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# Performance Appraisal System for Band I and II Employees

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# Introduction

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## Purpose of the Performance Appraisal System

This appraisal system's primary purpose is to provide a systematic and uniform method to evaluate job performance of GAO Evaluators and Evaluator-related specialists in Bands I and II on the basis of job-related criteria. Additionally, the system should be used to

- help employees understand their responsibilities and their relationship to organization goals;
- advise employees of the level of performance expected of them;
- provide periodic feedback to employees on how well they are meeting expectations and coach them in improving performance;
- help employees set career goals;
- provide a basis for personnel actions, such as training, promotions, and pay; and
- recognize and help to deal with performance problems.

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## Supersession

This manual supersedes the Evaluator/Auditor/Specialist Performance Appraisal System Manual issued by the Personnel Systems Development Project in 1984.

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<b>Appendices</b>		
	Appendix I: Expectation-Setting Checklist	30
	Appendix II: Role Definitions for Employees in Band I and II	31
	Appendix III: Job Dimension Definitions and Task List	35
	Appendix IV: Job Dimension Performance Standards for Band I	60
	Appendix V: Job Dimension Performance Standards for Band II	83
	Appendix VI: GAO Form 563, End of Assignment/Period Performance Appraisal for Band I and II Employees	106
<b>Index</b>		108

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**Abbreviations**

ADP	Automated Data Processing
EO	Equal Opportunity
FAL	Firm Assignment List
GAO	General Accounting Office
OCR	Office of Congressional Relations
OJT	On-the-Job Training

# The Performance Management Cycle

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This chapter discusses the main objectives of each phase of the performance management cycle and methodology for attaining them. The phases are (1) Setting Expectations, (2) Monitoring Performance, Feedback and Coaching, and (3) Performance Appraisal Preparation and Counseling.

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## Setting Expectations

Expectation setting is a key element in performance management. Performance expectations include what an employee will do, by when and how well. The components of what and by when are usually determined by the work assigned to the employee. The how well component is in reference to the written performance standards in this manual. Specifically, staff should understand:

- what responsibilities are being assigned,
- what outputs are expected and what they are expected to contain or cover,
- when the outputs are expected to be delivered, and
- that, at a minimum, they should be able to perform at the Fully Successful level as described in the performance standards in this manual (all employees should be thoroughly familiar with the Performance Standards in app. IV and V).

Expectation setting is not an administrative exercise—expectation setting and performance coaching are an ongoing process. If expectations are set at a point in the job when product, product time frames, scope of assignments, etc., are not yet known, supervisors should try to define expectations to the extent possible. Expectations may be either verbal or written, although a written summary must be included in Part I of the appraisal form. Verbal or written expectations should be reexamined periodically by the ratees and the persons who set them. They should be revised when circumstances negate or substantially modify prior agreements. Supervisory discretion should be used to determine when and how changes need to be documented.

Expectations should be discussed with employees in a sufficiently formal setting, such as a meeting, where staff are aware that performance expectations are being established.

When setting expectations, supervisors should solicit input from the staff and consider the staff's goals and expectations. Particularly with developmental staff, supervisors should consider the full performance definition and compare individual developmental needs with that definition when setting expectations.

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Note: Appendix I contains an Expectation-Setting Checklist that should be used to guide expectation setting and to monitor changes requiring modified expectations.

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## Using This Manual to Set Expectations

### Band Role Definitions

Appendix II summarizes typical duties for each band. Staff are responsible for being familiar with the responsibilities applicable to their bands.

### Job Dimension Definitions and Task List

Appendix III defines the seven critical job dimensions of Evaluator and Evaluator-related specialist work:

- Planning;
- Data Gathering and Documentation;
- Data Analysis;
- Written Communication;
- Oral Communication;
- Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity; and
- Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling.

Each dimension definition is supplemented with a list of tasks typical for most staff members in each band (app. III). Staff are responsible for being familiar with the tasks which are typical for their bands.

### Performance Standards.

Appendices IV and V provide dimension performance standards. These standards must be used to set expectations for quality, timeliness, thoroughness, extent of supervision etc. and for use by raters in appraising employees on each dimension. When establishing these qualitative or “how well” expectations, it is important to read the Performance Standards beginning with those for the Fully Successful level.

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### When Documenting Expectations May Be Appropriate

Ratees must clearly understand expectations. Even though GAO has not prescribed the exact manner for communicating expectations, that is, whether expectations should be written or verbal, there may be instances when written expectations are needed to ensure a clear understanding of what is expected. For example, written expectations are

helpful when (1) staff are new, (2) assignments involve a large number of tasks, (3) priorities or time frames for completing specific work segments vary considerably, or (4) seeking to correct and improve performance deficiencies. In such instances, assignment plans and/or audit programs can often be annotated with little additional effort to document expectations. The specific method used to communicate expectations is left to the discretion of the unit head. In the cases of developmental staff, upward mobility staff, intercareer developmental staff, and cooperative education students, written expectations are encouraged.

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## Monitoring Performance, Feedback and Coaching

Once expectations are established, supervisors must monitor performance and periodically provide feedback to subordinates on how well they are doing. Monitoring not only keeps staff members apprised of their performance, but also assists them in developing, maintaining, or improving their skills. Moreover, such activity can also positively impact assignments by indicating when employees are ready for increased responsibility or by identifying and correcting problems.

When monitoring performance, supervisors are encouraged to keep brief anecdotal notes on all subordinates reflecting both positive accomplishments and instances where developmental needs are present. This effort will facilitate more accurate and complete performance appraisals. In addition, supervisors should not wait until the end of the appraisal period to provide feedback and coaching. A number of techniques can be used, ranging from day-to-day discussion to formal periodic feedback sessions. Feedback should be provided often enough to allow the subordinates to know how well they are performing, what their strengths and weaknesses are, and coaching provided to improve performance. At least one formal review of expectations and the progress displayed in meeting them before the assignment is completed is anticipated unless circumstances, e.g. duration of the job, etc. dictates otherwise. Scheduling this session at the mid-point of the assignment is suggested. Such a review ensures a clear understanding of expectations and the progress toward meeting them.

However, feedback is not solely the responsibility of supervisors. Subordinates also are responsible for actively seeking and being receptive to feedback. Positive feedback will reinforce good performance. On the other hand, if performance is not up to expectations, the earlier staff find out, the greater the likelihood that they will be able to correct problems.

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## Performance Appraisal (Preparation and Counseling)

The supervisor must complete the appraisal form, either at the end of the assignment or annually (or, in the case of developmental staff, once during each six months); submit it for review by the designated reviewer; and then hold a face-to-face counseling session to communicate the basis for the appraisal. Counseling should address both the employee's strengths and areas of needed improvement and should be specific enough for the employee to respond with any pertinent facts that the rater may need to consider; otherwise, the appraisal is considered to be final. The normal expectation is that the ratee will not be surprised by the appraisal since ongoing discussions should have been taking place during the course of the assignment or the appraisal period.

A detailed discussion of the proper way to prepare the appraisal form is in chapter 2 of this manual. A further discussion of the role of the reviewing official is in chapter 3.

# Preparing Performance Appraisal Form 563

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The End-of-Assignment/Period Performance Appraisal for Band I and II Employees (GAO Form 563) records performance data and consists of five parts. (See app. VI.)

No comments on the rater's assessment of the promotion potential of the ratee are allowed on this form. Instructions for supervisors to follow in completing the form are given below.

Record staff-days spent on the assignment during the current assessment year in block 5 of the form and the date(s) expectations were set or modified in block 6. Record the date of progress review(s) in block 7.

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## Part I: Assignment Information and Expectations Summary

Part I includes information on the assignment and the expectations established for the ratee.

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### Assignment Information

In sub-part (A), briefly describe (1) the job(s), assignment(s), or project(s) covered by the appraisal or the phases in which the ratee participated, and (2) any unusual characteristics of the assignment (e.g., factors of complexity, originality, or sensitivity).

The narrative should highlight any particularly significant factors relating to the complexity or difficulty of the assignment (e.g., deadlines, evaluation criteria, or staffing problems). Also, credit for performing higher-level work should always be documented in part I.

Collateral duties (e.g., memberships on committees, special projects, or staff activities) may be included here if they occupy a significant amount of time but, more appropriately, should be included in the Contributions and Accomplishments Statement (GAO Form 223) for pay for performance.

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### Expectations Summary

In sub-part (B), record a summary of the expectations set for the employee describing the ratee's role and responsibilities and major work products expected to be produced (e.g., evaluation plans, questionnaires, reports, report chapters, or testimony). Examples of summaries of expectations follow:

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### Expectations Summary for a Band I, Full Performance Employee

Mr. Smith was the regional site senior on the review of the 1990 Decennial Census Personnel Requirements (job code 018332). He was responsible for conducting and coordinating the work in the region and assisting the EIC in headquarters in developing the assignment plan for implementation. Mr. Smith was expected to: develop a methodology for identifying the extent and the causes of staffing difficulties in a selected sample of the Census's temporary decennial district offices by December 15; draft the task analyses segment of the assignment plan 2 weeks prior to the end of planning milestone date; and ensure that all workpapers were properly prepared and indexed to facilitate analysis.

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### Expectations Summaries for Band II Employees

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 products of the regional offices into the final report.

Mr. Lopez was the issue area coordinator responsible for all law enforcement work in the region. He was expected to develop issues, ideas, and resource requirements for new assignments into an issue area plan for the region. In addition, he was expected to coordinate 6 ongoing assignments with the issue area Director/Assistant Directors in GGD. He was also the EIC on a review of employer sanctions implementation as required in the immigration reform legislation. He was expected to prepare testimony on the results of the annual evaluation for the Committee hearings in May.

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## Part II: Assessment of Job Dimensions

This section documents how well the employee performed each job dimension on the basis of the Performance Standards. Using the guidance in the Job Dimension Performance Standards (app. IV and V), select one of the five rating levels.

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### Determining If the Dimension Is Relevant

Any staff member who performs any task or achieves an accomplishment logically assignable to a dimension should be appraised on it. Scanning the task list in app. III will help serve this purpose by identifying the kinds of activities an employee of that band should be able to perform.

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If an individual was not involved in a dimension, note this under No Basis for Evaluation and proceed to the next dimension. After determining which dimensions are relevant, focus on the specific tasks or aspects of the individual's assignment as the basis for the appraisal.

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## Assessing Performance

Read the Performance Standards for band I in app. IV or for band II in app. V to determine which of the five levels best describes overall performance in each dimension: Unacceptable, Borderline, Fully Successful, Superior, or Exceptional. Detailed standards are described for Exceptional, Fully Successful and Unacceptable. The Borderline and Superior standards are in summary form. The standards were developed so that an employee doing a good job (i.e., meeting expectations) should be rated Fully Successful. Read the Performance Standards at the employee's band for each performance level, beginning with Fully Successful, and consider whether the ratee exhibits the kinds of behavior represented by the examples of that level.

If the ratee's predominant behavior, that is, the overall work during the entire assignment/appraisal period, most nearly matches the kind of behavior exemplified by the performance standards, then check that level for the overall assessment on that dimension in part II of Form 563.

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## Part III: Document Individual Accomplishments and Justification for Appraisal

In part III, document specific individual accomplishments and the level of performance achieved for ratings in each dimension. Make preliminary notes for each dimension, including what expectations were set at the outset, what accomplishments were achieved in relation to expectations, and the qualitative nature of the accomplishments and supporting performance. From these notes, a clear, succinct narrative, summarizing both accomplishments and qualitative performance, should be written for each dimension appraised.

The narrative in part III should be supported with sufficient examples of observed behavior (1) to establish a logical crosswalk between actual performance and the adjective rating chosen on the basis of the standards in this manual, (2) to provide a sound basis for performance feedback and counseling to the ratee, and (3) to facilitate important personnel decisions to follow.

Under side captions for each dimension, provide a narrative justification for the check marks including the following parts:

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### Specific Accomplishments

Include individual contributions, products, and participation by the ratee during the assignment or appraisal period. Where one or more accomplishments were achieved or products delivered, clearly describe not only the accomplishment or the product itself, but what the ratee did to bring it about (e.g., substantive aspects of planning, methods of data collection and analysis, written and/or oral presentations made, supporting teamwork, and leadership and supervisory skills demonstrated).

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### Qualitative Performance

You must use the Performance Standards (app. IV and V) as guides to identify relevant qualitative factors for the dimension. However, do not feel constrained by the qualitative factors cited in the Performance Standards. You may describe other relevant factors that support the level of performance indicated by the check mark rating.

The narrative should include comments on any performance trend, such as an improvement or a decline in performance during the period.

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### Examples of Accomplishments and Qualitative Narrative

Regardless of the adjective rating in part II of GAO Form 563, the narrative should be specific in addressing individual accomplishments and qualitative performance. The following paragraphs illustrate how narratives in part III of the form should be written. In order to illustrate the difference between accomplishments and quality descriptors, these examples are displayed with specific individual accomplishments underscored, followed by indicators of qualitative performance, set off by brackets. The examples are not intended to typify any particular adjective rating level.

Data Gathering and Documentation: Chris applied a comprehensive knowledge of inventory management techniques to develop tests for the Air Force's DO-39 and DO-41 systems chosen for review. The tests developed to verify the accuracy of "due-ins" [were innovative in that several steps were accomplished simultaneously, permitting us to complete this test in 5 staff-days, or about half the time anticipated]. Moreover, the tests chosen and the use of quality checks to anticipate human errors [were nearly flawless in producing accurate and reliable data for analysis]. Chris programmed the portable computer to capture data on a daily basis [so that analysis began the day after the on-site work was finished].

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Written Communication: Lee wrote two draft report chapters [that addressed every issue in the work plan, allowed for easy indexing of the supporting work, and told why any issue had not been pursued]. For example, [to index 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 even when he was addressing technical issues], as exhibited by the explanation of the sets of graphs in chapter 2. Lee's [conclusions are always well drawn and are never forced].

Supervision: Pat's work assignment and review was [thorough, covering technical issues and compliance with the work plan and directed toward staff development as well]. Pat prepared individual development plans for his staff that [addressed critical new technical skills needed to pursue work in his issue area.] He prepared staff appraisals that were [complete, accurate, and fair and were prepared on time]. The [staff knew where they stood] with Pat at all times, and [the staff's technical performance was materially advanced].

Data Analysis: Terry examined data obtained for accuracy, consistency, and adherence to agency budget preparation sources, [under direct supervision]. She prepared an analysis which [was generally timely and complete]. For example, she compared source documents for program funding at the local field activities with summary funding totals reported on another form to the Hill committee. Her analysis [contributed to the identification of incomplete data] being provided to the Hill. Additionally, she assessed information obtained orally for relevance to her segment of the review and determined how it satisfied review objectives. Her analysis [formed the basis for follow-up questions to the Navy].

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Total Pages Allowed

If necessary, one additional letter-size page (one side) may be attached for a narrative exceeding the space available in part III.

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## Part IV: Signatures

Only after the reviewer has reviewed and discussed the appraisal with the rater (see ch. 3 for details on the role of the reviewer), should the appraisal be presented to the ratee. The rater's name (typed), band, and signature, as well as those of the reviewer, should be affixed to the form. After the rater discusses the appraisal with the ratee, the ratee signs the appraisal form. By signing, the ratee does not indicate agreement with the appraisal but acknowledges that he/she has read it.

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## Part V: Ratee Comments

In this part, which is optional, the ratee may wish to append comments on the appraisal. Employee comments are not limited to any number of pages. If employee comments are submitted, the "Yes" block in part V should be checked and the comments should be attached to the appraisal form, and become part of the appraisal. Otherwise, the "No" block should be checked. If comments are provided, they should be submitted as quickly as possible but no later than 5 calendar days after the date the rater and the ratee have discussed the appraisal. (See chapter 3 for a discussion of grievance procedures for resolving performance appraisal disagreements.)

Note: A final appraisal is, at a minimum, the two-sided Form 563 or, at a maximum, the Form 563, plus one side of an additional page for narrative and ratee comments (no limit on pages).

# Performance Appraisal Policy

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## Appraising Officials

The performance appraisal form normally is prepared by the immediate supervisor in the home unit except as provided under "Responsibilities of the Reviewing Official" below. To determine how well the employee has performed, the supervisor must have sufficient contact with the ratee. This entails, to some degree, observing conditions under which work is being done and assignments are being completed, as well as reviewing the end product(s).

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## Staff Member Concurrently Reporting to More Than One Individual

When a staff member concurrently reports to more than one individual and one of these is outside the home unit (i.e., remote supervision), the staff member's home unit is responsible for preparing the appraisal after consultation with the remote supervisor.

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## Staff Member With More Than One Immediate Supervisor During the Rating Period

The immediate supervisor of record as of the date that a performance appraisal is due (e.g., at the end of the annual cycle, at the end of an evaluator's job, or at the time of an employee's reassignment) is responsible for preparing the appraisal. Such a supervisor ensures that he/she obtains appropriate input from any former immediate supervisors of the employee during the appraisal period.

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## Committee Assignments

At the outset of a congressional staff assignment, the home unit must reach agreement with the Office of Congressional Relations (OCR) on how to handle the employee's performance appraisal. When assignments are expected to last from a few weeks to a few months, the home unit may obtain information from the congressional staff member who will be supervising the GAO employee to prepare the appraisal. When a GAO staff member is expected to continue on an assignment for a major portion of the appraisal period, OCR arranges for a supervisory congressional staff member to prepare the appraisal using the appropriate form and standards. In this instance, OCR reviews the appraisal, provides any additional comments, and forwards the final appraisal to the employee's home unit.

If the home unit is responsible for preparing the employee's performance appraisal, a management representative (e.g., an assistant director, or an assistant regional manager) should discuss GAO's performance appraisal requirements with the congressional staff member who will be supervising the GAO employee. The home unit's representative must maintain sufficient contact with the GAO staff member and his/her

immediate supervisor on the assignment to gather sufficient information to prepare the final appraisal.

If another GAO staff member is the individual's immediate supervisor on the committee assignment, then he/she may be assigned responsibility for preparing the appraisal, including setting expectations and completing the appraisal form.

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### **“Opportunity Period” Outside Home Unit**

If an employee is detailed outside the home unit during an “opportunity period” for unacceptable performance, the organization to which he/she is assigned is considered the home unit for the purpose of preparing appraisals covering the “opportunity period.”

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### **Relationship Between Rater and Ratee in the Same Band**

As the needs of the work require, a staff member in any band may be called upon to supervise and appraise the performance of a person in the same band more frequently than was the case with the former General Schedule grades. One advantage of a broad-banded classification system is that it allows for structuring relationships on a given assignment more directly related to the needs of the assignment instead of according to grade level. Therefore, there is more certainty that the rater will have the knowledge of the work needed to interpret performance and prepare an accurate appraisal.

A staff member assuming responsibilities as supervisor and rater for others in the same band is obliged as any other supervisor to approach his/her duties with objectivity and integrity. He/she is responsible for ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities as established in GAO performance appraisal policy and in this manual.

Although the rater and the ratee may be in the same band, this situation will not be the case between the reviewer and the ratee. A reviewer must be in a higher band than the ratee.

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### **When Appraisals Are Due**

The utility of performance appraisal information depends upon its timeliness. Local units determine whether to appraise staff at end of assignment or annually.

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For an employee rated when an assignment ends, the appraisal is due within 20 calendar days of the staff member's release date. Under certain conditions, such as tight deadlines, limited additional time may be given to the rater with higher-level management approval.

A person rated at the end of each assignment who has completed more than 30 staff-days (i.e., where a "day" is defined as 8 hours charged to one job code) on an incomplete assignment as of June 15 must have an appraisal prepared closing out the assessment year. The next appraisal period will begin on June 16 and the appraisal will cover only performance beginning on that date.

All appraisals should be completed (i.e., written, reviewed, and discussed with the ratee) by June 15 of each year so that they can be used in the annual assessment process.

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## Appraisal Periods

All employees are to be rated at least annually, except that developmental staff will be appraised at least once every 6 months, and be given a copy of the appraisal. Appraisals must be typed. A temporary employee must be appraised when the appointment is reasonably expected to exceed 120 days. Appraisal periods will be as follows:

- A 12-month period beginning June 16 and ending June 15.
- The period an individual was assigned to a job or a lesser period such as an appraisal closing out the assessment year.
- A specified period of time to include the period from the date the person entered on duty.
- The period ending with promotion of an employee with a new period beginning on the employee's promotion date. (In this instance, the employee is appraised at the end of one period against the standards for the lower band, and new expectations are set after promotion using the standards for the higher band.)
- Any other period since the last given performance appraisal, but not longer than 12 months.

Home unit management decides upon the appropriate appraisal period(s) for its staff and communicates that determination to its staff and to supervisors in other units who may provide input to appraisals.

For a staff member rated on a job-by-job basis, a formal written appraisal need not be prepared if the individual is on the job less than

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30 staff-days, unless specifically requested by either the individual or the home unit management.

When an employee has been officially detailed or temporarily assigned to a different position for longer than 90 calendar days, expectations must be set for the position to which the employee is detailed or temporarily assigned. Upon completion of the detail or the temporary assignment, the written performance appraisal by the supervisor in charge of the employee while on detail or temporary assignment must be completed and sent to the individual's home unit, with a copy given to the employee.

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## Responsibilities of Reviewing Officials

The reviewing official is responsible for (1) serving as an educator on the appraisal system by ensuring that raters have sufficient knowledge of the appraisal system and use it effectively and (2) reviewing individual appraisals to ensure their accuracy and compliance with this manual.

In the role of educator, the reviewer ensures that raters understand the performance system and know how to properly prepare performance appraisals. The reviewer should see to it that raters are knowledgeable about performance standards in this manual and that they maintain reasonable consistency in applying standards.

In the role of appraisal reviewer, the reviewer must check each appraisal to ensure that it complies with instructions and standards. This review must be done by someone in a higher band than the ratee and must be done before the appraisal is discussed by the rater and the ratee. The reviewer provides additional assurance that the narrative in part III and the check marks in part II are consistent with the Performance Standards. The reviewer may return the appraisal to the rater for additional justification or change of the check mark placement if the narrative is unclear or inadequately supports the appraisal. Disagreement between the rater and the reviewer should be resolved before discussing the appraisal with the ratee.

In those instances when a disagreement with a rater on the basis for an adjective rating cannot be resolved, and the reviewer possesses knowledge of the performance of the ratee and/or believes the rater has not properly applied the standards, then the reviewer may assume responsibility for the rating on the dimension(s) in disagreement. In this instance, the reviewer will (1) obtain approval from the next higher

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responsible official and document the reasons and approval; (2) change the check mark placement, and (3) provide the appropriate narrative support for the check mark. In this instance, the appraisal form presented to the ratee will include only the final check marks cleared by the reviewer.

In any instance when the rater and the ratee agree to a change in the appraisal after the reviewer has signed off on the rating, that change must be approved by the reviewer.

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## Grievance Procedures for Performance Appraisals

GAO has established an expedited grievance process to allow employees who are dissatisfied with their performance appraisals to obtain redress, when warranted, prior to pay decisions and without delaying the process. The grievance process is intended to address matters such as inaccuracies, omissions, or inconsistencies in the performance appraisal. The expedited grievance process will not abrogate appeal rights currently available to GAO staff, and does not alter the grievance process associated with other grievable events. (See GAO Order 2771.1, ch. 5, for complete details about the expedited grievance process.)

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## Critical Elements

A critical element is a component of an employee's job (i.e., a job dimension, such as Planning) that is of sufficient importance that unacceptable performance in that component constitutes unacceptable performance of the employee's job and may be the basis for reduction in band or removal. All seven dimensions are "critical elements" for the purposes of this policy to the extent that tasks typical of the employee's band or a lower band are assigned. When an employee is assigned tasks typical of a higher band or substantially higher-level tasks within the band (i.e., developmental staff in Band I performing full performance tasks) and performance is judged **Unacceptable**, it is not to be the basis for a performance-based action.

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## Factoring Assignment Complexity Into the Appraisal Process

The Performance Standards were not developed to fully consider the relative complexity of the overall assignment. Assignment complexity is best assessed by supervisors and, subsequently, by assessment panels using narrative information provided in part I of Form 563, which describes the assignment and any unusual assignment characteristics as well as the individual's expectations and role in the assignment, and in part III of the form, which describes the ratee's performance for each dimension.

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## Appraising an Employee Doing Specialized Work

The job dimensions are general and encompass all evaluator and specialist work done at GAO. The tasks are more specific and describe the work done by the majority of staff: general evaluations, reviews, audits and some specialist functions. For evaluator-related specialists and employees assigned to staff offices, technical units, or task forces, etc., who perform more unique and specialized tasks, appraising officials should address the specific tasks to be performed in expectation setting and reference these in parts I and III of the appraisal form.

Guidance for setting, documenting, and communicating expectations is the same as that for other employees.

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## Appraising an Employee Doing Developmental Work

A developmental assignment is one that has not been assigned to the employee before or is different from those normally associated with a particular band. It enables the staff member to learn different work processes, develop new skills and abilities, and apply different knowledge.

Responsibilities normally associated with a higher band may be assigned to an employee in a lower band, or tasks associated with the higher end of a band, particularly band I, may be given to a less-experienced staff member within the band if accompanied by additional assistance and supervision to compensate for his/her lesser experience. The existing standards are applied to the employee's resulting performance. This policy does not provide for assigning a higher adjective rating due to the developmental nature of the assignment. To assign a higher rating than a comparison between the staff member's actual performance and the standard would compromise the integrity of the system. A supervisor would then, in effect, be applying personal standards, and tremendous inconsistencies throughout GAO would result.

A developmental assignment should be clearly documented in part I of Form 563, and the resulting accomplishments and qualitative performance should be described in the usual manner in part III. If additional assistance and supervision are not provided during the developmental assignment and the resulting performance is Fully Successful or better, that fact should be stated in part I, and the fact that resulting accomplishments and qualitative performance were achieved without more than average supervision should clearly be stated in the supporting narrative in part III.

Since all the Performance Standards were developed on the basis of an average level of supervision, providing additional assistance and supervision to a staff member on a developmental assignment compensates for applying the higher-level work and the standards. The term “average supervision” means a span of supervisory control that is more than limited supervision and less than close supervision. “Close supervision” means that all objectives are clearly defined, detailed instructions are provided, and work steps and products are closely reviewed. “Limited supervision” means that the employee has the freedom to set objectives and to determine how to meet them; innovativeness is routinely demanded, and accomplishments are subjected to only normal administrative review.

For example, take a leadership role normally associated with Band II or the Full Performance portion of Band I. The Fully Successful standard has an “average” supervision requirement, but the work is performed satisfactorily by a less-experienced Band I employee with more than “average” supervision. The employee would be rated Fully Successful because, notwithstanding the additional supervision, other qualitative factors described in the standard(s) were met. Further, if the employee fulfilled the performance requirements described in the standards at the Superior or Exceptional Levels, but under the qualifying conditions of additional assistance and supervision, the Superior or Exceptional appraisal is justifiable. An appraisal below Fully Successful on a developmental assignment is proper only when additional assistance and supervision were provided. (See also the discussion of unacceptable performance in a critical element on p. 18.)

If additional supervision was not provided and performance falls below the Fully Successful standard, then no check mark appraisals on those assignments should be made in part II. Only performance of tasks commensurate with the employee’s band or experience level are appraised in this circumstance.

If a staff member’s performance of developmental tasks is judged below Fully Successful, then counseling and remedial assistance should be given to help the employee overcome his/her inability to complete the assignment in a fully successful manner. The extent of documentation in parts I and III of Form 563, in this circumstance, is decided by the rater, reflecting the nature of the assignment, its duration, whether additional assistance and supervision were provided, or other factors deemed applicable.

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## Avoiding Predetermined Appraisals

GAO policy is that every assignment possesses the potential for the individual to exceed Fully Successful standards for timeliness and quality of product or otherwise exceed expectations. The policy, therefore, does not allow for the concept that certain assignments (e.g., special administrative projects or projects of limited duration) do not merit higher than a Fully Successful appraisal.

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## Supervisory Notes

Supervisors who keep notes on performance to enhance their ability to accurately appraise staff and improve narrative in Part III of the appraisal form, are responsible for safeguarding those notes and ensuring they are private to the rater. Private notes made as memory joggers are not covered by Privacy Act-type disclosure requirements. Such notes do not become agency records so long as they are not disseminated or circulated to any person or organization. The anticipation is that they will be destroyed after the appraisal is completed.

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# Performance Appraisal Questions and Answers

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This section includes questions and answers relating to performance appraisal policy and the use of this manual. Staff who have additional questions about appraisal policy or the proper use of this manual should address their questions to their supervisors, human resource managers, or other human resource officials.

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## General Information

Question No. 1: What is meant by performance management?

Answer: Performance management is the systematic, cyclical process of setting and communicating performance expectations; monitoring and documenting performance, and providing feedback and coaching; and preparing and communicating the written performance appraisal.

Question No. 2: What is the purpose of the evaluator/specialist performance appraisal system, and what are the principal uses of performance appraisal information?

Answer: The primary purpose of the performance appraisal system is to provide a systematic and uniform method to evaluate the performance of GAO evaluators and evaluator-related specialists on job-related criteria.

Appraisals help employees to understand their responsibilities and the level of performance expected of them; provide feedback to assist in performance improvement; assist in setting career goals; and provide a basis for important personnel decisions, such as pay, promotion, and retention.

Question No. 3: What safeguards are provided to ensure fairness when the rater and the ratee are in the same band?

Answer: The most important consideration is whether the appraising official has sufficient knowledge of the ratee's work to be able to prepare an accurate appraisal. The rater is the immediate supervisor who has responsibility for the work and the staff assigned to do it; and, the fact that the rater is assigned responsibility for supervising the employee and has observed the performance of the ratee is more important than the rank of the rater.

As a specific safeguard, policy requires that the appraisal reviewer be in a higher band than the ratee. Also, the sensitivity of staff to this issue

will help to ensure that the rater's performance is closely checked. Additionally, unit management and the Assistant Comptroller General for Operations will monitor appraisal practices.

Question No. 4: What is the most important thing to remember when using this performance appraisal manual?

Answer: This manual contains the official performance standards for appraising the critical job dimensions of Evaluator and Evaluator-related specialist work. A rater should review the Job Dimension Definitions and the Job Dimension Performance Standards before deciding on the performance level of the ratee on each dimension.

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## Setting Performance Expectations and Monitoring Performance

Question No. 5: How should performance expectations be established for staff, and how much documentation is necessary?

Answer: Although GAO policy does not require that expectations must be in writing, except in summary form in part I of the appraisal form, individual units may require written expectations. It is GAO policy that expectations must be formally discussed with the employee, that is, during a meeting or a conference where both parties are aware that performance expectations are being discussed.

The manual provides general guidance on what expectations should cover. Using the Expectation Setting Checklist (app. I) along with a task check list or memoranda of understanding are common ways of documenting expectations. Even if written expectations are prepared, they should not be so cumbersome that adjustments cannot be made easily or upon verbal agreement. For example, written expectations could include an understanding of the staff member's role in the assignment, the phases in which he/she will be involved, the milestones for accomplishments, and the products that are expected.

Question No. 6: When should the narrative summary of expectations to be included in part I of the appraisal form be written and who should prepare it?

Answer: The narrative summary of expectations required in part I of the appraisal form need not be written in advance of the final appraisal to which it relates and the summary may be prepared by the rater exclusively. However, the rater may request that the ratee draft the summary at the conclusion of expectation setting as an additional way

of confirming the ratee's understanding of the expectations which have been set. The rater may then retain the ratee's summary for later use in preparing the appraisal.

Question No. 7: What is meant by performance monitoring, documenting, and coaching, and why are they important?

Answer: After performance expectations are agreed upon, the supervisor is responsible for (1) monitoring the staff member's progress toward expectations, (2) documenting that effort, and (3) providing periodic feedback and coaching. This process produces information that can serve as the basis for the written appraisal.

To help document performance, personal notes or "memory joggers" would help to ensure that observations made during the appraisal period are complete and accurate and are properly conveyed in the written appraisal. These notes are not part of official records so long as they are not shared with any other person and are created and discarded at the rater's discretion.

Coaching is supervisory guidance to keep performance on track and motivate a staff member to continue to improve performance. Coaching should be both positive and corrective.

Question No. 8: Must I hold an annual progress review session? If so, what does it entail?

Answer: GAO policy does anticipate at least one formal progress review session and the midpoint is a natural time for such a meeting. In particular, a staff member who is appraised annually needs to be informed of progress toward expectations and requires specific performance feedback and coaching. The session can serve these ends and provides important documentation for the annual written appraisal. An employee should not be surprised by the final appraisal and periodic feedback is one way of preventing this.

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## Preparing the Written Performance Appraisal

Question No. 9: What is the meaning of "No Basis for Evaluation" when appraising staff? How much exposure must a staff member have before I can rate the employee on a job dimension?

Answer: If a staff member was not involved in any task, responsibility, or accomplishment logically assignable to a dimension, note this by

checking the “No Basis for Evaluation” block and proceed to the other dimensions. A staff member who is not expected to be assigned tasks or responsibilities grouped under a job dimension should be informed of this during the expectation-setting process. Subsequent changes to expectations should be communicated in a manner that is clear to the staff member. When the appraisal is prepared, the rater must again reexamine the relevance of each job dimension to the staff member’s actual involvement on the assignment.

Any staff member who performs any task or produces an accomplishment logically assignable to a job dimension should be appraised on it.

Question No. 10: Is there a checklist raters and reviewers can follow when preparing or reviewing appraisal narrative in parts I and III?

Answer: The following checklist is suggested.

Part I

- Is the nature of the assignment described? Was the staff member assigned for the entire assignment or only specific segments?
- What is the difficulty of the assignment and/or the ratee’s role?
- Was the staff member responsible for any significant collateral duties?
- What were the expectations for the ratee? What was the ratee’s role? What deliverables were expected to be produced?

Part III

- What did the ratee accomplish for each job dimension?
- Is there narrative support for the check mark ratings? Are examples of relevant behavior included?
- Does the narrative evidence a trend in performance, either improving or declining?
- In general, is the appraisal
  - factual,
  - clear,
  - concise,
  - convincing,
  - objective, and
  - suitable for submitting to an assessment panel?

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## Tasks and Standards

Question No. 11: What is the purpose of the task list in appendix III, and how are the tasks organized?

Answer: Tasks are very discrete elements of evaluator and specialist work and vary in complexity. The tasks are guides to help in establishing performance expectations and in guiding career development of staff, particularly for Band I staff.

Band I tasks are divided into two groups, developmental tasks and full performance tasks. Developmental tasks are those to be learned by newer evaluators and specialists. Full performance tasks range from tasks of intermediate difficulty to those characteristic of a fully seasoned staff member with some leadership experience.

As staff grow in experience, they are assigned increasingly more complex responsibilities. Staff members who have mastered a task are expected to be able to perform the task, when assigned, even though they have advanced in their current band or into a higher band and are learning new tasks.

Question No. 12: What are the Performance Standards and how can I use them?

Answer: The Performance Standards are benchmarks for evaluating employee performance. The Performance Standards are organized so that performance levels build on or subtract from the Fully Successful level. For example a Superior rating is appropriate only when an employee's overall performance meets and exceeds characteristics associated with Fully Successful and is not predominantly characteristic of the Exceptional level. This approach is to be followed up and down the rating scale.

Question No. 13: Are the Performance Standards all-inclusive?

Answer: When applying the Performance Standards in appendices IV and V remember that the performance examples which make up the standards are representative of each dimension as a whole. Thus, it is not necessary for the staff member to perform all of the activities or the exact activities described in the standards to be rated at that level. The standards are neither exhaustive nor all-inclusive. They are provided to help the rater clarify the meaning of each performance level by describing typical behavior. If the staff member has not performed the activities cited in the standard for a given performance level, but has

performed activities of equivalent difficulty and quality, the staff member still could be rated at that level.

Question No. 14: Why are there no written standards for the Borderline and Superior rating levels in the Performance Standards?

Answer: The presence of performance standards at the Unacceptable, Fully Successful and Exceptional rating levels provides clear anchors to a continuum of performance behavior from the lowest level to an acceptable level to the highest level. Performance definitions at Borderline and Superior provide for ratings at those levels by comparison from the detailed anchors. This approach simplifies appraisal guidance and provides only the essential data needed to make accurate appraisal decisions. This approach is consistent with federal regulation, and contemporary practice and the Band III appraisal system.

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Question No. 15: Is there any difference between expectations set for a developmental assignment and those for a regular one?

Answer: The only essential difference lies in the amount of information provided and the more frequent presence of written expectations. Because the developmental assignment is outside the expected range of assignments for the employee and new knowledge requirements are involved, more specificity is usually present and expectations are frequently put into writing to assist the employee. Additionally, more supervision should be provided on a developmental assignment, and expectations should consider that.

Question No. 16: What is GAO's policy on appraising a staff member on a developmental assignment?

Answer: A developmental assignment requires performance of duties different from those normally associated with a particular band or which are more difficult than the employee has experienced up to that point. It may also be given to a less-experienced staff member within the band. It enables the staff member to learn different work processes, develop new skills and abilities, and apply different knowledge.

GAO policy provides that additional supervision be provided to a staff member on a developmental assignment to compensate for his/her lesser experience. The published standards are to be applied to the employee's resulting performance.

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## Developmental Assignments

GAO policy does not provide for assigning a higher adjective rating solely on the basis of the developmental nature of the assignment. To assign a higher rating than a comparison between the staff member's actual performance and what the standard would justify would compromise the integrity of the system.

Question No. 17: How should a developmental assignment be documented? What should be done when additional supervision is not provided on a developmental assignment?

Answer: A developmental assignment should be clearly documented in part I of the GAO Form 563, and the resulting accomplishments and qualitative performance should be described in the usual manner in part III. If additional supervision was not provided, that fact should also be stated in part I; and the fact that resulting accomplishments and qualitative performance were achieved without more than average supervision should be clearly stated in the supporting narrative in part III. In this way, an assessment panel can give proper credit for the employee's actual performance.

Question No. 18: How do I rate someone who does poorly on a developmental task?

Answer: If additional supervision was present, as provided for in GAO's policy, and performance falls below Fully Successful, then document part I and part III and appraise the employee in part II using the standards. If additional supervision was not present, then documentation in part I and part III is discretionary and the appraisal in part II should be based on performance of tasks commensurate with the employee's band or experience level.



# Expectation-Setting Checklist

GAO

United States General Accounting Office  
**Expectation-Setting  
Checklist**

Instructions The rater and ratee may use this list as a guide during the expectation-setting session. As you discuss each point, check it off. At the end of the session, review the list to make sure that all important issues were addressed. You may want to add other expectations tailored to your situation.

**1. Assignment Expectations**

- Assignment objectives
- Assignment complexity and sensitivity
- Unusual job characteristics
- Role(s), responsibilities, and tasks of the ratee
- Performance appraisal standards
- Products/results
- Due dates and quality expectations for tasks and products
- Collateral duties and responsibilities
- Assistance available: staff, technical resources, etc.

**2. Working Relationship Expectations**

- Degree of supervision and the person(s) who will provide it
- Who will prepare, sign, and review the rating
- Roles and responsibilities in the supervisory relationship, when and how problems are discussed, who makes decisions, responsibilities for follow-up, etc.
- Relationship key staff have to the assignment: i.e., unit head, senior management of other units, support staff, etc.
- How both supervisor and ratee prefer to work
- How information is treated: personal privacy, mutual confidentiality, communicating up and down
- Timetable for feedback sessions
- Specific developmental experiences that will be provided
- Administrative expectations: flex time, training, travel paperwork, leave

**3. Staff Expectations**

- What the ratee wants out of the assignment, including possible developmental opportunities
- Ratee capabilities and past experiences

**4. Other**

OPR:PERS

GAO Form 209 (4/89)

# Role Definitions for Employees in Band I and II

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These definitions describe responsibilities typical of each band. The definitions complement the Task List (app. III) in setting expectations.

The definitions emphasize that the discrete tasks shown in the task list should be viewed in the perspective of broad levels of responsibility and a variety of roles, including nonsupervisory, supervisory, and specialist. The definitions are not all inclusive, but contain the most typical duties.

Note: GAO evaluators and evaluator-related specialists using this appraisal system were previously classified in grades GS-7 through GS-14, which have been replaced in this manual by bands I and II. Staff previously classified as GS-15 (now band III) are appraised under a different system.

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## Band I

Band I is divided into two levels: Developmental and Full Performance.

Developmental Level — Employees receive assignments beginning with the most rudimentary through the more complex in a training mode. They initially work under close supervision progressing to more independent efforts. Through on-the-job and classroom training and a variety of job experiences, employees learn the theories, policies, and procedures required to complete GAO evaluations. Fact-gathering and documentary assignments lead to more advanced planning, data analysis, writing assignments and personal contacts, both inside GAO and in other agencies. Typical assignments include

- various data-gathering activities such as conducting research, conducting interviews, and summarizing facts in writing;
- applying defined analytical methods to data; determining patterns, trends, or irregularities; and drawing conclusions;
- researching and writing job plans, audit guidelines, and tasks;
- interviewing agency officials; and
- writing report segments.

Full Performance Level — Employees are expected to perform the full range of evaluation functions, including ongoing responsibility for a specific component of a project. They may serve in site senior or other roles requiring some leadership capability and may provide required guidance and instruction to lower-level staff. Typical assignments include

- developing job plans, audit guidelines and tasks;

- taking the lead in data collection efforts or reviewing data collection efforts of others, performing report processing functions, referencing, or clearing referencing points;
- selecting and applying analytical methods appropriate to the situation from a number of alternatives to develop conclusions and recommendations;
- integrating and consolidating analyses and written summaries of others to develop draft chapters or complete draft products; and
- participating in and/or leading meetings with GAO and agency officials to communicate results of work.

Some specialists in this band possess basic knowledge in a specialty field (e.g., statistics, mathematics, actuarial science, accounting, etc.) and who work with and assist more experienced specialists, acquiring progressively more advanced knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and the ability to carry out more difficult assignments with less supervision. Staff ultimately can perform moderately complex tasks with minimal supervision.

Supervision decreases as the employees obtain experience and knowledge to the point where only broad assignments are made and employees frequently devise their own work methods to meet broadly stated objectives. Work is reviewed to ensure objectives are met and GAO policies are followed.

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## Band II

This band includes those employees carrying out roles in which the leadership/supervision of others is a major component. They are responsible for successfully completing assignments or major segments of assignments. Leadership ability is the paramount characteristic distinguishing this band from Band I. Leadership responsibilities may be focused on a single job or a major segment of a job or might include more than one job, led either directly or through others. Typical duties include:

- planning an entire assignment or planning and/or coordinating several concurrent assignments, including line-of-effort development and determining and/or allocating resources needed to complete assignments;
- developing, evaluating and reviewing data collection efforts, determining sufficiency of evidence, coordinating analysis to identify reportable issues, and directing meetings with higher-level officials;
- developing, reviewing and revising written products of subordinates and consolidating report segments into complete reports or completing large segments of major assignments/projects;
- ensuring that report processing requirements are completed and carried out properly; and
- making assignments, monitoring performance, evaluating performance against expectations and counseling staff, promoting team-building, and providing for staff development.

Staff in this band, in addition to or in lieu of performing leadership roles on specific assignments, may

- serve as members on complex or difficult jobs,
- participate in unit management functions,
- be involved in issue area or other broad planning functions on the basis of expertise, or
- perform staff assignments in the home units or staff offices when skills associated with this band are a requisite to successful performance.

Some specialists in this band possess advanced KSAs in one or more specialized fields. They are proficient in adapting knowledge and theory of specialty fields to complex situations with only minimal supervision and working with more senior specialists on unusual or particularly complex tasks. These employees may lead more junior specialists and/or evaluators in multiphased projects and may serve as consultants to other specialists and/or generalists.

These employees are given assignments in very general terms and develop the approaches to be used, determine resources and staff

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**Appendix II**  
**Role Definitions for Employees in Band I**  
**and II**

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required, and evaluate progress. Work products are considered technically complete and are reviewed only to ensure that they conform to GAO policies and meet audience needs.

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# Job Dimension Definitions and Task List

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This appendix is organized to help supervisors establish performance expectations on the critical dimensions of Evaluator and Specialist work, which are most typical for each band. The task list is not prescriptive about what is to be done but is a menu from which supervisors may identify tasks consistent with individual assignment objectives. The tasks are displayed within each of seven critical job dimensions.

## Job Dimensions

Planning

Data-gathering and documentation

Data analysis

Written communication

Oral communication

Working relationships, teamwork, and equal opportunity

Supervision, appraisal, and counseling

Within most of the job dimensions, the tasks are divided into two bands. (See app. II for definitions of the bands.) Band I tasks are further divided into two groups, Developmental Level tasks and Full Performance Level tasks. Developmental tasks are those to be learned by newer GAO Evaluators and specialists. Full Performance tasks range from tasks of intermediate difficulty to those characteristic of fully seasoned staff with some leadership experience. Band II comprises many additional leadership tasks.

Tasks are normally assigned progressively by band and level, i.e. developmental level tasks are assigned before full performance level tasks, etc. Lower level tasks are often mastered before higher level tasks are assigned. Thus employees in the Full Performance Level and Band II are assumed to be capable of performing tasks previously mastered whenever they are assigned. Tasks predominantly performed by specialists are an exception, but most tasks will eventually be mastered by Band II staff. In this way a body of knowledge reflecting tasks assigned is accumulated and may be drawn upon depending on the specific roles and expectations assigned.

The task list may be used to identify developmental tasks, that is, tasks characteristic of higher bands or a higher level of difficulty within a band. This appendix is particularly useful in setting expectations for Developmental Level staff to help them develop a better understanding of the many discrete tasks constituting their work.

The appendix neither contains every task that could be performed, nor must a GAO Evaluator or specialist perform all the tasks listed. Further, the task list does not include tasks typical of every position in GAO. Therefore, raters must discuss the additional tasks during expectation setting if they are important and are reasonable requirements, considering the employees' position and role. For example, **Data Analysis** tasks in the list may not be specific enough to describe the data analysis work of some specialists. Tasks addressing specific types of analyses should be discussed during expectation setting. Raters in staff offices and on task forces may wish to discuss more tailored **Planning or Communication** tasks.

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## Job Dimension Definition

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### Planning Dimension

GAO Evaluators and Specialists may be assigned a variety of planning activities. These include:

- Issue area planning, such as identifying potential areas of review; ascertaining congressional interests; reviewing proposals from subordinates; and developing segments of issue area plans that provide direction and guidance to others.
- Assignment resource planning, such as estimating the amount, location and time frames of work to be performed; the need for technical assistance; the number and type of staff needed; and evaluating the firm assignment list (FAL) for field work.
- Assignment design, such as identifying past and current work; determining the scope and objectives of the assignment; and coordinating work or working to avoid conflict and duplication; identifying alternative approaches and constraints to planned work; sources and availability of information; and alternative research approaches and evaluation methodology to be used; developing task analysis and segmentation of work to be performed and/or reviewing work plans or segments thereof prepared by others; and designing or selecting sampling plans for data collection.
- Product/output design, such as determining the potential impact of findings and the likelihood of acceptance; identifying the customer and the type of communication appropriate to the customer.
- Terminating nonproductive work.
- Administrative support for planning, such as keeping informed of administrative policy; using applicable GAO and federal policies and forms for work initiation and coordination; preparing travel estimates, etc.

Planning includes planning one's own time in a nonsupervisory role and planning in support of staff projects and collateral duties. Planning skills may be assessed through the review of written planning documents or evaluations of the outcomes of work reflecting on the quality or thoroughness of the initial planning.

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## Job Dimension Task List

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### Planning Dimension

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<b>Developmental Level</b>	<p>The following tasks may be performed by Developmental Level staff in Band I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Keep abreast of administrative policies, procedures, and news through manuals, memoranda and other organization information to carry out job and administrative function.</li><li>2. Determine sources and availability of information (documents, files, personnel, etc.) required to accomplish detailed audit/project steps.</li><li>3. Identify past and current work in subject area to avoid conflict and duplication relative to a specific assignment.</li><li>4. Identify constraints that will have an impact on the scope and/or methodology of the audit/project.</li></ol>
<b>Full Performance Level</b>	<p>In addition to performing tasks described above as developmental, the following tasks may be performed by Full Performance Level staff in Band I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Determine the appropriate evaluation methodology to be used on a project, or segment thereof, considering timeliness, cost factors, and other requirements.</li><li>6. Identify potential areas of review or evaluation to help assure coverage in major issue area.</li><li>7. Using applicable GAO and federal policies, procedures and forms, fulfill requirements to initiate audit/project work in agencies (e.g., make contacts, obtain clearance, prepare job notification documents, etc.).</li><li>8. Prepare travel estimates to plan travel needs and costs for the audit/project.</li></ol>

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9. Estimate amount, location and time frames of work to be performed and resources needed to perform an assignment or a segment of an assignment.
  10. Identify the need for technical assistance (legal, ADP, consultative, etc.).
  11. Propose alternative audit/project approaches to accomplish the audit/project steps.
  12. Review assignment plans, or segments thereof, to determine how to meet individual audit/project objectives.
  13. Develop task analysis/assignment plan, or segment thereof, needed to do an audit/project.
  14. Design and/or select a sampling plan or methodology to meet the audit/project, or a segment thereof, objectives.
  15. Construct alternative research approaches to meet audit/project objectives using professional literature and standards.
  16. Determine potential impact of findings considering viability, probability of effecting a change and likelihood of acceptance.
  17. Coordinate project with similar projects in other areas of GAO in order to avoid conflicts and duplication.
  18. Provide input to go/no-go decision on audit/project to determine whether project should continue.

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**Band II**

In addition to performing developmental and full performance tasks, the following tasks may be performed by Band II staff:

19. Meet with Congressional committee staff to discuss priority interest areas to aid in planning assignments.
20. Accept, reject, or modify project proposals submitted by subordinates.
21. Develop segments of issue area plan to provide overall guidance and direction for long range work using input from regions and divisions.

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22. Evaluate Firm Assignment List (FAL) to identify staffing needs for a specific assignment (Regional staff only).

23. Identify the format and type of communication appropriate to the customer.

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## Job Dimension Definition

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### Data Gathering and Documentation Dimension

Data gathering and documentation are among the most basic activities of GAO Evaluators and Specialists, especially Band I staff. Activities include:

- Conducting literature searches to establish a base of information.
- Selecting data sources, requesting data and examining collected data (agency records, statistical information, contracts, computer printouts, etc.).
- Interviewing knowledgeable personnel to gather facts, opinions and leads related to project objectives.
- Observing and documenting agency procedures, practices and results.
- Writing-up interview data to document evidence using GAO standards.
- Preparing, organizing and indexing workpapers to provide backup to the report or other presentation.
- Screening data for relevancy and usefulness.
- Organizing documentation (e.g., scheduling, data input, flow charting, etc.) to facilitate analysis.
- Designing, pretesting and administering data collection instruments to support project objectives.
- Writing and documenting computer programs for accessing and analyzing data.
- Contacting appropriate personnel to follow up on previously gathered information and/or previously issued reports.
- Using applicable GAO and federal policies, procedures and forms to mark and file classified or sensitive material, to track report progress and final processing, to obtain policy clearances, to document travel, and to record time and attendance, etc.

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## Job Dimension Task List

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### Data Gathering and Documentation Dimension

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#### Developmental Level

The following tasks may be performed by Developmental Level staff in Band I:

24. Search literature to establish a base of information (technical, historical, legislative, legal, etc.) on the audit/project.
25. Contact appropriate personnel to follow-up on previously gathered information and/or previously issued reports.
26. Apply the specific methodology and select the data sources required to satisfy the scope and objectives of the audit/project.
27. Request and examine data sources (agency records, statistical information, contracts, grants, charts, printouts, etc.).
28. Observe and document agency procedures, practices and results.
29. Interview knowledgeable personnel to gather facts, opinions, and leads related to the audit/project objectives.
30. Extract data from computer files to produce documentation required for audit/project.
31. Write up interview data to document evidence using GAO standards.
32. Prepare work papers to document work performed and to provide the basis for the written report.
33. Screen data to ensure relevancy and usefulness.

34. Review all data collected to determine what specific documents are needed in work papers.
35. Assemble and index work papers and prepare table of contents to organize work performed.
36. Organize documentation (e.g., scheduling, coding data, flow charting, etc.) to facilitate analysis and review by the supervisor.
37. Document computer programs that have been written for accessing and analyzing data.
38. Participate in and/or pretest data collection instruments and/or methods to refine data gathering techniques.
39. Administer questionnaires to gather data to satisfy audit/project objectives. (Questionnaires dealing with particularly sensitive subject matter may be administered by higher level staff.)
40. Using applicable GAO and federal policies, procedures and forms, fill out and process administrative forms (T&A's, travel vouchers, F-66, etc.).
41. Using applicable GAO and federal policies, procedures and forms, mark and file classified or sensitive material.

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**Full Performance Level**

In addition to performing tasks described above as developmental, the following tasks may be performed by Full Performance Level staff in Band I:

42. Using applicable GAO procedures and forms, prepare and process job progress documents (J-1's, etc.).
43. Using applicable GAO policies, procedures and forms, prepare and track report processing documents (e.g., Forms 115, 116, 117) through required GAO and external reviews, (e.g., editing, Offices of Information and Policy, General Counsel, etc.).
44. Design data collection instruments to collect data required for audit/project.

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**Band II**

The tasks for Band I, for this dimension, apply to many work situations in Band II with added emphasis on reviewing these tasks when they are performed by others. This involves, in many instances, a broad range of technical skill exhibited by Band II staff.

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## Job Dimension Task List

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### Data Analysis Dimension

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#### Developmental Level

The following tasks may be performed by Developmental Level staff in Band I:

45. Identify follow-up areas not anticipated in the task analysis/assignment plan.
46. Analyze data using computerized data bases and software packages.
47. Determine type and amount of analysis necessary to develop findings and/or resolve an issue.
48. Test data to verify that it is current, accurate, and sufficient.
49. Identify weaknesses, problems, or irregularities in the data and/or analysis.
50. Interpret data for the purpose of identifying patterns, trends, and irregularities.
51. Determine whether the evidence is sufficient to meet the objectives of the assignment plan.
52. Combine the results of data analyses to draw conclusions and form recommendations.
53. Determine the possible causes of agency problems to guide conclusions and recommendations.
54. Examine data and results of analysis to determine the soundness of conclusions or hypotheses.

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55. Compare and contrast data from related situations to test and interpret the data and to draw conclusions.

56. Organize data into major areas of interest to provide structure for writing and reviewing the report.

57. Select techniques and design formats which provide effective displays of data.

58. Select and utilize professionally accepted analytical techniques (statistical, econometric, operations research, modeling, accounting, etc.) to meet objectives of the audit/project.

59. Discuss and respond to referencing comments.

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**Full Performance Level**

In addition to performing tasks described above as developmental, the following tasks may be performed by Full Performance Level staff in Band I:

60. Reference reports and briefing materials to provide a third party evaluation of accuracy and adequacy of support.

61. Identify controversial or sensitive issues which can affect the outcome of the audit/project.

62. Verify the adequacy of specialized methodology and data interpretations with technical advisors (legal, ADP, consultants, etc.).

63. Determine if findings and conclusions contained in report/product are adequately supported.

64. Determine completeness and technical accuracy of report or major product.

65. Evaluate agency comments to ensure adequacy of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

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**Band II**

The tasks for Band I, for this dimension, apply to many work situations in Band II with added emphasis on reviewing these tasks when they are performed by others. This involves, in many instances, a broad range of technical skill exhibited by Band II staff.

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## Job Dimension Definition

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### Written Communication Dimension

GAO Evaluators and Specialists are responsible for preparing and reviewing a wide range of written products including:

- Assignment justifications and issue area plans.
- Assignment plans, agency notification letters and congressional contact memoranda.
- Interview write-ups.
- Workpapers and workpaper summaries.
- Data collection instruments (e.g., questionnaires, structured interview questions, etc.).
- Report segments, chapters, technical appendices, complete reports, or testimony.
- Executive summaries.
- Other internal and external correspondence and administrative documentation of all types.
- Performance appraisals.
- Professional articles.

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## Job Dimension Task List

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### Written Communication Dimension

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#### Developmental Level

The following tasks may be performed by Developmental Level staff in Band I:

66. Write up interviews and work papers using interview notes and research materials.

67. Prepare written material, such as:

67a. Work paper summaries.

67b. Data collection instruments (DCIs).

67c. Report segments, chapters or technical appendices.

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#### Full Performance Level

In addition to performing tasks described above as developmental, the following tasks may be performed by Full Performance Level staff in Band I:

67d. Regional office or site summary reports.

67e. Audit/project documents (e.g. Form 100's, assignment plans, decision papers, report outlines, assignment notification letters, letters to agency requesting comments on reports or on information, etc.).

67f. Other internal communication (e.g., congressional contact memorandums, press contact memorandums, performance appraisals, trip reports, accomplishment reports, etc.).

67g. Executive summaries of reports.

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**Appendix III  
Job Dimension Definitions and Task List**

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67h. Planning documents (e.g., issue area plans, proposals for long-range work plan, Firm Assignment Lists, etc.).

67i. Other external correspondence (e.g., letters responding to inquiries from agency officials, private or public organizations, etc.).

67j. Fact sheets and/or questions.

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**Band II**

In addition to performing developmental and full performance tasks, the following additional tasks may be performed by Band II staff:

67k. Complete report.

67l. Bill comments or testimony for congressional hearings/committee staff.

67m. Professional articles.

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**Full Performance Level  
and Band II**

The following additional task is characteristic of both Full Performance Level staff and Band II staff:

68. Review, in a nonsupervisory role, written products of staff or consultants for factors such as completeness, adherence to policy and procedures, quality, relevance, sound principles and standards, usefulness to intended users, etc.

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## Job Dimension Definition

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### Oral Communication Dimension

Effective oral communication is an integral part of the review, evaluation and reporting functions of GAO Evaluators and Specialists. Activities include:

- Communicating upward and downward with other GAO staff (1) to gain approval of work objectives and methods and to report on progress and results, (2) to assist in assignment design to refine objectives, scope and methodology, (3) to provide direction to subordinates in the conduct of work, (4) to obtain approval and clearance of work from policy bodies, (5) to train and orient staff, and (6) to chair policy meetings.
- Communicating with agency personnel (1) to schedule on-site visits and to interview knowledgeable personnel to obtain facts, opinions and leads related to the assignment, (2) to respond to questions raised by the agencies about the assignment, (3) to conduct entrance conferences, and (4) to brief agency personnel on the results of the assignment.
- Meeting with Members of Congress and their staffs (1) to promote mutual understanding of GAO's work, (2) to brief them on the status of work, and (3) to participate in presenting testimony.
- Representing GAO to the public, private organizations and the press.
- Communicating complex technical information to clients.

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77. Talk to subordinates to provide understanding of audit/project objectives, methods, progress, and expected products.

78. Meet with division management, Report Review, Office of Program Planning, Office of General Counsel, etc. to discuss audit approach intended results and expected contributions of audit/project.

79. Brief agency personnel in order to inform them of results of the audit/project.

80. Prepare for and attend meetings with congressional staffs to brief them on the status of audit/project within specific areas of responsibility.

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**Band II**

In addition to performing developmental and full performance tasks, the following tasks may be performed by Band II staff:

81. Prepare and deliver formal presentations to GAO staff (e.g., training, task forces, etc.).

82. Chair periodic meetings to explain/discuss changes in GAO policies, goals, and practices.

83. Participate in preparing and/or presenting testimony before legislative bodies.

84. Represent GAO for areas under direct supervision or in area of expertise, including public and private organizations and the press.

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## Job Dimension Definition

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### Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity (EO) Dimension

Effective accomplishments/projects require extensive interaction with people both inside and outside of GAO. Staff members at all levels must be able to establish and maintain effective and constructive working relationships, and promote teamwork with other GAO staff members, including

- cognizant regional/headquarters personnel assigned to the particular job;
- staff members of other regions or divisions;
- support staff;
- technical specialists and consultants; and
- immediate subordinates, peers, and superiors.

This dimension includes the maintenance of a cooperative, favorable, motivating, and rewarding work climate. It also includes group effort directed to accomplishing assigned work and group objectives supported by individual members. In addition, assignments usually require that effective working relationships be established with groups and individuals external to GAO including

- agency personnel and officials;
- outside experts, representatives, and consultants;
- congressional members and/or staff; and
- the general public.

In addition, all GAO employees (regardless of band) are responsible for ensuring that principles of equal opportunity are properly observed. Discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, marital status, political affiliation, or physical handicap is prohibited. Certain individuals have specific responsibilities for ensuring equal opportunity (outlined in GAO Order 2713.1).

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## Job Dimension Task List

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### Working Relationships, Teamwork, and EO Dimension

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#### Developmental Level

The following tasks may be performed by Developmental Level staff in Band I:

- 85. Cooperate and share information with others both within and outside the immediate job team to accomplish audit objectives.
- 86. Establish and maintain working relationships with other GAO/agency personnel to sustain open communication, support equal opportunity and obtain required information.
- 87. Demonstrate knowledge of and support for equal opportunity rights, responsibilities, and procedures.
- 88. Provide guidance to administrative and support personnel to accomplish audit/job objective.

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#### Full Performance Level

In addition to performing tasks described above as developmental, the following task may be performed by Full Performance Level staff in Band I:

- 89. Encourage staff members' contributions and high quality performance through words of encouragement, praise, direct assistance, etc.

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Band II

In addition to performing developmental and full performance tasks, the following tasks may be performed by Band II staff:

90. Maintain good relations with congressional staffs and committees prior to, during, and upon completion of specific project assignments to exchange information.

91. Maintain open communication channels with congressional, professional, academic, etc. groups to exchange information.

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## Job Dimension Definition

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### Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling Dimension

This dimension is applicable only when the ratee is assigned some supervisory responsibility. Technical review of work, in a nonsupervisory role, is covered in other of the six job dimensions.

GAO Evaluators and Specialists, in a supervisory capacity, perform a variety of important leadership and staff development activities. These include:

- Delegating to subordinates, by (1) communicating performance expectations and standards; (2) assigning tasks, coordinating work, and holding staff accountable for the completion of work; (3) giving advice, demonstration and instruction to staff on methods of performing work; and (4) controlling staff time and attendance to facilitate work completion (regional staff).
- Reviewing subordinates performance, such as: (1) monitoring progress of assignment and making needed changes; (2) reviewing staff work to assess accuracy, compliance with objectives and sufficiency of supporting documentation; (3) evaluating staff performance against expectations and appraising performance; (4) counseling staff members on job performance; (5) rewarding staff members, formally and informally, to encourage contributions and high quality performance; and (6) assessing adherence to GAO policies and standards.
- Promoting team building by working to resolve disagreements and interpersonal problems, and identifying and addressing personal problems that affect job performance.
- Promoting staff development of subordinates, such as: (1) assuring fairness in assigning work, providing on-the-job training (OJT) and other developmental opportunities; (2) encouraging participation in GAO training programs; (3) selecting assignments that enhance job-related skills and meet developmental needs; and (4) assuring full utilization of staff according to their skill level and band.

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## Job Dimension Task List

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### Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling Dimension

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#### Full Performance Level

The following tasks may be performed by Full Performance Level staff, when assigned:

- 92. Establish and communicate performance goals and standards to subordinates to clarify expectations.
- 93. Delegate tasks and hold people accountable for effective and timely completion of work assignments.
- 94. Coordinate efforts of staff to assure required tasks are accomplished.
- 95. Give advice, direction, demonstration, and instruction to staff on methods of performing various audit/project tasks.
- 96. Monitor progress of project and make needed changes.
- 97. Review staff work to assess accuracy, compliance with objectives, and sufficiency of supporting documentation.
- 98. Measure and evaluate individual staff performance against performance expectations and performance standards, provide feedback, and prepare performance appraisals.
- 99. Counsel staff members on their job performance, career developmental and training needs.
- 100. Reward (formally or informally) staff members to further encourage contributions and high quality performance.
- 101. Ensure that employees adhere to GAO policies and standards.

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102. Work to resolve disagreements and interpersonal difficulties within the staff.

103. Assure fairness to all employees in assigning work, providing OJT, and other developmental opportunities.

104. Encourage participation in GAO training programs.

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**Band II**

In addition to performing the tasks described above, the following additional tasks may be performed by Band II staff:

105. Control staff time and attendance schedule to facilitate job progress.

106. Identify and address personal problems that affect job performance.

107. Assign tasks to staff that enhance job-related skills and meet developmental needs (OJT).

108. Assure that assigned staff are fully used to the best of their skill and grade level.

109. Project training needs of staff.

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# Job Dimension Performance Standards for Band I

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Performance Standards define the levels of performance in work-related terms. The standards are organized by the job dimensions and describe typical behaviors that the employee would routinely exhibit to warrant being rated at a particular level.

Readers of these standards should be aware that some standards in this appendix are the same for both the Developmental Level and Full Performance Level in Band I or are the same for both Band I and Band II work. This reflects job analysis research results which documented this circumstance for certain job dimensions and for certain levels and bands.

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## Mandatory Use of Written Standards

The Job Dimension Performance Standards in this appendix are the GAO-wide performance standards for appraising GAO Evaluator and related specialist work on the critical job dimensions of their work.

The Performance Standards are described in some detail at the Exceptional, Fully Successful and Unacceptable levels. Use of the intermediate adjective ratings, **Superior** and **Borderline** are appropriate when the anchor standards described at Exceptional, Fully Successful, and Unacceptable are not fully met.

The following definitions for the intermediate levels are to be used in assigning these performance levels:

**SUPERIOR - Predominant performance for the entire period exceeds the Fully Successful standard, but does not fully meet the Exceptional Standard.**

**BORDERLINE - Predominant performance for the entire period does not overall meet the Fully Successful standard, but generally exceeds the Unacceptable standard.**

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## Reading Standards Beginning With Fully Successful

The Performance Standards are incremental in nature and are grouped around the Fully Successful level. Therefore when establishing performance expectations, read the Performance Standards beginning with the **Fully Successful** level.

When deciding the final check mark rating for each dimension, read the fully successful standard first (the fully successful standard appears first for each dimension in this appendix). If predominant performance

is not judged to be Fully Successful for the entire appraisal period, then read the highest standard, Exceptional, and the lowest standard, Unacceptable, and determine if predominant performance is at either of those levels. If predominant performance is between Fully Successful and Exceptional, then performance would be rated Superior. If predominant performance is between Fully Successful and Unacceptable, then performance would be rated Borderline. The definitions of Superior and Borderline appear in the preceding paragraph.

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## **Standards Not All-Inclusive**

When applying the Performance Standards, remember that they are representative of performance for each entire dimension. The staff member need not perform all of the activities or the exact activities described in the standards to be rated at that level. The standards are neither exhaustive nor all-inclusive. They are provided to help the rater clarify the meaning of each performance level by describing typical behavior. If the staff member has not performed the activities cited in the standard for a given performance level, but has performed activities of equivalent difficulty and quality, the staff member still could be rated at that level.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Planning Dimension

Fully Successful: For the Planning dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level

Identifies, within established time frames, most of the relevant sources of information needed to accomplish detailed project steps and frequently determines their availability and ways to obtain it.

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### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standard above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Within available opportunities, suggests realistic ideas for projects that are potentially productive and relevant to the issue area.

Makes assignment segment estimates which are practical and complete. Staff and skills needed, time frames to complete work, and constraints are identified and some contingencies are specified. Estimates for segment of assignment or other work products require a normal amount of supervision and revision by the supervisor.

Adequately researches and recognizes available alternative methods of meeting project objectives, develops an understanding of these approaches, and usually proposes a methodology which recognizes assignment constraints.

Identifies similar projects, recognizes which factors can potentially result in conflict and duplication, and works out coordination for timely solutions.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Planning Dimension

Exceptional: For the Planning dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level

Identifies, almost always in advance of established time frames, relevant sources of information needed to accomplish detailed project steps and completely and accurately determines their availability and ways to obtain it effectively and efficiently.

---

### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standard above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Actively seeks opportunities to make productive contributions to issue area plan. Suggestions reflect consideration of objectives, scope and alternatives. Employee is sought after by supervisors and peers as a source of ideas for new work.

Makes assignment segment estimates which are almost always on target, address staff and skills needed, time frames to complete work, work locations, headquarters and field coordination, and minimize "down-time." Assignment segment constraints and contingencies are anticipated at the outset. Estimates for segments of assignment and other work products require virtually no substantive changes by the supervisor.

Independently researches and has an in-depth understanding of all the alternative methods and/or approaches which will best meet project objectives, and almost always develops a logical, innovative, and complete approach.

Almost always identifies all actual and potential coordination problems and independently develops and implements solutions. Establishes rapport with other GAO staff and devises methods for avoiding future problems.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Planning Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Planning dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level

Usually fails to identify important sources of information needed to accomplish detailed project steps or seldom identifies sources that are relevant. Usually fails to properly determine the availability of the information and ways to obtain it within established time frames.

---

### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standard above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Within available opportunities, rarely makes usable suggestions for potential projects; does not contribute to planning efforts and/or respond to suggestions from others.

Makes assignment segment estimates which are unrealistic and incomplete (i.e., critical work locations are not identified, estimates of staff and skills needed are inappropriate or inefficient, or time frames to complete work are unrealistic). Assignment or segment constraints and contingencies are not anticipated. Estimates for segment of assignment or other work products require extensive review and revision by supervisor.

Usually fails to consider, understand and/or research appropriate methodologies and factors/requirements to meet project objectives. Does not make meaningful contributions to selection of methodology or suggestions are inappropriate and would result in significant delays in meeting job requirements.

Makes almost no attempt to identify similar projects or to coordinate work efforts and/or fails to act even when informed of coordination problems.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Data Gathering and Documentation Dimension

Fully Successful: For the Data Gathering and Documentation dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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#### Developmental Level

Identifies appropriate data sources; obtains relevant data in a timely manner.

Assembles, indexes and cross-indexes workpapers properly to facilitate analysis within established time frames. Workpapers are organized in such a way to support the preparation of written summaries and/or report segments.

Prepares administrative documentation which is usually complete, accurate and submitted on time. Developmental staff may initially require additional supervision while learning agency documentation requirements.

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#### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standards above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Assists Developmental Level staff in completing administrative forms, when necessary.

Requires a normal amount of supervisory review.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Data Gathering and Documentation Dimension

Exceptional: For the Data Gathering and Documentation dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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#### Developmental Level

Identifies appropriate data sources and obtains relevant data to sustain supportable conclusions within specified time frames and in the most cost effective manner; organizes data in a manner which almost always exceeds expectations for relevance, organization and clarity.

Organizes, indexes and cross-indexes workpapers in a manner which almost always exceeds normal expectations for relevance, organization, clarity of purpose and timeliness. Significantly facilitates and expedites preparation of the written report.

Prepares administrative documentation which is always complete, accurate and is usually completed ahead of time. Is sought after by peers to provide clear guidance in meeting these requirements.

---

#### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standards above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Reviews administrative documentation prepared by others for adherence to requirements. Brings attention to non-adherence to office policies and procedures and seeks improvements.

Supervisory changes to work are minimal.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Data Analysis Dimension

Fully Successful: For the Data Analysis dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level and Full Performance Level

Devises an analysis strategy which adequately addresses the issues. Planning generally considers job constraints. The analysis plan uses "tried and true" analysis techniques.

Evaluates the quantity and quality of the evidence gathered to determine whether it satisfies the requirements of individual project objectives. Is able to determine whether data is sufficient to draw proper conclusions and recommendations, and, if not, follows up. Work products are relevant, complete and timely.

When choosing and/or applying a specialized analytical technique for the project, produces analyses which are timely and complete and use appropriate techniques. Demonstrates understanding of the strengths and limitations of the technique employed, the sensitivity of issues being reviewed and resulting analyses are keyed to these issues. Considers job constraints.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Data Analysis Dimension

Exceptional: For the Data Analysis dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level and Full Performance Level

Devises an analysis strategy which is complete, efficiently considers job constraints (time and staff) and recognizes job quality trade offs. Employee recognizes the need for flexibility in planning when data availability becomes a problem or other factors emerge. Analysis plan uses innovative analytical techniques.

Is sought after by supervisors and peers to examine data and/or analyses to quickly identify and correct weaknesses and assure that all job objectives are met.

Analysis of evidence almost always exceeds established expectations, demonstrated by virtually error-free work in combination with other factors such as heavy work load, the ability to work independently, unusual creativity or the speed of the analysis or some combination of these factors.

When choosing and/or applying a specialized analytical technique for the project, analyses are almost always completed ahead of schedule. Demonstrates knowledge of the sensitive review issues and almost always develops innovative ways to meet project objectives. Almost always plans for alternative analytical strategies.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Data Analysis Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Data Analysis dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level and Full Performance Level

Chooses an analysis strategy which seldom addresses the issues, includes irrelevant analysis and job constraints are rarely considered. Includes inappropriate analysis techniques.

Does not recognize that data is weak or has problems, even after being given several opportunities. Usually cannot identify serious gaps or weaknesses in the evidence gathered and is unable to determine what evidence is needed to satisfy individual project objectives without constant supervision.

When choosing and/or applying a specialized analytical technique for the project, usually does not complete analyses when they are needed. Analyses almost always include inappropriate techniques and provide inadequate information. Supervisor cannot use the analyses or must make extensive substantive changes to meet project objectives.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Written Communication Dimension

**Fully Successful:** For the Written Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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#### Developmental Level

Prepares written products (manually or electronically) which are complete, accurate, logical and timely. Presents sufficient examples when developing conclusions and recommendations. Prepares products which conform with GAO policy guidance. Written products contribute to or can be incorporated into the final product with some revision.

---

#### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standard above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Prepares data collection instruments consisting of properly constructed and formatted items, and usually result in complete coverage of job objectives. Questionnaires or interview items are understandable and use proper grammar and structure.

Written products require a normal amount of review and require some revision by the supervisor.

When reviewing written products of others, conducts helpful and timely reviews of products which include the identification of major flaws, if any exist. Suggestions for change are constructive without being petty and ensure compliance with GAO policy guidance.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Written Communication Dimension

Exceptional: For the Written Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level

Prepares written products (manually or electronically) which are complete, accurate, logical and well organized. Prepares intermediate products such as workpaper summaries and chapters which require no substantive changes and provide support for or can be easily incorporated into the next phase or the final product. Products are almost always completed before established time frames and comply with GAO policy guidance.

---

### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standard above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Prepares data collection instruments which are almost always of high quality in technical construction and reflect a comprehensive understanding of developments in the field. Employee is attuned to identifying sensitive issues and demonstrating originality in measuring them.

Written products require no substantive revision.

When assigned, almost always conducts high quality reviews of written products of others, which detect major flaws, if any exist, and which provide insights into the most complex products. Reviews are uniformly constructive and include outlines of possible revised approaches to remedy the identified problems. Reviews are thorough, but never petty and provide excellent perspective by highlighting major issues.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Written Communication Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Written Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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#### Developmental Level

Prepares written products (manually or electronically) which are incomplete, inaccurate, illogical, untimely or are of little value in meeting project objectives. Prepares products which do not conform with GAO policy guidance. Uses incomplete sentences, incorrect grammar and misspells words.

---

#### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standard above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Prepares final data collection instruments with biased or ambiguous items, provides an inadequate form of data collection, provides incomplete coverage of project objectives, or products are seldom produced on schedule or occasionally are not produced at all.

Employees written products require close supervisory review, monitoring and revision even after coaching.

When reviewing written products of others, is rarely able to provide constructive or helpful assistance, often creating tension with review comments that are arrogant, insulting and/or are clearly irrelevant. Reviews are usually late.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Oral Communication Dimension

Fully Successful: For the Oral Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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#### Developmental Level

Prepares for all interview situations. Questions are clear, concise and logical. Actively listens to comments and acknowledges stated positions and perspective. Responds to comments in definitive, objective and meaningful manner. Sessions do not ramble and appropriate time frames are observed.

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#### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standard above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Participates in preparing for meetings (GAO, agency, or congressional) and assists in preparation of visual aids, when warranted. Evidences knowledge of project objectives, status of efforts and responds directly to questions in his/her specific areas of responsibility. Presents material in clear, complete and organized manner. Actively listens to position of other participants and responds accordingly.

Presents technical information issues and plans clearly and succinctly in a way that is understood by clients. Actively listens to alternative plans proposed by potential clients. Articulates positions that are flexible but convince clients of their basic value.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Oral Communication Dimension

Exceptional: For the Oral Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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#### Developmental Level

Probes, questions or requests information so skillfully that officials readily provide information. Is articulate so that misunderstandings and misconceptions do not occur. Obtains complete information on the first attempt and return visits are not necessary. Interviews are focused and extraneous comments by officials do not impede flow.

---

#### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standard above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Prepares for meetings (GAO, agency or congressional) and nearly always contributes to the meetings by not only presenting information within area of responsibility, but also eliciting beneficial views on the issues. Responds to questions clearly, concisely and accurately. Shows skill in reading audience and adjusts presentation and responses accordingly.

Almost always presents technical information clearly and persuasively for clients demonstrating the importance and relevance of planning and research proposals. Actively listens to client proposals and is sensitive to implied concerns. Routinely convinces clients to adopt more productive research designs by clearly and concisely explaining the strengths and weaknesses of alternative designs even on unusually complex assignments.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Oral Communication Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Oral Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level

Does not prepare for agency interviews. Does not communicate questions clearly, thereby requiring excessive time for repetition and clarification. Antagonizes or attacks agency officials or position. Is unsure of self and not able to answer agency questions.

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### Full Performance Level

In addition to the Performance Standard above, the following additional standards apply to Full Performance Level work:

Does not prepare for meetings (GAO, agency, or congressional) in advance or requires extensive guidance and instruction to prepare for meetings. Disrupts meeting by not listening, asking antagonistic questions or monopolizing discussions. Has extreme difficulty presenting information, responding to specific questions, or distinguishing between facts and opinions.

Usually is unable to present technical information clearly so that it can be understood by clients. Presents absolute position and fails to present alternatives. These weaknesses usually cause the loss of potential clients or client dissatisfaction with technical assistance services.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity (EO) Dimension

Fully Successful: For the Working Relationships, Teamwork, and EO dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level and Full Performance Level

Demonstrates an adequate knowledge and firm support for EO rights, responsibilities and procedures. Works harmoniously with co-workers, not making distinctions based on race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, marital status, political affiliation, or handicaps.

Demonstrates respect and concern for others to strengthen and maintain effective working relationships. Provides support and words of encouragement, praise, etc. to staff members for their contributions and performance in accomplishing work objectives.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity (EO) Dimension

Exceptional: For the Working Relationships, Teamwork, and EO dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level and Full Performance Level

Consistently demonstrates knowledge of and an enthusiastic support for EO rights, responsibilities, and procedures. Is empathetic toward and works successfully with co-workers by not making distinctions based on race, sex, age, etc., Seeks leadership roles in EO programs and activities and encourages others to do the same.

Continuously strives to demonstrate respect and concern for others to strengthen and maintain effective working relationships. Is extremely active in seeking out and helping others to provide support, by advocating and directly providing words of encouragement, praise, etc. to staff members for their contributions and performance in accomplishing work objectives. These actions result in demonstrated improvement in the work group and observable high morale to overcome the adverse effects of highly stressful and unusually demanding work situations.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity (EO) Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Working Relationships, Teamwork, and EO dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Developmental Level and Full Performance Level

Does not demonstrate knowledge or support for EO rights, responsibilities, and procedures. Avoids members of another race, sex, etc. and expresses an unwillingness to work with them. Makes derogatory (racist, sexist, etc.) remarks.

Almost never demonstrates respect and concern for others. Without regard to the need for results, almost never provides words of encouragement, praise, direct assistance, etc. to staff members for high quality performance and staff contributions.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling Dimension

**Fully Successful:** For the Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Full Performance Level (When Assigned)

Communicates performance expectations clearly and precisely at the beginning of the subordinate's involvement on the assignment. Solicits subordinates' input about expectations and opportunities to develop their skills. When asked, provides clear, accurate and practical assistance to subordinates that addresses their needs.

Continually monitors progress of individual staff members. Identifies necessary changes and develops alternative courses of action before assignment is adversely affected. Considers staff input and keeps staff informed of the basis for decisions affecting their work.

Completes performance appraisals in accordance with prescribed policies and procedures, i.e., appraisal forms are complete, expectations are established, progress reviews are held (if required by local policy), appraisals are submitted to the designated reviewer, appraisals are discussed with the ratee, narrative justifications and adjective check marks are consistent with the performance standards, and ratee comments are appropriately considered. Appraisals are on time. Provides timely performance feedback over the course of the assignment.

Discusses interpersonal problems with affected staff members involving them in the solution. Is aware of GAO's professional counseling services, seeks their advice, and refers affected staff members to counseling, when appropriate.

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## Performance Standards: Band I

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### Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

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### Full Performance Level (When Assigned)

Usually does not communicate performance expectations to subordinates and seldom provides remedial assistance or the assistance provided is not appropriate.

Usually fails to monitor progress on the project, make timely changes, or keep supervisors informed of problems resulting in wasted resources. Seldom bothers to involve staff in or keep them informed of job progress.

Usually fails to complete performance appraisals in accordance with prescribed policies and procedures, or appraisals are seldom prepared on time. Provides little or no performance feedback.

Overlooks or ignores disagreements and interpersonal problems until they adversely affect the assignment.

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is not judged to be Fully Successful for the entire appraisal period, then read the highest standard, Exceptional, and the lowest standard, Unacceptable, and determine if predominant performance is at either of those levels. If predominant performance is between Fully Successful and Exceptional, then performance would be rated Superior. If predominant performance is between Fully Successful and Unacceptable, then performance would be rated Borderline. The definitions of Superior and Borderline appear in the preceding paragraph.

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## Standards Not All-Inclusive

When applying the Performance Standards, remember that they are representative of performance for each entire dimension. The staff member need not perform all of the activities or the exact activities described in the standards to be rated at that level. The standards are neither exhaustive nor all-inclusive. They are provided to help the rater clarify the meaning of each performance level by describing typical behavior. If the staff member has not performed the activities cited in the standard for a given performance level, but has performed activities of equivalent difficulty and quality, the staff member still could be rated at that level.

## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Planning Dimension

Fully Successful: For the Planning dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Submits job proposals that are relevant to the issue area and are sufficiently detailed to ascertain that they are practical and achievable.

Makes assignment estimates which are practical and complete. Staff and skills needed, time frames to complete work, and constraints are identified and some contingencies are specified.

Uses available literature to construct alternative research approaches, considering professional standards and generally recognized analytical techniques. Recognizes the appropriate methodology to be used on a project and generally offers constructive suggestions to modify proposals to facilitate meeting requirements.

Coordinates his/her projects with other projects to minimize conflict and duplication and achieves timely project results.

Chooses format for message communication that facilitates logical and conclusive presentation of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The form of communication generally meets the customer's needs.

Work plans, estimates and/or products require a normal amount of review and require only occasional revision by supervisor and/or higher management.

## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Planning Dimension

Exceptional: For the Planning dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Submits job proposals which are innovative, provide unique or comprehensive coverage of an issue area; identifies impacts on cross-cutting issues; accurately predicts customer's interest. Is often asked to provide leadership in issue-area planning.

Makes assignment estimates which are almost always on target, address staff and skills needed, time frames to complete work, work locations, headquarters and field coordination, and minimize "downtime." Assignment constraints and contingencies are anticipated at the outset.

Performs independent research into alternative methods and approaches and/or introduces new insights in job methodology which exceed expectations. Proposals and results reflect an advanced level of technical and professional evaluation competency. Or, develops innovative methodology that is recognized by professional peers as having theoretical value and practical application to work projects.

Identifies and resolves all actual and potential coordination problems. Maintains rapport with other GAO staff to avoid problems.

Chooses format for message communication which is logical and effective in presenting findings, conclusions and recommendations. The format chosen adheres to GAO policy, meets the customer's needs, and requires a minimal amount of time and staff resources.

Work plans, estimates and/or products are produced ahead of established deadlines, require little or no review, and changes by the supervisor and/or higher management are minimal.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Planning Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Planning dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Seldom submits job proposals in time to be useful or submits proposals which are so incomplete or unsuitable that they are not useful in planning future work in the issue area.

Makes assignment estimates which are unrealistic and incomplete (i.e., critical work locations are not identified, estimates of staff and skills needed are inappropriate or inefficient, or time frames to complete work are unrealistic). Assignment constraints and contingencies are not anticipated.

Usually fails to construct alternative research approaches which meet project objectives. Approaches are inconsistent with professional standards. Rarely makes constructive suggestions for the choice of the methodologies to be used on a project. Suggested revisions to proposed methodology are inappropriate and would result in significant delays in meeting project requirements.

Makes almost no attempt to identify similar projects or to coordinate work efforts and/or fails to act even when informed of coordination problems.

Chooses format for message communication that is inappropriate and/or illogical and incomplete and requires extensive substantive change. Communication method fails to meet customer's need, requires an unnecessary amount of resources and/or does not adhere to GAO policies and procedures.

Work plans, estimates and/or products require extensive review and revision by supervisor and/or higher management.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Data Gathering and Documentation Dimension

Fully Successful: For the Data Gathering and Documentation dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Identifies appropriate data sources; obtains relevant data and resolves access to record problems in a timely manner.

Assembles, indexes and cross-indexes workpapers properly to facilitate analysis and referencing within established time frames. Workpapers are organized in such a way to support the preparation of written summaries and/or report segments.

Prepares administrative documentation which is usually complete, accurate and submitted on time. Developmental staff may initially require additional supervision while learning agency documentation requirements. Assists staff in completing administrative forms, when necessary.

Prepares draft products that require few substantive changes as they move through the referencing and review process.

Requires a normal amount of supervisory review.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Data Gathering and Documentation Dimension

Exceptional: For the Data Gathering and Documentation dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Identifies appropriate data sources and obtains relevant data to sustain supportable conclusions within specified time frames and in the most cost effective manner; organizes data in a manner which almost always exceeds expectations for relevance, organization and clarity. Quickly resolves access to records problems or agency delays in providing documents important to job objectives.

Organizes, indexes and cross-indexes workpapers in a manner which almost always exceeds normal expectations for relevance, organization, clarity of purpose and timeliness. Significantly facilitates and expedites preparation of the written report.

Prepares administrative documentation which is always complete, accurate and is usually completed ahead of time. Is sought after by peers to provide clear guidance in meeting these requirements. Reviews administrative documentation prepared by others for adherence to requirements. Brings attention to non-adherence to office policies and procedures and seeks improvements.

Prepares draft products that require no substantive changes due to documentation or support deficiencies.

Supervisory changes to work are minimal. Band II staff require no supervision in completing requirements.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Data Gathering and Documentation Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Data Gathering and Documentation dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Chooses a data gathering approach and/or submits documentation which is usually incomplete or inappropriate, and is rarely reliable. Basis of support for conclusion(s) is missing. Does not follow up to obtain missing data or follow up is ineffective. Does not respond promptly or effectively when access to records problems are encountered.

Submits workpapers which are so poorly organized that analysis is not possible.

Prepares administrative documentation which is usually late, inaccurate or incomplete.

Prepares draft products requiring many substantive changes due to inadequacies in documentation or support.

Requires extensive supervision or coaching to complete work requirements.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Data Analysis Dimension

**Fully Successful:** For the Data Analysis dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Devises an analysis strategy which adequately addresses the issues. Planning generally considers job constraints. The analysis plan uses "tried and true" analysis techniques.

Evaluates the quantity and quality of the evidence gathered to determine whether it satisfies the requirements of individual project objectives. Is able to determine whether data is sufficient to draw proper conclusions and recommendations, and, if not, follows up. Work products are relevant, complete and timely.

When choosing and/or applying a specialized analytical technique for the project, produces analyses which are timely and complete and use appropriate techniques. Demonstrates understanding of the strengths and limitations of the technique employed, the sensitivity of issues being reviewed and resulting analyses are keyed to these issues. Considers job constraints.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Data Analysis Dimension

Exceptional: For the Data Analysis dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Devises an analysis strategy which is complete, efficiently considers job constraints (time and staff) and recognizes job quality trade offs. Employee recognizes the need for flexibility in planning when data availability becomes a problem or other factors emerge. Analysis plan uses innovative analytical techniques.

Is sought after by supervisors and peers to examine data and/or analyses to quickly identify and correct weaknesses and assure that all job objectives are met.

Analysis of evidence almost always exceeds established expectations, demonstrated by virtually error-free work in combination with other factors such as heavy work load, the ability to work independently, unusual creativity or the speed of the analysis or some combination of these factors.

When choosing and/or applying a specialized analytical technique for the project, analyses are almost always completed ahead of schedule. Demonstrates knowledge of the sensitive review issues and almost always develops innovative ways to meet project objectives. Almost always plans for alternative analytical strategies.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Data Analysis Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Data Analysis dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Chooses an analysis strategy which seldom addresses the issues, includes irrelevant analysis and job constraints are rarely considered. Includes inappropriate analysis techniques.

Does not recognize that data is weak or has problems, even after being given several opportunities. Usually cannot identify serious gaps or weaknesses in the evidence gathered and is unable to determine what evidence is needed to satisfy individual project objectives without constant supervision.

When choosing and/or applying a specialized analytical technique for the project, usually does not complete analyses when they are needed. Analyses almost always include inappropriate techniques and provide inadequate information. Supervisor cannot use the analyses or must make extensive substantive changes to meet project objectives.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Written Communication Dimension

Fully Successful: For the Written Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Prepares written products (manually or electronically) which are complete, accurate, logical and timely. Presents sufficient examples when developing conclusions and recommendations. Prepares products which conform with GAO policy guidance. Band II staff produce complete reports which require only occasional substantive revision. Reviews and/or revises report drafts from staff quickly and generally assures issues are presented accurately and are fully supported.

Prepares data collection instruments consisting of properly constructed and formatted items, and usually result in complete coverage of job objectives. Questionnaires or interview items are understandable and use proper grammar and structure.

Written products require a normal amount of review and require some revision by the supervisor. When reviewing written products of others, conducts helpful and timely reviews of products which include the identification of major flaws, if any exist. Suggestions for change are constructive without being petty and ensure compliance with GAO policy guidance.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Written Communication Dimension

Exceptional: For the Written Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Prepares written products (manually or electronically) which are complete, accurate, logical and well organized. Products are almost always completed before established time frames and comply with GAO policy guidance. Band II staff produce complete reports or other written products which present complex issues in easily understood language and/or contain conclusions and recommendations which are rarely questioned. Substantive changes are, for the most part, unnecessary.

Prepares data collection instruments which are almost always of high quality in technical construction and reflect a comprehensive understanding of developments in the field. Employee is attuned to identifying sensitive issues and demonstrating originality in measuring them.

Written products require no substantive revision. Reviews of the written products of staff are thorough and do not require additional revision.

Almost always conducts high quality reviews of written products of others, which detect major flaws, if any exist, and which provide insights into the most complex products. Reviews are uniformly constructive and include outlines of possible revised approaches to remedy the identified problems. Reviews are thorough, but never petty and provide excellent perspective by highlighting major issues.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Written Communication Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Written Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Prepares written products (manually or electronically) which are incomplete, inaccurate, illogical, untimely or are of little value in meeting project objectives. Usually writes draft reports that require substantial changes after several rewrites and are submitted after extended deadlines. Prepares products which do not conform with GAO policy guidance. Uses incomplete sentences, incorrect grammar and misspells words.

Prepares final data collection instruments with biased or ambiguous items, provides an inadequate form of data collection, provides incomplete coverage of project objectives, or products are seldom produced on schedule or occasionally are not produced at all.

Written products require close supervisory review, monitoring and revision even after coaching.

When reviewing written products of others, is rarely able to provide constructive or helpful assistance, often creating tension with review comments that are arrogant, insulting and/or are clearly irrelevant. Reviews are usually late.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Oral Communication Dimension

Fully Successful: For the Oral Communication dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Presents information in a clear, well-organized manner and is prepared to answer most questions. Additional questions are invited to assure understanding. Keeps the discussion or meeting in line with the objectives. Ensures understanding exists at the conclusion of these meetings/discussions.

Prepares for and conducts meetings (GAO, agency, or congressional). Has sufficient knowledge of all aspects of project and routinely discusses status clearly and concisely. Shows skill in reading audience and adjusts presentation and responses accordingly. Responses to questions generally need no further explanation. Is at ease in eliciting participation of others. Summarizes results of meetings prior to their conclusion.

Presents GAO position (to the public, private organizations, or the press) accurately and acts in accordance with policy. Recognizes level of authority as GAO spokesperson. Weighs consequences of responses before speaking, clearly distinguishing between fact and opinion, and avoids disclosing sensitive/tentative findings prematurely. Listens well and responds to issues at hand; minimizes extraneous information.

Presents technical information issues and plans clearly and succinctly in a way that is understood by clients. Actively listens to alternative plans proposed by potential clients. Articulates positions that are flexible but convince clients of their basic value.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity (EO) Dimension

Exceptional: For the Working Relationships, Teamwork, and EO dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Consistently demonstrates knowledge of and an enthusiastic support for EO rights, responsibilities, and procedures. Is empathetic toward and works successfully with co-workers by not making distinctions based on race, sex, age, etc., Seeks leadership roles in EO programs and activities and encourages others to do the same.

Continuously strives to demonstrate respect and concern for others to strengthen and maintain effective working relationships. Is extremely active in seeking out and helping others to provide support, by advocating and directly providing words of encouragement, praise, etc. to staff members for their contributions and performance in accomplishing work objectives. These actions result in demonstrated improvement in the work group and observable high morale to overcome the adverse effects of highly stressful and unusually demanding work situations.

As a supervisor, actively seeks out staff for inclusion on team without distinction based on race, sex, age, etc; works to assure equal acceptance and status within the group and in work-related social functions; assigns tasks in a fair and equitable manner; and seeks and facilitates opportunities for development of all staff members.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Working Relationships, Teamwork, and Equal Opportunity (EO) Dimension

**Unacceptable:** For the Working Relationships, Teamwork, and EO dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Does not demonstrate knowledge or support for EO rights, responsibilities, and procedures. Avoids members of another race, sex, etc. and expresses an unwillingness to work with them. Makes derogatory (racist, sexist, etc.) remarks.

Almost never demonstrates respect and concern for others. Without regard to the need for results, almost never provides words of encouragement, praise, direct assistance, etc. to staff members for high quality performance and staff contributions.

As a supervisor, either refuses to accept minority staff members; keeps relevant work information from those assigned; or consistently assigns work or trips on the basis of race, sex, etc.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling Dimension

**Fully Successful:** For the Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Fully Successful, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Communicates performance expectations clearly and precisely at the beginning of the subordinate's involvement on the assignment. Solicits subordinates' input about expectations and opportunities to develop their skills. When asked, provides clear, accurate and practical assistance to subordinates that addresses their needs.

Continually monitors progress of individual staff members. Identifies necessary changes and develops alternative courses of action before assignment is adversely affected. Considers staff input and keeps staff informed of the basis for decisions affecting their work.

Completes performance appraisals in accordance with prescribed policies and procedures, i.e., appraisal forms are complete, expectations are established, progress reviews are held (if required by local policy), appraisals are submitted to the designated reviewer, appraisals are discussed with the ratee, narrative justifications and adjective check marks are consistent with the performance standards, and ratee comments are appropriately considered. Appraisals are on time. Provides timely performance feedback over the course of the assignment.

Discusses interpersonal problems with affected staff members involving them in the solution. Is aware of GAO's professional counseling services, seeks their advice, and refers affected staff members to counseling, when appropriate.

Makes reasonable assignment staffing decisions and/or work assignments that generally enhance employee skills and meet developmental needs on the basis of available information regarding staff members' existing skills, job requirements, etc.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling Dimension

Exceptional: For the Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Exceptional, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Logically explains performance expectations, taking into account job requirements, deadlines, and subordinates' expectations and gains staff's acceptance. Anticipates need to adjust expectations as job conditions change. Provides direction and assistance to staff by identifying and using alternative approaches according to situation. Uses judgement in determining amount of assistance required; lets high achievers develop by reducing day-to-day instruction and supervision.

While monitoring staff progress on assignment, frequently anticipates and resolves sensitive personal problems without affecting deadlines. Notifies top management of personal issues requiring action and recommends courses of action acceptable to management and staff.

Completes performance appraisals in accordance with all policies and procedures and on time. Performance problems are anticipated and remedial counseling occurs throughout the assignment. Strategies for staff performance improvement are devised and implemented throughout the assignment.

Identifies potential staff disagreements and interpersonal problems and takes action or makes appropriate referral before they adversely affect the job. When short-range solutions are not possible, adjusts work assignments and responsibilities so that problems have minimal impact on the work.

Makes assignment staffing decisions and/or work assignments which almost always achieve a highly desirable employee/job match, significantly enhance employee skills, and fully meet developmental needs.

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## Performance Standards: Band II

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### Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling Dimension

Unacceptable: For the Supervision, Appraisal, and Counseling dimension, the employee's predominant performance is Unacceptable, that is, the overall work during the entire period meets or falls below that characterized by the following behaviors or comparable behaviors.

Usually does not communicate performance expectations to subordinates and seldom provides remedial assistance or the assistance provided is not appropriate.

Usually fails to monitor progress on the project, make timely changes, or keep supervisors informed of problems resulting in wasted resources. Seldom bothers to involve staff in or keep them informed of job progress.

Usually fails to complete performance appraisals in accordance with prescribed policies and procedures, or appraisals are seldom prepared on time. Provides little or no performance feedback.

Overlooks or ignores disagreements and interpersonal problems until they adversely affect the assignment.

Makes haphazard assignment staffing decisions that seldom enhance employee skills or reflect developmental needs of staff. Ignores even readily available information when assigning staff.

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

**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

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General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548**

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Penalty for Private Use \$300**

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