

## Performance Review and Development System (PRDS)

The annual Performance Review and Development System (PRDS) cycle sets out the stages by which we are guided in respect of planning, objective setting, coaching, review and feedback within government's financial year. However, one of the most vital skills needed to make the PRDS experience successful, meaningful and rewarding is communication.

At each stage of the PRDS cycle, communication is the vehicle used to push the process forward. Communication is defined in this context, as a process of transmitting and receiving work related information to and from two or more persons. While communication may take many forms, under the PRDS, written and oral communication is preferred. But, make no mistake, non-verbal signals also play a part in the process. A perceptive manager can easily read his subordinates' body language, similarly an observant employee will also pick up non-verbal messages from his supervisor.

What do we need to do in order to keep communication lines open?

*Often persons do not listen because:*

- They feel that we do not listen to them.
- Too often our messages lack relevance to their situation.
- We talk about us, not about them.
- We do not ask their opinion.
- Our words represent an attack; and
- They have not yet learned to trust us.

*People listen to us when:*

- They feel we will listen to them.
- Our words are relevant to their own situation.
- They sense that we are in touch with their feelings and our own.
- It is clear that we have taken their feelings and opinions into account.
- The messages in what we say and how we say them, are consistent with each other; and
- They have learned to trust us.

What can you do to help the PRDS meetings flow smoothly?

*Before the meeting*

- Both supervisor and employee should refresh their knowledge of the PRDS.
- The supervisor should give advance notice of the meeting.
- The supervisor should encourage the employee to prepare for the meeting.
- The supervisor/employee should review the employee's job description and performance history.
- The meeting should be held in a private setting, so as to ensure that it will not be interrupted.

*During the meeting*

- Foster mutual participation
- Encourage appropriate input.
- Actively listen to each other's point of view and provide feedback.
- Focus on the issue not the individual.
- Avoid personal comments, criticism and assigning blame.
- Focus on mutual problem solving.
- Be ready to accept both positive and constructive, negative feedback.
- Discuss and agree on specific strategies for moving forward

## The PRDS Cycle

The PRDS Cycle has four formal stages at which supervisors meet with employees to discuss matters related to that employee's work.

**Stage 1.**      *The Planning Meeting*

We have already discussed the planning meeting which takes place in March or April. During the planning meeting the supervisor and the employee prepares the individual workplan based on the employee's job description. (Please see Section 3.1, pages 7-8 of the Performance Review & Development System Guidelines, version 30:17-01-08).

### **Stages 2. and 3.**      *The Progress Meetings*

Progress meetings are held with each employee in July and December. The supervisor should request the employee to bring to the meeting details of any issues, concerns or problems preventing progress towards achieving the objectives. The manager should also consider for discussion in the meeting, any aspects of the employee's performance or behaviour that are either exceeding or not meeting the required expectations. Should it be found the employee's progress was hampered by factors beyond his /her control; the supervisor must document these findings on the relevant section of the PRDS Form.

### **Stage 4.**      *The Appraisal/Assessment Meeting*

All the steps outlined above in the section "Before the meeting" should be undertaken for the Appraisal /Assessment meeting ensuring that the employee fully understands the performance review process and the relationship of the performance rating scale to the achievement of objectives.

The employee should bring to the meeting his/her self-appraisal. For this, he/she should consider his/her objectives and achievements and what rating could be appropriate.

During the meeting each objective and how well it has been achieved is discussed in turn, with comments being noted on the work plan form.

A total rating is then agreed for achievement of objectives in line with the objectives rating scale at the bottom of the work plan form.