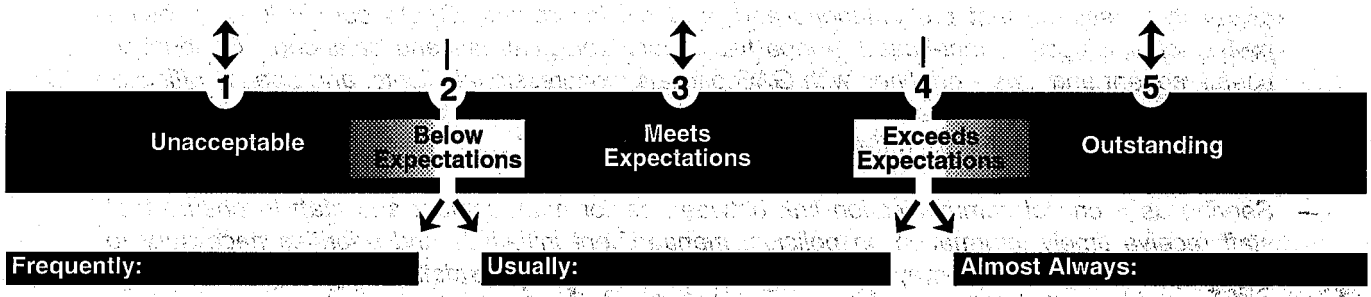
Is a role model for two-way communications, ensuring that all necessary information is shared in a timely manner.

Communicates with others in respectful manner, fostering a positive work environment.

(Continued on Next Page)

Band III—Performance Standards (Continued)

3. Communications



Frequently:

Fails to follow congressional protocols when communicating with clients.

Cannot be relied upon to effectively represent GAO externally.

Usually:

Is at ease speaking before most groups, including congressional staff and agency officials.

Almost Always:

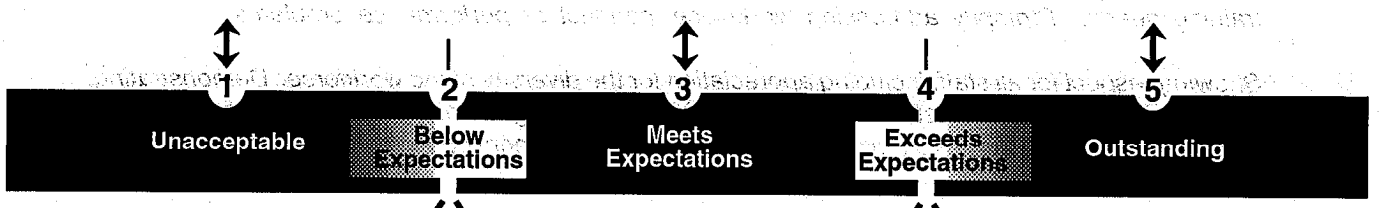
Ensures that congressional protocols are scrupulously followed in communicating with clients on all assignments.

Is a convincing speaker, who effectively represents GAO with all audiences.

Band III—Performance Standards

4. External Relations

Acting as an official liaison and representative for GAO in relations with congressional clients, agency officials, and external groups to promote understanding of GAO plans, assignments, policies, core values and professional standards. Adhering to congressional protocols governing relationships with congressional clients (effective January 2000) and ensuring that assigned staff understand and properly apply the protocols on assignments. Ensuring appropriate level of contact and knowledge sharing with congressional clients during the job cycle so as to minimize expectation gaps and misunderstandings. Maintaining a professional working relationship with executive agencies and others. As appropriate, representing GAO and its products to the media. Facilitating exchange of knowledge by participating in professional meetings, conferences, and seminars, including as a speaker. Promoting good relations with faculty, staff and students at colleges and universities.



Frequently:

Fails to adhere to the congressional protocols, or to ensure that staff understand and use the protocols.

Fails to build or maintain effective relationships with congressional clients.

Does not keep congressional clients adequately informed about assignment status.

Acts in a discourteous or unprofessional manner when interacting with agency personnel.

Does not adhere to GAO policy regarding media contacts.

Gives a poor impression of GAO by being unprepared for external meetings.

Does not facilitate idea exchange and good relations with professional associations; fails to develop or maintain contact with external experts.

Mishandles or exacerbates audit access problems.

Does not willingly participate in or support recruiting efforts.

Usually:

Adheres to congressional protocols.

Builds and maintains productive relationships with congressional clients.

Informs clients about status of GAO work at all appropriate intervals.

Develops and maintains professional relationship with agencies under review, thus facilitating the flow of information.

Acts in accordance with GAO policy on media contacts.

Is an effective representative of GAO at hearings, on panels and at other external meetings.

Facilitates idea exchange and good relations with professional associations and outside experts.

Promptly seeks guidance in dealing with audit access problems.

Participates in recruiting efforts.

Almost Always:

Has excellent grasp of the congressional protocols and is proactive in ensuring that assigned staff properly apply the protocols.

Maintains a high level of visibility and service to clients, avoiding expectation gaps and misunderstandings.

Informs clients about status of work, and displays seasoned judgement and tact when dealing with clients.

Establishes and maintains open channels of communications with agency officials and staffs from inspectors general offices.

Can be relied upon to accurately convey information to the media and adhere to GAO's policies.

Represents GAO effectively is often requested to serve as a speaker.

Maintains regular contact with professional assocations and outside experts.

Skillfully develops workable solutions to audit access problems.

Seeks out opportunities to help recruiting efforts.

Works to ensure adoption of GAO recommendations.

Band III—Performance Standards

5. Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Performance Management

Fostering a positive, professional and productive work environment reflecting a balanced approach to product, people, and client considerations. Effectively using available staff. Displaying a wide range of interpersonal skills to facilitate collegial working relationships, resolve problems and develop new approaches to successfully completing the work. Supporting and promoting teamwork and collaboration. Fostering matrix management principles through cooperation and knowledge sharing across organizational lines.

Promoting optimal staff performance through effective performance management and awards practices. Setting expectations, assessing performance in accordance with standards and providing clear, candid and constructive feedback. Recognizing contributions of individuals and teams. Assisting employees with career development and taking steps to build staff capacity by identifying training needs. Promptly addressing workplace, conduct or performance problems.

Showing respect for all staff, including appreciation for the diversity of the workforce. Demonstrating fairness in all aspects of staff management, including assignments, evaluations, rewards and recognition. Adhering to GAO policies regarding equal employment opportunity and merit principles.

Frequently:

Fails to coordinate or share knowledge with other GAO units in a timely manner, does not foster collaboration and cooperation with others.

Does not demonstrate a positive attitude or commitment to GAO's work or its staff.

Does not treat all staff fairly, courteously and professionally.

Does not contribute to, or works against, a shared understanding of job objectives, roles, and report messages.

Significantly underutilizes assigned staff.

Creates or tolerates negative unproductive workplace behaviors that detract from achieving team objectives.

Fails to set clear expectations.

Fails to give meaningful constructive feedback on performance.

Usually:

Uses teamwork effectively to meet commitments and coordinates work with others to avoid delays and conflicts.

Demonstrates a positive attitude and commitment to GAO's work and its staff.

Treats all people fairly, courteously and professionally.

Leads or facilitates meetings that bring about a shared understanding of issues, goals and objectives.

Assigns work fairly, ensuring all staff are fully utilized and the workload is balanced.

Calms tensions in conflict, listens to feedback and considers alternate points of view.

Establishes performance expectations that are clear, consistent with standards and staff roles and responsibilities.

Almost Always:

Skillfully balances product, people and client demands; creating a highly productive work environment with high morale.

Demonstrates a positive attitude and commitment to GAO's work and its staff.

Is exemplary in treating all staff in a fair, courteous and professional manner.

Demonstrates strong leadership in implementing matrix management by promoting interdisciplinary approaches, cooperation, and information sharing among units.

Motivates staff to achieve higher performance levels through coaching, feedback, training, rewards and recognition.

Is creative and proactive in dealing with interpersonal problems in the workplace.

(Continued on Next Page)

Band III—Performance Standards (Continued)

5. Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Performance Management

Frequently:

Fails to accurately distinguish among levels of performance in appraisals and awards.

Does not offer praise or recognition when deserved.

Does not provide effective on-the-job training.

Exhibits counterproductive behavior; is argumentative or confrontational.

Usually:

Monitors performance and provides clear, specific and constructive feedback.

Prepares appraisals that accurately assess performance and appropriately distinguish among levels of performance.

Offers praise and recognition when deserved.

Provides effective on-the-job training.

Almost Always:

Establishes clear expectations, revises and clarifies them as appropriate.

Monitors performance and provides clear specific, and candid feedback; suggests ways to improve performance.

Rewards and recognizes performance and contributions appropriately.

Prepares appraisals that accurately assess performance and appropriately distinguish among levels of performance.

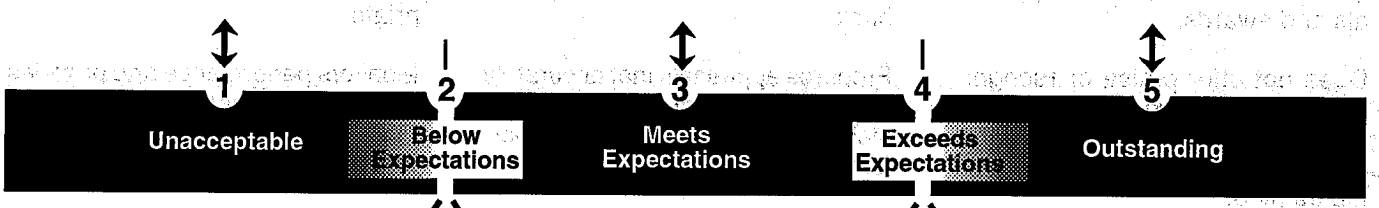
Promotes staff development by serving as a mentor and a role model.

Band III—Performance Standards

6. Organization Management

Applying GAO's core values to all facets of work and ensuring that assigned staff understand the core values and apply them in their assignments. Being well versed in GAO policies, quality dimensions, standards and work processes and keeping abreast of all major changes. Being a part of the GAO management team and supporting the agency's strategic plan, goals and objectives. Handling administrative responsibilities relating to staff management and unit management. Representing the CG in appropriate agency initiatives. Representing the agency in a variety of meetings and forums.

Implementing change. Working cooperatively in pursuit of the agency's mission. Supporting matrix management through collaborative efforts and knowledge sharing. Coordinating assignments to ensure maximum resource usage. Advising on policy and problem solving. Maintaining and enhancing own skills and subject matter knowledge. Participating in GAO corporate activities such as strategic planning, training, recruiting and college relations.



Frequently:

Fails to adhere to GAO's core values in managing work.

Fails to put forth the necessary effort to meet GAO goals and objectives.

Does not understand, or improperly applies, GAO policies and standards.

Fails to keep staff abreast of policy and organizational changes.

Resists change and does not help staff adapt to change.

Fails to contribute to the overall management of unit; fails to understand or fulfill management responsibilities.

Puts personal or local unit interests above interests of agency as a whole.

Displays negative attitude, and does not offer constructive solutions to concerns.

Refrains from participating in GAO-wide activities.

Usually:

Understands and adheres to GAO's core values in managing work.

Puts forth necessary effort to meet GAO goals and objectives.

Understands and properly applies GAO policies and standards.

Keeps staff informed about changes to policies and procedures.

Understands and supports agency goals and objectives.

Fulfills responsibilities as member of the unit management team.

Works cooperatively with managers and staff across unit lines.

Raises concerns in a constructive manner and offers potential solutions.

Participates in GAO-wide activities when requested.

Almost Always:

Leads by example in applying GAO's core values in managing and doing work.

Applies extraordinary effort to further GAO goals and objectives.

Understands, properly applies and is an excellent teacher of GAO policies/standards.

Provides high-quality, constructive, candid advice on mission and human capital issues.

Takes a leading role in helping staff understand agency goals and objectives and facilitates staff acceptance of change.

Is a role model for others aspiring to a management-level position.

Adds value to GAO products by routinely collaborating and sharing information across organizational lines.

Raises concerns in a constructive manner and works to achieve mutually agreed-upon solutions.

Actively seeks out opportunities to contribute to GAO corporate activities.

Preparing the Appraisal Form for Band I and II Staff

The rater should ensure that all necessary information is entered on GAO Form 563, "Performance Appraisal for Band I and II Employees" (see appendix II). GAO Form 563 is available on the LAN.

Instructions for completing the five parts of the form follow.

Part I: Assignment Information and Expectations Summary

Part I may be prepared by the ratee and reviewed and amended, as necessary, by the rater. It should include information on the assignment and the expectations established for the ratee as discussed below.

Assignment Information

Part I(A) should briefly describe

- the job(s), assignment(s), or project(s) covered by the appraisal or the phases in which the ratee participated and
- any unusual characteristics or particularly significant factors relating to the complexity or difficulty of the assignment, for example, deadlines, evaluation criteria, or staffing problems.

Collateral duties, such as memberships on committees, special projects, or staff activities, may be included here if they occupy a significant amount of time. However, these are more appropriately included in the ratee's "Contributions and Accomplishments Statement" (GAO Form 223).

Expectations Summary

Part I(B) should summarize the expectations for the ratee's role and responsibilities and major work products, such as plans, summaries, questionnaires, reports, report chapters, or testimonies.

Part II: Assessment of Job Dimensions

In Part II, the rater provides information on the ratee's performance during the appraisal period on seven dimensions.

- Planning
- Data Gathering and Documentation
- Data Analysis
- Written Communication
- Oral Communication

- Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity
- Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling (Band I Developmental Level excepted)

Using the appropriate performance standards, the rater evaluates the ratee's performance in the relevant job dimension, using one of five performance levels: (1) Unacceptable, (2) Below Expectations, (3) Meets Expectations, (4) Exceeds Expectations, and (5) Outstanding. Performance standards and guidance for evaluating performance are detailed in chapter 3.

Part III: Rater's Assessment of Performance

In Part III, the rater provides a summary narrative covering performance and major accomplishments as well as dimension-specific assessment of the ratee's performance for any dimension rated other than Meets Expectations. One side of one page may be attached for continuing the narrative and a 12-pitch font should be used.

Part IV: Signatures

The ratee, the rater, and the reviewer should sign the appraisal form in the spaces provided. Additionally, the ratee's, the rater's and the reviewer's typed names and Band/SES should also appear on the form.

Part V: Ratee Comments

See chapter 1 for details.

Preparing the Appraisal Form for Band III Staff

The rater should ensure that all necessary information is entered on GAO Form 175, "Performance Appraisal for Band III Employees" (see appendix III). GAO Form 175 is available on the LAN.

Instructions for completing the seven parts of the form follow.

Part I: Description of Work/Duties/ Responsibilities/ Expectations

Part I may be completed by the ratee and reviewed and amended as necessary by the rater. A summary of the expectations, including the ratee's role and responsibilities and expected work products, is to be included. Information regarding the type of work, duties, and responsibilities of the ratee during the appraisal period should be included in this section. Appropriate information includes

- the ratee's overall assignment objectives, role in the unit, and workload (number of jobs);
- complexity of assignment(s) undertaken;
- number of staff supervised;
- number of or key agencies affected;
- degree of supervision received; and
- unique characteristics of individual assignments or area(s) of responsibility.

Collateral duties, such as memberships on committees, special projects, or staff activities, may be included here if they occupy a significant amount of time. However, they are more appropriately included in the ratee's "Contributions and Accomplishments Statement" (GAO Form 223).

Part II: Major Results/ Accomplishments Achieved

The ratee may complete Part II, or attach GAO Form 223 instead of completing Part II.

In completing Part II, the ratee should identify the major results or accomplishments achieved during the appraisal period and explain their importance or impact. There is no limitation on the number of accomplishments that can be listed; however, the information must not exceed the space provided. It is recommended that only major accomplishments be listed. The accomplishments do not necessarily have to relate to a specific job dimension or to an established expectation. For example, an accomplishment might relate to a collateral

duty that may not be clearly addressed in any other part of the appraisal. The narrative explaining the significance of each accomplishment is more important than the number of accomplishments listed.

Part III: Assessment of Job Dimensions

In Part III, the rater provides information on the ratee's performance during the appraisal period on six dimensions.

- Planning
- Project Implementation
- Communications
- External Relations
- Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Performance Management
- Organization Management

Since Band III duties vary widely, instances may occur when a Band III ratee performs in a dimension that has not been specified. In this instance, the duties should be specified and appraised under other. This dimension, however, is to be used only to appraise the performance of a ratee assigned special or unusual duties. This dimension should be agreed to when expectations are set at the start of the appraisal period or when the special or unusual duties are assigned. Space is provided on GAO Form 175 for rating other, specified dimensions.

Using the performance standards, the rater evaluates the ratee's performance in the relevant job dimension, using one of five performance levels: (1) Unacceptable, (2) Below Expectations, (3) Meets Expectations, (4) Exceeds Expectations, and (5) Outstanding. Performance standards and guidance for evaluating performance are detailed in chapter 3.

Part IV: Rater's Assessment of Performance

In Part IV, the rater provides summary narrative covering overall performance and major accomplishments as well as a dimension-specific assessment of the ratee's performance for any dimension rated other than "Meets Expectations." One side of one page may be attached for continuing the narrative and a 12-pitch font should be used.

Part V: Signatures

The ratee, the rater, and the reviewer should sign the appraisal form in the spaces provided. Additionally, the ratee's, the rater's, and the reviewer's typed names and Band/SES should also appear on the form.

Part VI: Ratee Comments

See chapter 1 for details.

GAO Form 209, Expectation-Setting Record

United States General Accounting Office

Expectation Setting Record

Instructions: This form must be used to confirm that the ratee has been informed about, and understands, the following matters:

1. **Assignment expectations (such as roles, responsibilities, outputs and timeframes.)**
2. **Job Dimensions and Performance Standards to be used in evaluating performance (see the job dimensions and performance standards as set forth in the performance appraisal manual.)**
3. **How individual efforts support GAO's core values, strategic objectives and goals.**

Chapter 1 of the Performance Appraisal System for Band I, II, and III Employees provides further guidance on setting expectations.

Date(s) Expectations Set	Employee's Signature	Supervisor's Signature

Optional (Summary of Expectations)

OPR:Pers

GAO Form 209 (Rev. 12/99)
Previous editions obsolete

GAO Form 563, Performance Appraisal for Band I and II Employees

United States General Accounting Office

Performance Appraisal for Band I and II Employees

GAO
Accountability * Integrity * Reliability

1. Name	2. Band	3. Division/Office

4. Rating Period	5. Total Staff Days
From: To:	

Part I(A) Assignment Information: Describe, (1) job title(s), code(s), summary of assignment(s) objectives; and (2) any unusual job characteristics or factors of complexity.

Part I(B) Summary of Ratee's Expectations: Describe ratee's role and expectations for the assignment/period.

Part II. Assessment of Job Dimensions Review the Performance Appraisal System Manual for the performance standards. Place a check in box that best describes ratee's performance. Narrative must be provided in part III.

Job Dimensions	No Basis for Evaluation	Unacceptable	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Outstanding
Planning						
Data Gathering and Documentation						
Data Analysis						
Written Communication						
Oral Communication						
Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Equal Opportunity						
Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling						

(GAO Order 2430.1) GAO Form 563 (Rev. 12/99)

Part III. Rater's Assessment of Performance. Summary and dimension-specific narrative as appropriate. One additional page may be added.

Part IV. Signatures

	Name (typed)	Band	Signature	Unit	Date
Rater					
Reviewer					
Ratee					

The signature of the rater and ratee indicate that the appraisal has been discussed and the ratee was counseled on his/her performance. By signing, the ratee does not necessarily indicate agreement with the appraisal.

Part V. Ratee Comments (optional): Additional pages may be added.

GAO Form 563 (Rev. 12/99)

GAO Form 175, Performance Appraisal for Band III Employees

United States General Accounting Office

Performance Appraisal for Band III Employees

GAO
Accountability * Integrity * Reliability

1. Name	2. Position Title
3. Division/Office	4. Rating Period From: To:

Part I. Description of Work/Duties/Responsibilities/Expectations:

Part II. Major Results/Accomplishments Achieved: (GAO Form 223 may be attached in lieu of this section.)

Part III. Assessment of Dimensions:

Job Dimensions	No Basis for Evaluation	Unacceptable	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Outstanding
Planning						
Project Implementation						
Communications						
External Relations						
Teamwork, Working Relationships, and Performance Management						
Organization Management						
Other (Specify.)						

(GAO Order 2430.1) GAO Form 175 (Rev. 12/99)

Part IV. Rater's Assessment of Performance: Summary and dimension-specific narrative as appropriate. One additional page may be added.

Part V. Signatures

	Name (typed)	Band	Signature	Unit	Date
Rater					
Reviewer					
Ratee					

The signature of the rater and ratee indicate that the appraisal has been discussed and the ratee was counseled on his/her performance. By signing, the ratee does not necessarily indicate agreement with the appraisal.

Part VI. Ratee Comments (optional): Additional pages may be added

GAO Form 175 (Rev. 12/99)