



**Tips and Tidbits**  
**Issue #: 1 - 2011**



**14 January 2011**

**Question: What is involved in a supervisor's performance management and assessment of assigned employees' work?**

The Total Army Performance Evaluation System (TAPES) is the Army's system for planning and appraising performance. Army Regulation 690-400, Chapter 4302 defines performance management as the systematic process of integrating performance, pay, and awards systems to improve individual and organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of Army mission and goals. TAPES is designed to improve, manage, and assess performance by communicating organizational goals and priorities. This is achieved by establishing individual expectations for performance that reflect organizational goals and priorities, facilitate frequent discussion, provide an environment of recognition of achievements, and providing counseling and assistance in areas in which employees can improve. TAPES requires a written performance plan, midpoint (interim) assessment, and an annual evaluation (rating) - all components that provide supervisors and managers tools for systematic assessment of performance results achieved to make sound plans and decisions concerning compensation, training, rewards, reassignments, promotions, reductions in grade, retention, reductions in force, and removal. TAPES elements lay the foundation for a sound and continuing basis for effective supervisor-subordinate partnerships in pursuit of common goals.

Under TAPES the first line supervisor is required to prepare a written performance plan to employees within 30 calendar days of either the beginning of the rating period or the arrival of the employee to begin the new job, whichever is the appropriate circumstance. The performance plan should be tied to the official job description to include mission related standards. These responsibilities (or objectives) are designed to measure employees' accomplishments for the annual appraisal. Upon the establishment of the performance plan, supervisors are to conduct an initial counseling with the employee. This is the primary opportunity for management to communicate their expectations in measurable terms. Supervisors may use this opportunity to communicate other factors in accessing performance such as the Army values, ethics, professional development, and individual goals. This communication must be documented via DA 7222-1 or DA 7223-1, the Support Form, before the employee may be held accountable.

Throughout the entire rating period, employee performance should be observed, documented, and discussed.

When the mid-point of an employee's rating period is reached, managers are required to conduct counseling with their employees. Midpoint counseling provides informal feedback and provides an opportunity for input on performance expectations and accomplishments for the first half of the rating period. Although one documented mid-point (interim) counseling is required annually, supervisors can conduct performance counseling at any time. Managers should discuss

individual employee performance considering quality of their work, productivity, timeliness, and need for professional development when they see the need arise.

At the conclusion of the rating cycle, raters are responsible for preparing a timely written performance evaluation that accurately assesses the ratee's total contributions made toward meeting the organizational goals and priorities. This assessment is an overall analysis of an employee's recent successes and failures, personal strengths and weaknesses. Management's observation and evaluations are used to determine who will be assigned to chair the next team, promotion or reassignment to other positions, the need of further training, recognition and rewards, as well as the overall summary evaluation.

The TAPES system has many timelines, forms and specific requirements, but a manager's maximum utilization of personnel requires much deeper, more reflective, ongoing assessment of talents and skills available to accomplish the mission. A major influence on a rater's assessment should be the employee's feedback, motivation and suggestions. Listening and weighing this input may suggest additional challenges are appropriate for that employee in the new year. If planned carefully, a manager should be ready to present each employee's annual appraisal for the past year and initial counseling for the coming year at the same time. The goal should be to communicate assessments of employee performance throughout the year so there are no last minute surprises.

For additional information, please contact your servicing MER Human Resources Specialist at the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.

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