

GAO

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**How to Prepare
and Deliver
Performance
Appraisals for
Band I and II Staff**

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INTRODUCTION

How to Prepare and Deliver Performance Appraisals for Bands I and II Staff is designed to help raters prepare complete, accurate and high quality appraisals. It consists of:

- working papers to help raters prepare appraisals.
- a checklist to complete before submitting a draft appraisal to a reviewer and
- a refresher on techniques for feedback and coaching that can be used in delivering appraisals to staff.

A copy of GAO Form 563, Performance Appraisal for Band I and II Employees is included as an appendix.

A microcomputer version of this guide is available upon request. See page 2 for whom to contact.

PREPARING THE APPRAISAL

Overview

This set of working papers was designed to help you (a rater) complete parts I, II, and III of the Performance Appraisal for Band I and II Employees.

Think of these working papers as you would those on an assignment in which you are assembling information on a subject that you will summarize for publication as a short report.

As is the case with a report, an appraisal has criteria by which to judge its quality and is reviewed by management before it is finalized. Completing these working papers should help you prepare an appraisal(s) that will be approved by a reviewer.

Materials Needed

Before you start to complete the working papers have available

- the manual Performance Appraisal System for Bands I and II Employees;
- any local guidance on preparing performance appraisals,
- notes/documents accumulated on the assignment(s) during the appraisal cycle that will help document a staff member's performance, and
- the expectations set for the assignment(s).

DELIVERING THE APPRAISAL

Once you have prepared an appraisal and gone through the review process, you are ready to deliver it to the staff member. GAO's training program on feedback and coaching covers a number of skills for delivering appraisals. The last part of this guide discusses some of these skills.

ASSISTANCE WITH THE GUIDE

Direct any questions about the guide, the microcomputer version of the guide, or related matters to Dave Thompson or John McGrath, Personnel.

WORKING PAPERS FOR PREPARING PART I

Part I(A) Assemble Assignment Information. Complete the following for each assignment to be included on the appraisal.

1. Job code and assignment title

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2. Synopsis of the assignment. Include the objectives, where appropriate.

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3. Unusual job complexity/difficulty factors. Examples are deadlines, evaluation criteria, or staffing problems.

[Empty box for providing examples of unusual job complexity/difficulty factors.]

4. Collateral duties. Include these only if a significant amount of time is involved. The employee would normally include this information on the Contributions and Accomplishments Statement (GAO Form 223) for pay for performance. Examples of collateral duties are serving as a recruiter, a training instructor, an employee council member, or task force member.

[Empty box for providing examples of collateral duties.]

Using the information assembled in the above steps, write a draft of Part I.

(Please note that for the exercise more space is provided than is allowed on the GAO Form 563. Refer to the appendix for the actual space allowed on the form.)

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.

Review the Part I(A) draft and revise as needed.

- Is the nature of the job or the assignment understandable from the description provided?
- Does the write-up provide a basis for understanding the relative difficulty or complexity of the ratee's work or role?
- Are all relevant factors included?

Part I(B) Summary of Ratee's Expectations. Describe ratee's role and summarize expectations for assignment or rating period.

Example: Ms. Jones was the EIC on a three-region congressional request to review Navy requirements for acoustic processors. She was expected to prepare and process the final report on Navy requirements in time for the Committee to use for hearings on April 15. In addition, she was expected to supervise three developmental level staff members and coordinate the activities and the products submitted by the regional offices for the final report.

(Please note that for the exercise more space is provided than is allowed on the GAO Form 563. Refer to the appendix for the actual space allowed on the form.)

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

Review the Part I(B) draft and revise as needed.

- Is the ratee's role clear?
- Is it clear what the ratee was expected to do during the assignment (e.g., tasks, products, milestones, deadlines)?
- Does the narrative merely repeat the description of the assignment, which should be covered in Part I(A)?

WORKING PAPERS FOR PREPARING PART II

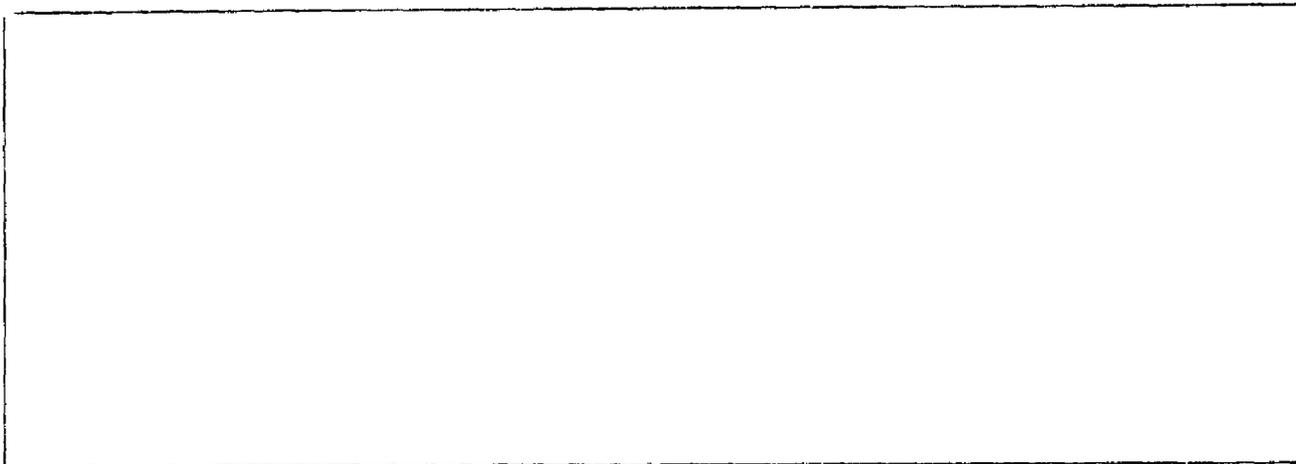
Assemble Assessment of Job Dimensions Information for Part II.

1. Select relevant dimensions. Determine which job dimensions are relevant by scanning the Dimension Definitions and Task List (app. II of the bands I/II manual), any written expectations and supervisory notes and by consulting with subordinate supervisors (if any) and the ratee to determine if the individual was involved in a dimension.
2. Summarize performance notes on the relevant job dimensions. Summarize the ratee's performance (execution of tasks, behaviors, or products) from observations, memory joggers, documents, etc., for the relevant dimensions. Refer to the task list for relevant tasks in each dimension.

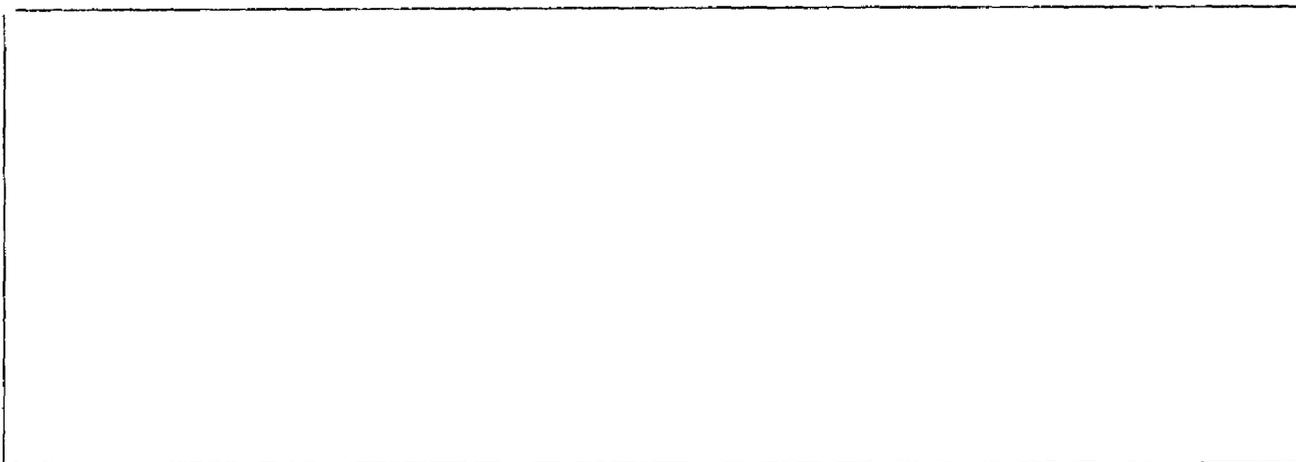
Planning tasks, behaviors or products

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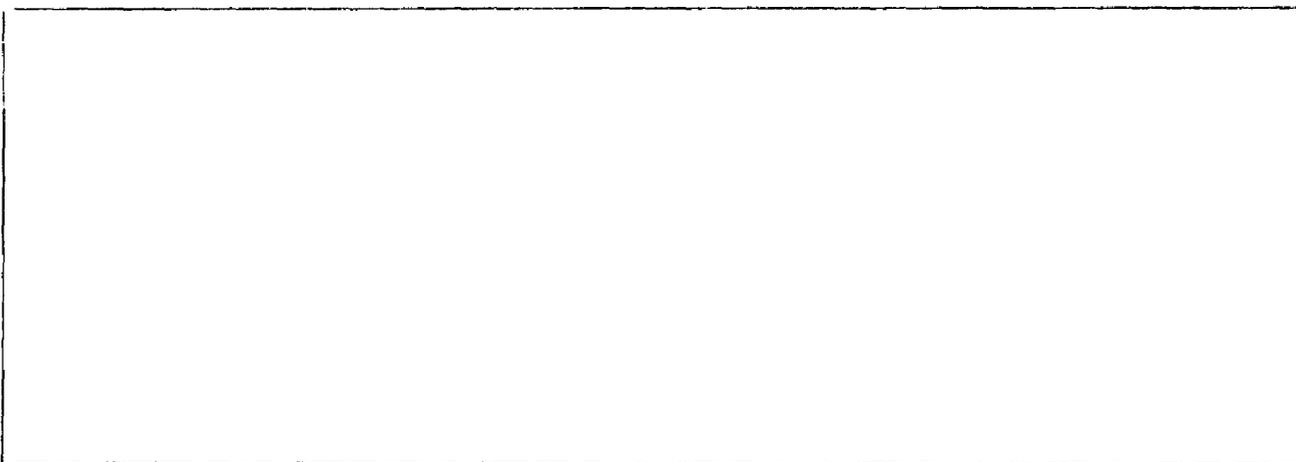
Data Gathering and Documentation tasks, behaviors or products



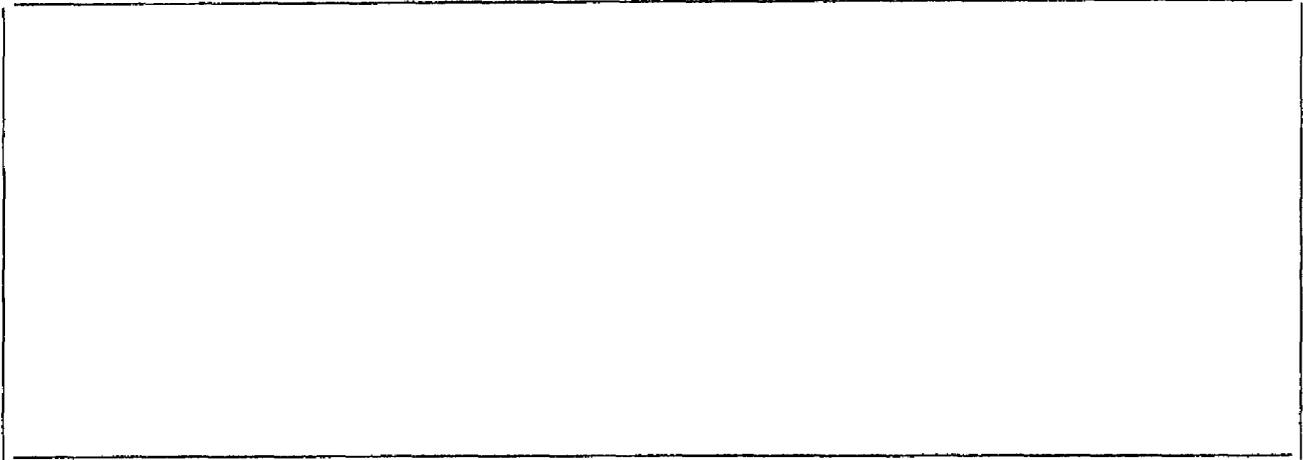
Data Analysis tasks, behaviors or products



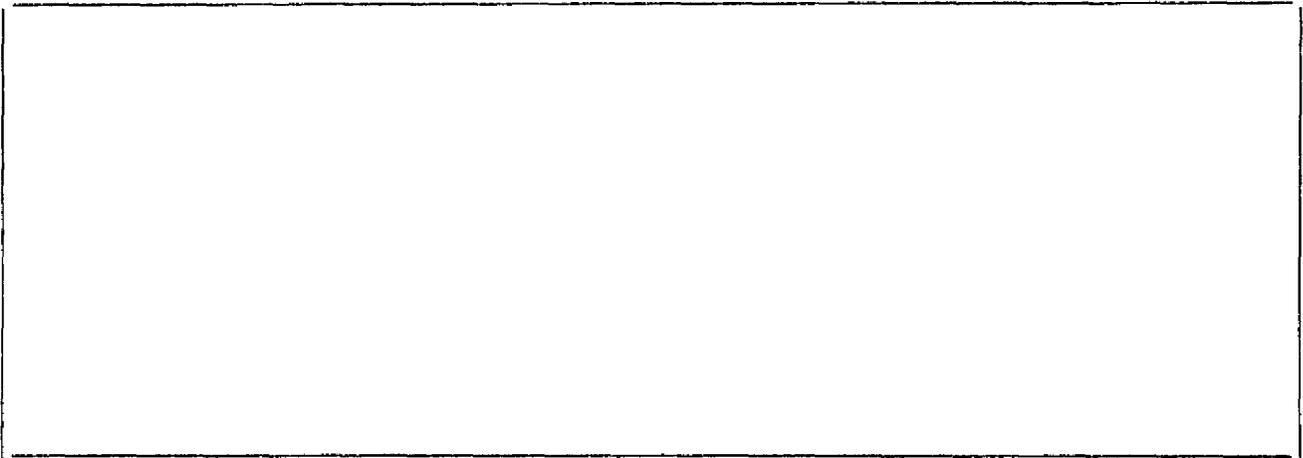
Written Communication tasks, behaviors or products



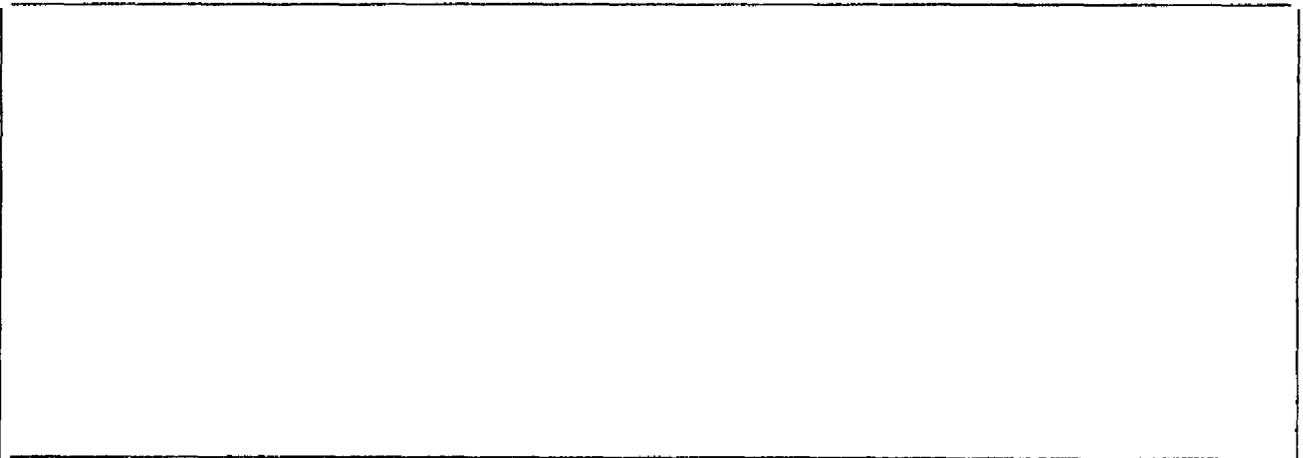
Oral Communication tasks, behaviors or products



Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity tasks, behaviors or products



Supervision, Appraisal and Counseling tasks, behaviors or products



3. Review the standards and decide on level of performance. Using the notes above, compare what was done and how well with the Performance Standards (apps. IV and V of the bands I/II manual). When deciding the final check mark rating for each dimension, read the Fully Successful standard first. If predominant performance is not Fully Successful, then read the Exceptional standard and the Unacceptable standard to determine if predominant performance is at either of those levels. If predominant performance is not at those levels, then either the Superior or Borderline rating is appropriate.

Enter check marks in the appropriate boxes of Part II.

On the basis of the preceding steps, check the appropriate box in each relevant dimension. If a dimension is not relevant to the ratee, mark the "No Basis for Evaluation" category.

PART II - ASSESSMENT OF JOB DIMENSIONS						
JOB DIMENSIONS	No Basis	JOB DIMENSION ASSESSMENT				
		U	B	FS	SUP	EX
Planning						
Data gathering and documentation						
Data analysis						
Written communication						
Oral communication						
Working relationships, teamwork, and equal opportunity						
Supervision, appraisal, and counseling						

Double check support for all ratings. Revise as needed.

Check the performance notes for each dimension in step 2 above against the Performance Standards to be sure that the notes support the level of the block you have checked. Remember you will need these notes in preparing the narrative justification in part III. (If you are using the microcomputer version, print out your notes now before proceeding to the next section.)

WORKING PAPERS FOR PREPARING PART III

Assemble Individual Accomplishments and Justification for Appraisal Information for Part III

Compare expectations with accomplishments and qualitative performance. Start by drafting narrative for each dimension (refer to your notes from part II of the guide to help in finalizing the narrative for part III of the appraisal form). You should (1) consider what expectations were set at the outset, (2) compare **what** the ratee accomplished with the expectations, and (3) describe **how well** the ratee performed the tasks, contributions or accomplishments.

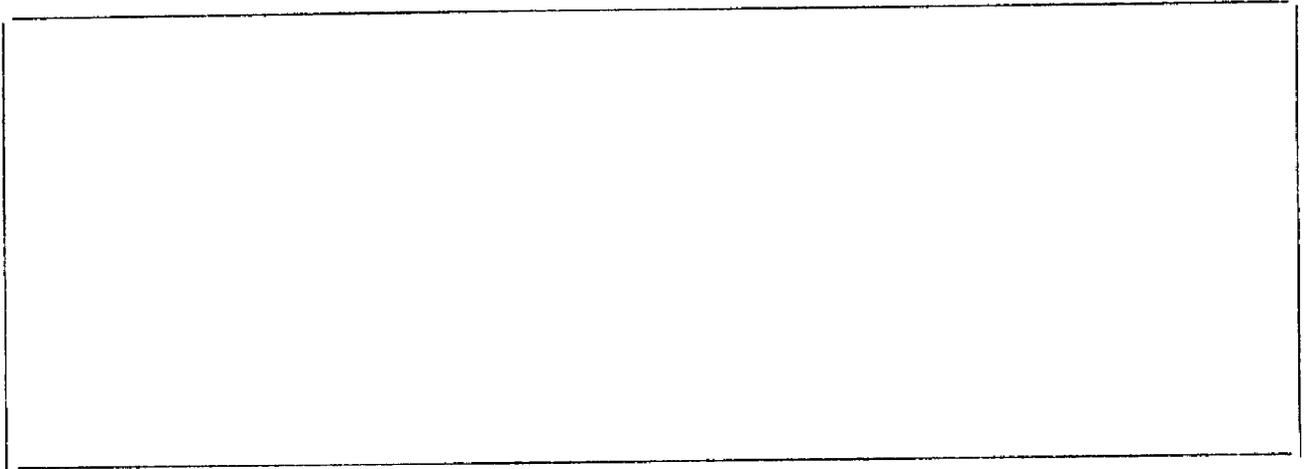
Example: Written Communication: Lee wrote two draft report chapters that addressed every issue in the work plan and allowed for easy indexing of the supporting work. For example, indexing chapters 2 and 3 took about one-third less time than anticipated. Also, there were almost no referencing points on these two chapters that could be attributed to indexing. All written products were simple and clear, including those addressing technical issues, as exhibited by the explanation of the graphs in chapter 2. Lee's conclusions were logical and convincing.

Using information from the steps above, draft your final part III narrative in the space provided on the following pages.

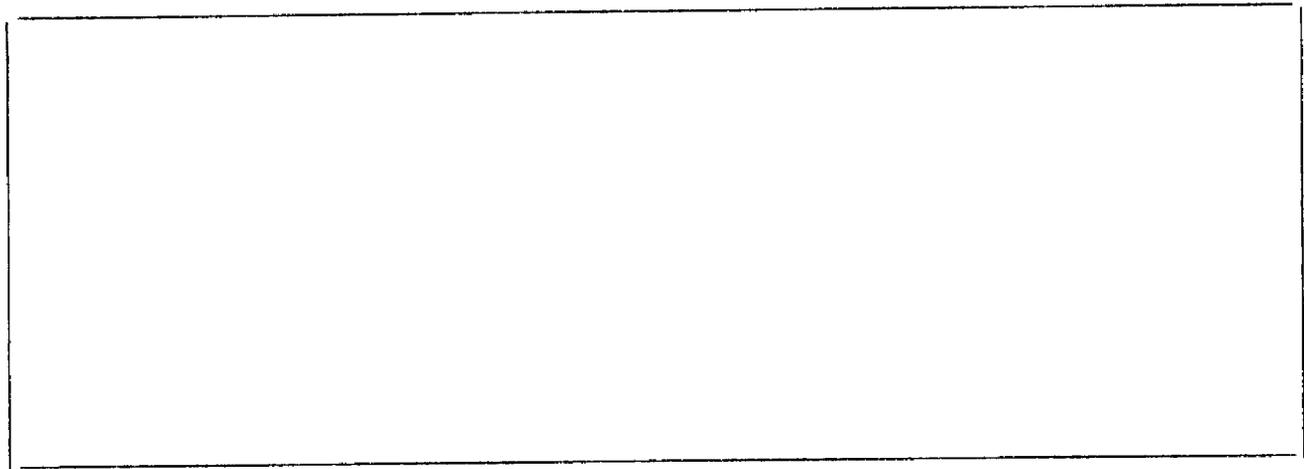
Part III - Document Individual Accomplishments and Justification
for Appraisal

INSTRUCTIONS: **Under side captions for each dimension,
**Cite individual accomplishments (contributions,
products, participation);
**Provide a narrative basis for each check mark; and
**Document performance trends.

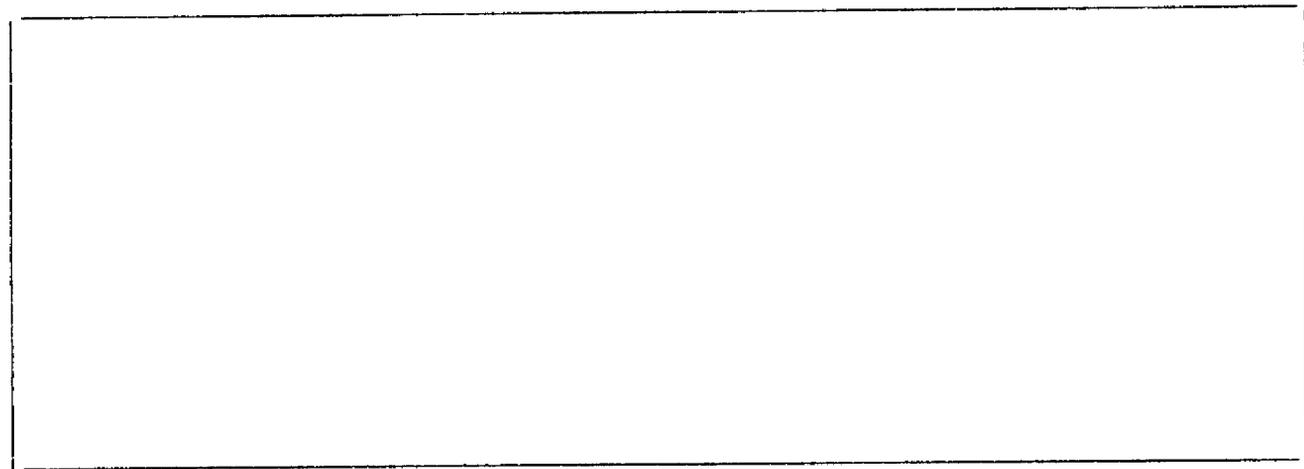
Planning



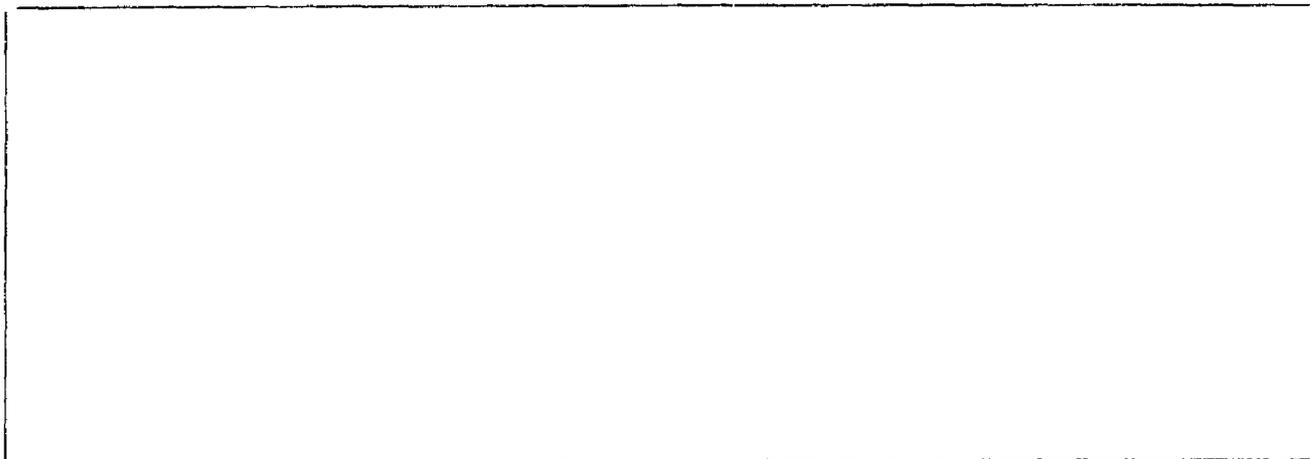
Data Gathering and Documentation



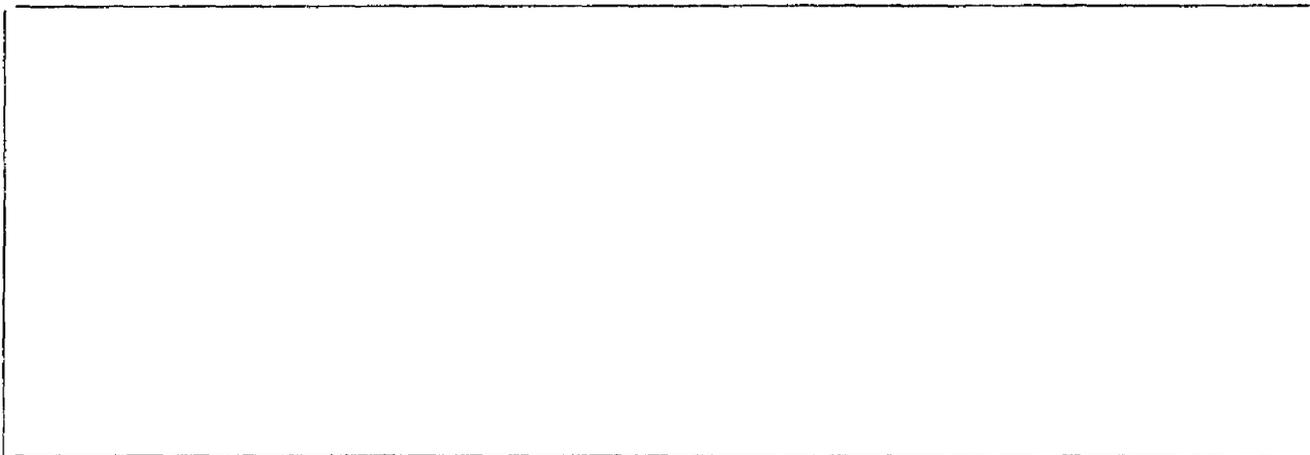
Data Analysis



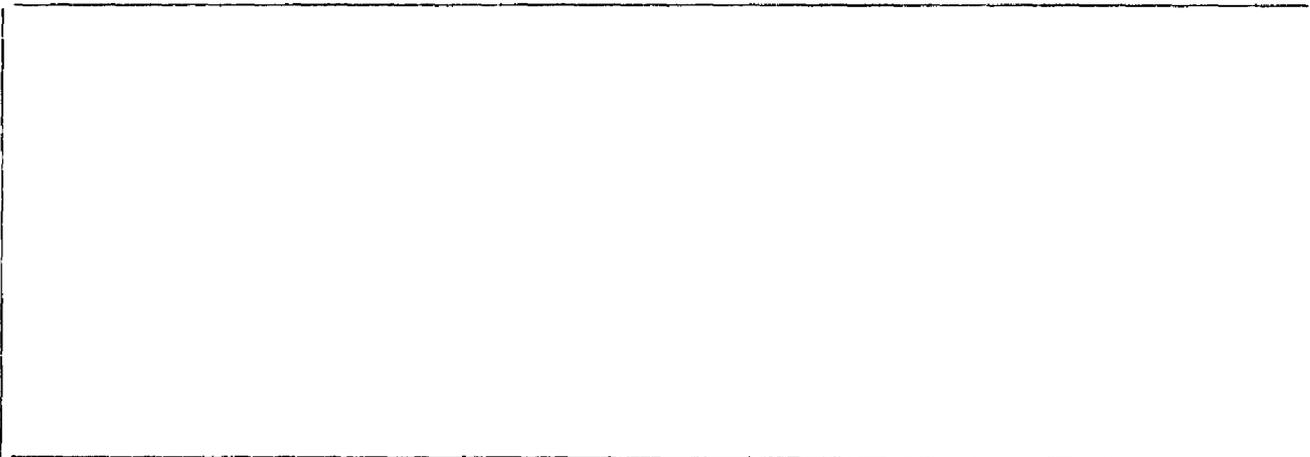
Written Communication

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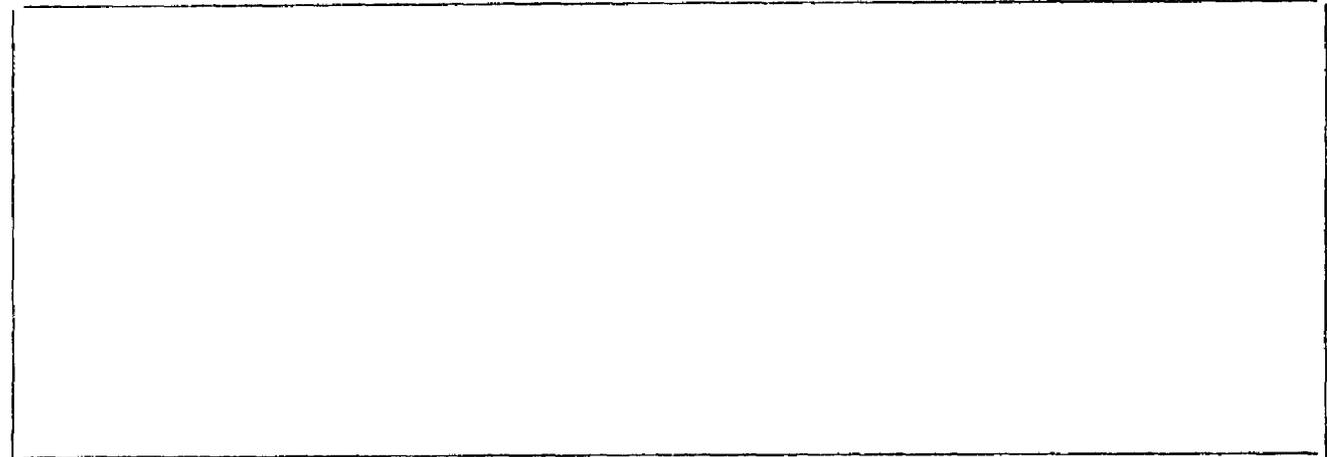
Oral Communication

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for handwritten or typed notes related to the 'Oral Communication' section.

Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for handwritten or typed notes related to the 'Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity' section.

Supervision, Appraisal and Counseling



Review the Part III draft using the following questions to test its quality. Revise as needed.

- Is there narrative for each dimension rated? Remember that appraisal narrative is now required for each dimension rated, not just dimensions rated above or below Fully Successful.
- Have you discussed the accomplishments of the ratee, rather than the outcomes of the job to which the employee did not directly contribute?
- Where the ratee's accomplishments exceeded expectations, have you provided specifics about how much or how well?
- Are there specific examples of relevant behaviors cited for each dimension rated? Is there convincing support for all ratings?
- Does the narrative avoid the following common mistakes?
 1. Narrative justification reads the same for the Fully Successful, Superior, and Exceptional levels of performance (i.e., the differences between these levels described in the standards are not addressed).
 2. There is incomplete elaboration within each dimension, or the dimensions overlap. Examples follow.
 - a. "Planning" addresses only written plans or does not tie planning to results.

- b. "Data Collection" concentrates on planning to obtain the data and methods of data collection but fails to address what data was collected and what obstacles were overcome in doing so.
- c. "Data Analysis" concentrates on the methods used to collect the data and omits the techniques and the skills applied in evaluating the data and arriving at findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
- d. "Oral Communication" describes team interaction, which should be covered under "Working Relationships."
- e. "Working Relationships" repeats or overlaps with "Oral Communication" or concentrates only on equal opportunity issues and omits positive work interaction and teamwork which are also major components of this dimension.
- f. "Supervision" focuses on planning the work and overlooks the central focus of the dimension, i.e., managing and motivating people to get the job done.

-- Can the appraisal still hold up using the following common reviewer tests?

1. Read each dimension narrative in part III without looking at the check mark rating it supports; then match it with the check mark in part II.
2. Can you accurately determine the check mark placement from the content of the narrative?

SKILLS FOR DELIVERING APPRAISALS

After the appraisal has been completed and reviewed, you need to schedule a formal counseling session to discuss the basis of the appraisal with the employee and to communicate the strengths and areas needing improvement.

The skills needed to carry out a formal session are covered in the GAO training course on feedback and coaching. An additional resource is the Office of Counseling and Career Development's booklet Dealing with Difficult Situations (July 1989). The following is a summary of some of the most important points and techniques from the feedback and coaching course.

DEFINITIONS

"Feedback" means providing information to staff about their performance on assigned tasks compared with expectations. It answers the question: "How has the staff member done?" Its main purpose is to support or reinforce performance or indicate a need to improve it.

"Coaching" means identifying ways for staff to improve performance.

HOW-TO GUIDE

The following steps highlight how to conduct feedback and coaching sessions.

Feedback

1. State Purpose: Be direct: "I want to talk about your write-ups of interviews." Don't create mixed messages--Be specific and identify the task(s) or behavior(s) to be addressed.
2. State the Performance Issue: Describe the expected performance, the actual performance, and the effects of the performance on the job.
3. Get Reaction From Staff Member: Ask the person to react. Keep the discussion to the expectations and the identified behaviors. Ask: "Did you have the same understanding of what was expected?" "Do you agree with my perception of your performance?"

Coaching

4. Seek a Collaborative Solution (If Possible): Ask the staff member for ideas as to how to resolve problems or differences of opinion. Consider all ideas. Be patient. If the staff member does not have viable ideas, offer your course of action and ask for the staff member's reaction. Summarize the specific course of action that will be implemented.

5. Assist and Follow Up: Identify the assistance you will give, and get the staff member's input. Identify what each of you will do for follow-up and future review of performance. (Note: In regions, follow-up may be the responsibility of an individual other than the current supervisor.)

FEEDBACK AND COACHING CHECKLIST

This checklist is provided to help you prepare for and carry out effective feedback and coaching, as well as to prepare for a formal appraisal session.

- _____ Give the staff member adequate notice, allowing ample time for both of you to prepare.
- _____ Hold the session in a private setting.
- _____ Use factual information and ask open-ended, probing questions.
- _____ Address the staff member's expectations.
- _____ Address both effective performance and areas for improvement.
- _____ Encourage input from the staff member.
- _____ Encourage self-evaluation.
- _____ Respect the dignity and the opinions of the staff member.
- _____ Focus on the specific desired result(s) of any improvement needed.
- _____ Involve the staff member in analyzing any concern/problem you discuss, and have the staff member define it in his/her own words.
- _____ Define and focus upon the specific behavior(s) causing the concern/problem.
- _____ Involve the staff member in clarifying the specific behavior(s) underlying the concern/problem.
- _____ Work with the staff member to identify ways to improve any identified deficient behavior(s) and specify a schedule for this to happen.
- _____ End on a positive note. Make a strong effort to motivate the staff member.

GAO Form 563, End-of-Assignment/Period Performance Appraisal for
Band I and II Employees

GAO

End-of-Assignment/Period Performance Appraisal for Band I and II Employees

1. Name	2. Band	3. Division/Office/Region		
4. Rating Period From: To:	5. Total Staff Days	6. Date(s) Expectations Set	7. Date(s) of Progress Review	

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-Assesment of Job Dimensions: Review the Performance Appraisal System Manual for Band I and II Employees for relevant tasks and 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	Borderline	Fully Successful	Superior	Exceptional
Planning						
Data Gathering and Documentation						
Data Analysis						
Written Communication						
Oral Communication						
Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity						
Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling						

Part III - Document Individual Accomplishments and Justification for Appraisal: Under side captions for each job dimension, cite individual accomplishments (i.e., contributions, products, participation) and provide narrative basis for each check mark in part II. Document performance trends. (One additional page may be added for narrative which exceeds space in part III.)

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)

Yes (see attached) No
