An Assessment of Texas State Agencies Employee Performance Appraisal Forms

by

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ABSTRACT:

Purpose: The purpose of this research is three fold. The first purpose uses the literature to develop the characteristics of a model employee performance appraisal form. The second purpose is to gauge selected Texas mid sized state agencies performance appraisal forms using the model. The third purpose is to make recommendations to improve the performance appraisal forms.

Method: Content analysis is the research method used to assess the employee performance appraisal forms of Texas state agencies. The data is collected through content analysis of Texas state agencies employee performance appraisal forms. The study examined twenty-seven Texas state agencies that were non-educational institutions that employed 50 to 1000 employees.

Findings: The overall findings reveal that the majority of state agencies do use the components, and some may need to be defined more clearly. There were also several additional criteria found on agency forms that may be useful to other agencies.

About the Author

In 1979 Mindy Martinez was born in New Braunfels, Texas and raised in Seguin, Texas. She graduated with a BA in Public Administration and a minor in political science from Texas State University – San Marcos in the summer of 2004. She decided to continue her studies and pursue a Masters of Public Administration. She is actively involved in Central Texas (CenTex) ASPA (American Society for Public Administration) and is currently the board secretary. Mindy worked at the Texas Legislative Council in the human resources section as the human resources assistant, which sparked her interest in exploring a topic in the human resources field. For additional information, please contact her at mindymmr@yahoo.com.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Appendix A   **Letter to Human Resources Manager**

Appendix B   **Best Overall Practice & Job Requirements**

Appendix C   **Best Practice – Communication Skills**

Appendix D   **Best Practice - Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork**

Appendix E   **Best Practice - Adaptability**

Appendix F   **Best Practice - Dependability**

Appendix G   **Best Practice - Goals**

Appendix H   **Best Practice - Comments**

Appendix I   **Best Practice - Signatures**

Appendix J   **Best Practice - Leadership**

Appendix K   **Best Practice – Training & Development**

Appendix L   **Best Practice – Planning & Organizing**

Appendix M   **Best Practice – Human Resources Signature**

Chapter 1
Introduction

"Ever since it was discovered that employee performance held the key to success, there have been continuous efforts to understand what optimizes performance, and how performance appraisals can be used as a vital observation tool," (Kressler 2003, 3). This topic is useful because performance appraisals are an important part of jobs, and if used correctly, they could become a powerful tool to enhance performance and motivation. According to Grote (2000, 10), "the purpose of performance appraisal is to identify the quality of an individual's job performance." Performance appraisals should guide future development, leverage existing strengths, and address skill deficiencies. Performance appraisal forms often suffer from design flaws. Unfortunately, managers seldom receive adequate training in appraisal administration and are seldom rewarded for accuracy in appraisal. Thomas and Bretz, (1994, 28) states that "both managers and employees tend to approach appraisal sessions with fear and loathing."

The performance appraisal system is a formal routine process that organizations use to evaluate their employees. Murphy and Cleveland, (1995, 326) believe that performance appraisals can help organizations in four ways. First, they can enhance the quality of organizational decisions, ranging from promotions, layoffs, and transfers. Second, they can enhance the quality of individual decisions, ranging from career choices to decisions about where to direct one's time and effort. Third, they provide a set of tools for organizational diagnosis and development. Finally, performance appraisals can affect employees' views of and attachment to their

organization. Management can use performance appraisals to make decisions such as retaining a probationary employee, or determining a strategy to improve employee performance (Cayer 2004, 91).

Performance appraisal is a tool of management that can lead to better communication, motivation and feedback (Kressler 2003, 61). According to Kressler, (2003, 49) it is important for everyone involved to understand the principles governing the appraisal process as well as the appraisal system itself. T.V. Rao (2004, 126) conducted a survey of appraisal practices in forty-five different organizations. The following observations could be made from the results of the survey: "About 50% profess the purpose of their appraisals as regulating employee behavior as well as developing capabilities. About 30% of them still use appraisals only for controlling and regulating employee behavior. About 10% use appraisals for development purposes."

Previous Applied Research Projects

There have been three Texas State Applied Research Projects on the Performance Appraisal Process in Texas state or local government. One of the key elements of performance appraisal is the form used to document the employees' performance. Earlier studies took a big picture perspective and looked at the process. Neither of the three studies assessed the performance appraisal forms.

In 2003, Chad Worley assessed the performance appraisal system of Travis County Departments by using an assessment model developed in previous research. The ideal type model for the performance appraisal system contains seven categories:

policies and procedures, managerial support, training, setting of employee goals, setting of performance standards, observation of performance standards, and appraising performance (Worley 2003).

His assessment was performed by using a case study research design that included survey research, focus interviews, and content analysis. He found that the performance appraisal system of Travis County Departments coincides with the model performance appraisal system. He made two recommendations, development of more comprehensive policies and procedures, and consistent application of rewards to those that perform at or above standards (Worley 2003).

In 1998, Le Ann Piatt developed a practical ideal performance system for her research. Her project, "Analysis of Municipal Government Performance Appraisal Systems" focused on performance appraisal systems of Texas Cities. She used the practical ideal performance system that she developed to conduct a content analysis of the policies and procedures of cities with a population between 20,000 and 50,000. She also conducted a survey, which she developed, of the cities. Through her research, she found that the performance appraisal systems did not consistently provide an explanation of setting of employee goals, performance standards, rating criteria, and appeal procedures. She also discovered that cities do not consistently provide training on the appraisal process. She recommended that cities set goals and performance standards (Piatt 1998).

In 2000, Paul Johnson conducted a follow-up study based on Piatt's research. He used the practical ideal performance appraisal system that she created, and conducted a survey and performed content analysis. He studied Juvenile Probation

Departments in Texas, rather than Texas cities. His findings were similar to Piatt's, that performance appraisal systems did not consistently provide an explanation of setting of employee goals, performance standards, rating criteria, and who is responsible for performing appraisals. He agreed with Piatt, and recommended that employee goals and performance standards should be set by both the rater and employee (Johnson 2000).

Research Purpose

No systematic analysis has been done on performance appraisal forms used by Texas state agencies. This study is an attempt to address this gap in knowledge about the performance appraisal forms used by the state of Texas.

The purpose of this research is three fold. The first purpose uses the literature to develop a model employee performance appraisal form. The second purpose is to gauge selected Texas state agencies' performance appraisal forms using the model. The third purpose is to make recommendations to improve the performance appraisal forms.

Chapter Summaries

This applied research project contains five chapters.

Chapter Two - The purpose of this chapter is to examine the literature concerning performance appraisals. The purpose of performance appraisals is described. In addition, the components of model performance appraisal forms are described and

justified using the literature. The model is used to assess the performance appraisal forms used in Texas state agencies.

Chapter Three – Chapter three explains the selected research method along with the associated strengths and weaknesses. This chapter also provides a discussion of the study of population, the coding sheet, and the data collection method.

Chapter Four - This chapter analyzes and examines the results of this study. The findings are used to assess the performance appraisal form used by Texas state agencies, using the ideal characteristics developed earlier. The results of the content analysis performed are presented in this chapter.

Chapter Five - This chapter presents the overall results of this study and summarizes which components of the performance appraisal form met the ideal characteristics developed through the literature. Best practices are identified as examples. Recommendations are made for improvements. Finally, the review of the forms revealed additional useful criteria incorporated in employee appraisal forms. These criteria are identified and assessed.

Chapter Two
Performance Appraisals

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the literature concerning performance appraisals. The purpose of performance appraisals is described. In addition, the components of model performance appraisal form are described and justified using the literature. Additionally, this chapter displays a table that summarizes the conceptual framework.

Employees Perspective versus Managements Perspective

There are two often conflicting perceptions of the role and use of employee performance appraisal – employee and employer. Herwig W. Kressler, (2003, 53) stated that from the employee's point of view the performance evaluation process should primarily take into account a question of fairness. Cayer (2004) agreed with Kressler and added that growth and development of employees, and participation and support of human resources in the organization was also important to employees. Management's perspective, on the other hand, often emphasizes the efficient utilization of human resources (Kressler 2003). Efficiency is dependent upon defining and obtaining performance goals; unfortunately, management often has difficulty explaining exactly what is expected of their employees, and when evaluation time comes, the supervisors have difficulty measuring performance against what they see as the organization's goals (Cayer 2004).

Human Resources Perspective on Performance Evaluations

From a human resources perspective, performance evaluations are viewed as a motivational and developmental tool. Employer strengths and weakness are identified through evaluations, and development allows the individual to improve (Smither 1998, 198). "Performance evaluations represent a central function of human resources management and remain an important topic of investigation among organizational researchers. Because the usefulness of performance evaluation as a managerial decision tool depends partly on whether or not the performance evaluation system is able to provide accurate data on employee performance, rating accuracy is a critical aspect of the evaluation process," (Poon 2004, 322).

"Performance evaluation is generally accepted as an important element of human resources management, a means not only of evaluating performance, but also, ideally, of achieving performance improvement," (Ammons and Rodriguez 1986, 460). "Evaluations should not be seen as an end in themselves but rather as one vital element in a broader set of human resource and management practices that link business objectives, day-to-day performance, development and compensation," (Smither 1998, 539).

Legislation

The *United States Civil Service Reform Act of 1978* (PL 95-454 (S 2640) is a key piece of legislation that influences contemporary performance appraisal systems. The legislation mandates that each federal agency:

shall develop one or more performance evaluation systems which provide for periodic evaluations of job performance of employees; encourage employee participation in establishing performance objectives; and use the results of performance evaluations as a basis for training, rewarding, reassigning, promoting, demoting, retraining, and separating employees (Ammons and Rodriguez 1986, 461).

Key provisions and recommendations of the act are:

* Agencies are required to create performance appraisal procedures.

* Appraisal systems must encourage employee participation in creating performance standards based on elements of the job.

* The critical elements of the job must be put in writing.

* Employees must be advised of the critical job elements before the appraisal.

* An employee's performance appraisal must be based entirely on the individual's actual performance of the critical elements of the job.

* Appraisals must be conducted and recorded in writing once a year.

* The appraisals must provide information that can be used for making decisions regarding the training, rewarding, reassigning, promoting, reducing in grade, retaining, and removing employees.

* Each agency is required to provide training to those who create and conduct appraisals.

* The effectiveness of each agency's performance appraisal system must be periodically evaluated to ensure its effectiveness (Grote 1996, 329 & PL 95-454 (S 2640).

Performance Appraisal Use

Performance appraisals are used for many purposes in organizations. Many organizations might emphasize a purpose and any given organization might pursue several different purposes with the same performance appraisal form (Murphy & Cleveland 1995). Management utilizes performance appraisals to make decisions such as retaining probationary employees, and to improve performance (Cayer 2004, 91). The performance appraisal is a tool of management, that takes into account communication, motivation and feedback (Kressler 2003, 61).

> According to DelPo (2005, 1/2): a manager's attitude is a key ingredient in whether a performance appraisal system will succeed. If the manager is enthusiastic about the chance to work with employees to improve their performance and their work experiences, the employees will share that enthusiasm.

According to Kressler (2003, 49), it is important for everyone involved in the appraisal process to understand the governing principles as well as the appraisal system itself. T.V. Rao, (2004, 126) conducted a survey of appraisal practices in 45 different organizations. He found that: "about 50% profess the purpose of their appraisals as regulating employee behavior as well as developing capabilities. About 30% of them still use appraisals only for controlling and regulating employee behavior. About 10% use appraisals for development purposes."

James W. Smither (1998) describes performance appraisals as a process of identifying, observing, measuring, and developing human productivity in

organizations. This definition of appraisal is simple, but the meaning of each component is complex.

> The *identification* component refers to the process of determining on which aspects to focus in the appraisal process. The criteria should be performance related. *Observation* means that all performance aspects must be directly and sufficiently observed so that fair and accurate judgments can be made. The *measurement* component of the definition might be considered the heart of appraisal. The identified and observed components must be evaluated. The *development* component refers to the future oriented and improvement focus of appraisal. Appraisals often focus on the past as a way to justify the level of reward or punishment handed out to the rate. (Cardy 1998, 140)

Byron Burnham (1995) suggests that the fundamental job of appraisal is to describe reality, which is done by data collection, analysis and reporting. Performance appraisals should guide future development, leverage existing strengths, and address skill deficiencies by using various forms such as output measurements and examinations (Smither 1998; Cayer 2004). DelPo (2005) believes that a good evaluation system includes support, motivation, communication, collaboration, fair treatment, documentation, formality, and accountability, and is consistent with the organization's core values and purpose. Also, performance appraisals tell both the manager and the employee how much progress they are making toward meeting established goals (Cadwell 1995, 18). Administrative purposes are often the primary reasons for conducting appraisal. The raters, usually "supervisors, need to justify their appraisals" to the ratees and deal with frustration, disagreement, and possibly anger (Smither 1998, 140). In focusing on judgment and measurement accuracy,

"performance appraisals may be viewed as a discretionary, motivational, and political process" that managers use to reward and punish subordinates and influence organizational decision making" (Smither 1998, 164).

Performance appraisals have the potential to provide useful information to both employees and management. Unfortunately, their value is dependent on the participant's willingness to take the process seriously and to use appropriate methods. People responsible for performance appraisals often assign a low priority to them because they have not thought about the benefits of a good appraisal session (Maddux 1993, 7).

Performance appraisals are widely used because they are the easy way out: they do not require anyone to address the problems that employees face. Failure to accurately report performance appraisals restricts the usefulness of performance information, leading to suboptimal and invalid administrative decisions (Smither 1998, 194). Instead, individuals are evaluated, a procedure that reminds them of "the extant power relationships and their subordinate place in that relationship." Performance appraisal has never been easy for managers or employees. Under the best circumstances, and in a reasonable environment, performance appraisal requires sensitive attention to the needs of people, responsible concern for productivity and open communication about expectations (Maddux 1993, 13). Few managers understand variation; they do not appreciate the inadequacy of this approach.

Advantages and Disadvantages

According to Murphy and Cleveland, (1995, 347-348) performance appraisals carry a number of potential advantages and disadvantages. Performance appraisals can contribute to the quality of organizational decisions as well as the quality of individual decisions. When performance appraisal is done well, it may enhance attachments between the employee and the organization, which in turn is likely to affect satisfaction and motivation. Finally, performance appraisals also provide information that can be used to direct and focus organizational development efforts.

Individually oriented performance appraisals voice concern and over emphasizes the individual and under emphasizes on the team. Performance appraisals also send mixed messages about what aspects of performance are most or least important. Last, performance appraisals are a headache for everyone involved and can be a major source of dissatisfaction and dissent in an organization (Cayer 2004, 73-75).

Performance Appraisal Process

There are eight characteristics for a successful performance appraisal system: (1) make sure that the appraisal criteria are relevant to the job; (2) make sure that appraisal criteria are clearly defined; (3) train raters on the appraisal process and sensitize them about impression management; (4) conduct appraisals frequently and allow enough time for raters to appraise ratees thoroughly; (5) make sure that appraisals are appropriate for individual or team goals; (6) avoid overall appraisals; (7) use more than one rater if possible; and (8) make raters accountable for their

appraisals (Smither, 1998, 194). Levinson (2005, 4) identifies five steps in an ideal

performance appraisal processes: 1) individual discussion with the superior about the

job description; 2) establishment of short-term goals; 3) meet to discuss

progression; 4) establish checkpoints to measure progress; 5) discussion at the end

of a defined period to assess the results. Which process is ideal? Brandon Tropov,

(1999, 1) states that all performance appraisals should be conducted using established

guidelines that will effectively eliminate any subjectivity. The guidelines should

cover job standards. Preparation for any appraisal should include an accurate job

description and an allowance for the setting, reviewing, and adjusting of goals.

Performance Appraisal Forms

Performance appraisal itself is often a process that involves documentation and

communication. Organizations usually formalize part of the process by using a

standard form.

What would the ideal performance appraisal look like? "As Bernardin, (1998,

538) and his colleagues say, no performance appraisal and management system is

ideal for all jobs, all purposes, and all organizations." Various appraisal techniques

such as Management By Objectives (MBO), Frame-of-Reference (FOR), and 360-

degree methods, have been adopted in public and private sector organizations in

hopes of achieving appraisal objectives while addressing concern over evaluator bias

(Ammons and Rodriguez 1986, 462).

The tendency in recent years has been to formalize the appraisal process,

whereas in years past, an informal approach with very little record keeping sufficed,

and now more documentation is required. "For a performance appraisal to be effective, documentation of the employee's performance should be kept throughout the year as it occurs (DelPo 2005, 4/2)." Documentation increases the fairness, and it also ensures that the appraisal will be based on the employee's entire performance, not just the recent events or the ones that stick out from memory (DelPo 2005).

According to Harry Levinson (2005, 4), the ideal performance appraisal form should measure and judge performance, relate individual performance to organizational goals, clarify both the job to be done and the expectations of accomplishment, enhance communication and growth, serve as a basis for judgments about salary and promotion and to stimulate motivation.

Components used on Form

The components used on a performance appraisal form are the elements of performance that correlate with superior job execution and are predictive of success in organizational life. The components should include behaviors, skills, traits, knowledge, proficiencies, attributes, and abilities, which the organization expects of everyone (Grote 2002). Any individual's performance is a function of three sets of factors: ability or competence to perform various tasks that lead to performance; motivation to carry on each of these tasks or work effort to carry out the tasks; and the organizational support one gets to carry out these tasks (Rao 2004, 6). Performance appraisals involve thinking through various facets of performance, identifying critical dimensions of performance, planning, review, and developing and enhancing performance and related competencies (Rao 2004, 4).

Murphy and Cleveland, (1995, 115) state, "to evaluate performance, evaluators must observe a wide range of behaviors that are relevant to the job." An ideal performance appraisal form should contain the following components:

* job requirements

* quality of work

* communication skills

* interpersonal skills/teamwork

* adaptability

* dependability

* goals

* comments

* signatures.

Gabris and Ihrke (2001, 159) believe "it is vital to include work factors that apply to employees in all positions such as **quality of work, communication** and **adaptability**."

Job Requirements

Gabris and Ihrke, (2001, 159) suggest to design a performance appraisal form, develop objectives that relate directly to the specific job requirements. A job requirement is a description of what an employer expects of an employee in a particular job to accomplish and how one wants an employee in that job to perform. DelPo (2005, 3/4) states that, "the best resource for identifying job requirements, is the **job description**." A vital building block for a good employer-employee

relationship is a clearly defined job description. **Job descriptions** serve to communicate the agency's needs to the employees and to provide the structure that enables them to meet their job goals (Toropov 1999). **Job descriptions** are lists of the general tasks, or functions, and responsibilities of a position. Typically, they also include to whom the position reports, specifies qualifications needed by the person in the job, salary range for the position, etc. **Job descriptions** are usually developed by conducting a job analysis, which includes examining the tasks and sequences of tasks necessary to perform the job. The analysis looks at the areas of knowledge and skills needed by the job. Grote (2002) suggests that **performance standards** should be defined and discussed with the employee in order for them to **meet the standards**. For an effective performance appraisal, both the employee and the supervisor must be prepared to discuss what the position is about, the **standards** that are to be met, and past, present and future goals (Tropov 1999, 3). The rating of "**meets job performance standards**" encompasses a wide range of performance from employees satisfactorily meeting job expectations to making exceptional contributions in advancing the objectives of their departments and/or the agency (Grote 2002).

Quality of Work

This section of the performance appraisal form allows the employer to document in order to be able to assess the quality of the employee's work. Assessing individual performance or quality of work is to focus on both results and competence. While performance elements tell employees what they have to do, the standards tell them how well they have to do it. Grote (1996, 117) recommends when evaluating

quality of work, ask three questions: "(1) Does the employee produce quality work, in an efficient manner?" "(2) Does the employee accomplish and produce higher quality and quantity than co-workers?" "(3) Does the employee manage resources such as time, and manpower efficiently?" Improving quality of performance is one of the primary goals of the entire performance appraisal process (Grote 1996). A **performance standard** is a management-approved criterion of the performance requirements or expectations that must be met to be appraised at a particular level of performance. A **standard** must be established for each element of a job and discussed with the employee so that the employee will know what they have to do to meet standards (Fodchuck 2004). Quality measures can be objective and subjective. It is important to specify expectations with measurable or at least verifiable criteria (Fodchuk 2004). Every result does not generate objective measurable data, but it should be possible to develop a verifiable basis for assessing results (e.g., meeting deadlines) (Risher 2002, 328). **Timeliness** addresses how quickly or by what date the work is produced. The most common error made in setting timeliness standards is to allow no margin for error. As with other standards, **timeliness standards** should be set realistically in view of other performance requirements and needs of the organization (Fodchuck 2004). The more that subjective measure of quality can be made objective, the stronger the data are for use both in the appraisal as well as any decisions based on the data (Grote 1996).

<u>**Communication Skills**</u>

Communication is a skill needed by almost every employee in any position. Effective communication is an essential component of organizational success. All performance appraisal forms should include a way for the manager to assess the communication skills – both oral and written.

Kikoski states (1999, 303) "one of the most valuable skills that a person can possess is the ability to effectively communicate with others." Communication is so difficult because at each step in the process there is major potential for error. By the time a message gets from a sender to a receiver, transmission errors can take place. An essential part of communication is **listening**. Expressing ones wants, feelings, thoughts and opinions clearly and effectively is only half of the communication process needed for communication effectiveness. The other half is **listening** and understanding what others communicate to us. The willingness to **listen** to others ensures an open channel of communication is maintained (Mealiea and Baltazar 2005, 145). Like any other tool, listening can be used as a part of ones choice and discretion. A good **listener** is always in a better position to deal with tasks or problems at hand. The employee should also ask questions to clarify ambiguities (Grote 1996).

Both **written and oral** communication is an on-going, two-way process between human beings in which the communication behavior of each influences the understanding of the other (Kikoski 1999, 316). **Writing** should be clear and concise and reviewed to assure accuracy. An advantage to good **written communication** is that **written** messages do not have to be delivered on the spur of the moment; instead,

they can be edited and revised several times before they are sent so that the content

can be shaped to maximum effect. Another advantage is that **written**

communication provides a permanent record of the messages that have been sent and

can be referenced later. **Written** forms of communication also enable recipients to

take more time in reviewing the message and providing appropriate feedback. Other

benefits commonly associated with good writing skills include increased customer /

client satisfaction; improved interorganizational efficiency; and enhanced image in

the community and industry (Kikoski 1999 318).

   Oral Communication should be clear and convincing to individuals or

groups.   Clarify information if necessary and facilitate an open exchange of ideas.

While communication can sometimes be difficult, not being able to communicate

effectively can be much worse (DelPo 2005).

Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork

   Dick Grote, (1996, 117) describes interpersonal skills as being able to support

management decisions, communicate support of goals and activities, and to be able to

work effectively as a team member and encourage **teamwork** in others. Employers

appreciate employees who get along with people at all levels; therefore, they seek

employees who have good interpersonal skills, such as communication, problem

solving, and **teamwork abilities**. Interpersonal skills enable you to work well with

others and efficiently. **Working well with others** involves understanding and

appreciating individual differences, which could also means using those differences to

your best advantage (Bowman 1994).

Employees should help other employees. For example, instead of trying to solve all the problems, one can identify all resources for help (Burnham 1995). Effective work relationships form the cornerstone for success and satisfaction with your job and your career. The employee should show willingness to seek out peers to establish positive working relationships (Cayer 2004). **Diversity** makes us unique in that we are able to appeal to each and every person in one way or another. Employees should be open to **diverse view points**, take them seriously, and learn from them (Tropov 1999; Maddux 1993). **Teamwork** involves working with others in a group, towards a common goal. This requires cooperating with others, **being responsive to others' ideas**, taking a collaborative approach to learning, and taking a responsibility for developing and achieving group goals. Employees should demonstrate the ability to fulfill commitments to other team members, promote a friendly climate, good morale, and cooperation among team members (Grote 2002, 146).

Adaptability

The employee should display professionalism in approach to work. Grote (1996, 117) states that an employee should recognize and accept new challenges and responsibilities for all parts of their jobs. The employee should be able to identify and analyze potential problems, and to stand by decisions when challenged (Cadwell 1995). It is important for employees be **flexible** and to demonstrate a **willingness to learn new job skills** and thus become a more valuable assets to employers. The employee should not offer excuses for errors or mistakes, and they should not blame others for mistakes (Rao 2004). It is important for the employee to demonstrate the

ability to handle pressure. The work environment can change from day to day, and in order to continue working effectively, the employee needs to be able to handle sudden changes. **Deadlines** are an important part of maintaining proper work flow, and the employee needs to be able to meet the deadlines (Rao 2004, 74). "Employees should bounce back quickly from disappointment and frustration, and be willing to adapt to change (Kressler 2003)."

<u>Dependability</u>

Arvey and Murphy, (1998, 150) state that "it is important to include dependability on a performance appraisal form." An **attendance** problem can be very harmful to an agency. Whether frequently coming to work late, leaving early or having full-day absences, these employees cause departmental problems that can have an affect on the agencies' performance and survival. **Attendance** is an excellent criterion for measuring dependability. However, the presence of an adequate reporting system is vital to avoid bias (Arvey and Murphy 1998, 150). The section on attendance should include sections for the following information to be entered:

* Number of days absent in the past 12 months

* Number of days late in the past 12 months

* Personal attendance percentage / organizational (or departmental)

attendance percentage (Grote 2002, 153).

Grote (1996, 376) states that "it is important for employees to **follow-up** to ensure the job or task is completed." All progress comes from **follow-up**, without consistent **follow-up**, the task at hand may suffer. Employees should demonstrate the ability to

work effectively with minimum supervision, and to show the capability of filling in during management's absence. When necessary, the employee should willingly put in the extra time and effort required (Williams 1998). An **effective follow through plan** will operate at the individual, group and organizational levels. Any change requires a change in behavior and people are often hesitant to change, being more concerned about what they are giving up over what they might gain. **Effective follow-up** helps keep momentum going so that new behaviors become habit and recognition becomes a valued and ongoing aspect of the organization's culture.

Goals

Goals should be included on a performance appraisal form because goals describe things that the employee should accomplish beyond the job requirements (DelPo 2005, 3/2). "It is useful to consider several classes of goals, including task performance goals, interpersonal goals, strategic goals, and internalized goals," (Murphy and Cleveland 1995, 240). Tailor goals to each employee as an individual, depending on the employee's strengths and weaknesses. When setting goals, do not try to change an employee's personality. Focus on what your employees do, not who they are (DelPo 2005). "Goals focus attention and effort on the future, which can be changed, versus past behavior which can not be altered," (Roberts 2002, 337).

Goals enhance performance as they encourage employees to try harder and provide pointers for the direction of work efforts (Brown and Benson 2005, 102). According to Tropov (1999,1), "goals are the most important feature of any standards that are set for any job, both the employer and the employee should have goals

representing the steps that need to be taken to achieve particular results." If a goal is new, or outside of the ordinary tasks that the employee does, help the employee figure out how to meet it by creating an action plan (DelPo 2005). The goals section should include **short-term goals** such as the successful completion of specific tasks, as well as **long-term goals** such as the maintenance of effective relationships between workgroups, departments, clients and so on (Murphy and Cleveland 1995). Make goals reasonable, realistic, challenging, specific, measurable (if possible), related to the job, and consistent with the organization's goals (DelPo 2005, 3/2; Roberts 2002).

Comments (Feedback)

In order for a performance appraisal system to be maximally effective, there must be a portion on the appraisal form for comments or feedback. Grote, (2002, 155) states, "a section for employee comments is an almost universal part of almost every performance appraisal form - and a very good idea." It demonstrates that the form was given to the employee and he or she was provided the opportunity to respond (Grote 2002). Comments allow the employee to acknowledge any specifics as desired (Roberts 2002, 337).

Roberts (2002, 337) states that, "comments or feedback is essential in gaining the maximum benefits from goal settings." The importance of adequate feedback is often overlooked and the practice of giving feedback is taken for granted by many supervisors, co-workers, and clients or recipients of organizational services. Feedback is very important in letting employees know how they are doing and to avoid assumptions (Cadwell 1995, 92). Feedback on goal-oriented performance

motivates higher performance only when it leads to the setting of higher goals.

Positive feedback on performance gives the worker a sense of achievement,

recognition, and accomplishment. According to Grote (1996, 5), "feedback alone will

not improve performance, but if it is missing from a performance appraisal,

performance can't improve."

Signatures

Accepted best practice calls for the individual's immediate supervisor to

complete the appraisal form, then have it approved by the supervisor's immediate

superior. Once the approval is complete, the form is returned to the immediate

supervisor, who then schedules the meeting with the individual to review the

appraisal form itself. By using this approach, a system of checks-and-balances is

established to ensure that their perceptions of the performance of individuals are

shared by those who directly supervise the individuals. If there is a discrepancy, they

can discuss and resolve it before the appraisal is discussed with the individual being

evaluated (Grote 2002, 152-155).

A signature portion should also be included on the performance appraisal

form, and everyone person who was involved in the preparation, approval, or review

of the form should sign it (Grote 2002, 155). Roberts (1998, 314) describes the

importance of the signature portion is accountability. "It holds the raters and

reviewers accountable for how well they administer the appraisal." "The signature

portion also validates that the extent of the performance appraisal measures what is

intended to be measured, (Grote 1996, 324). The reviewer signature ensures that the

rater was in compliance to policy and procedures (Roberts, 1998 314).

Summary of Conceptual Framework

Table 2.1 lists the components of each of the eleven categories and shows their

linkage to the literature.

TABLE 2.1
Components used in Employee Performance Appraisal Forms

COMPONENT	LITERATURE
* **Job Requirements** 　* Based on Job Description 　* Meets Job Performance Standards	Tropov, 1998 Gabris, Ihrke, 2001 DelPo, 2005 Grote, 2002
* **Quality of Work** 　* Meets Standards 　* Completes Tasks in a Timely Manner	Fodchuk, 2004 Grote, 1996 Risher, 2002
* **Communication Skills** 　* Effective Listening 　* Clear Written Communication 　* Clear Verbal Communication	Grote, 1996 DelPo, 2005 Kikoski, 1999 Mealiea, Baltazar 2005
* **Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork** 　* Assists Others 　* Open to Diverse View Points 　* Contributes in a Team Environment 　* Establish Positive Working Relationships	Burnham, 1995 Bowman, 1994 Cayer, 2004 Maddux, 1993 Tropov, 1999 Grote, 1996
* **Adaptability** 　* Flexible 　* Effectively Handles Pressure / Deadlines 　* Open to New Responsibilities / Duties	Grote, 1996 Cadwell, 1995 Rao, 2004 Kressler, 2003
* **Dependability** 　* Effective Follow Through 　* Attendance	Williams, 1998 Arvey, Murphy, 1998 Grote, 1996 Grote, 2002
* **Goals** 　* Short Term 　* Long Term 　* Other	Murphy, Cleveland, 1995 Brown, Benson, 2005 DelPo, 2005 Roberts, 2002
* **Comments (Feedback)** 　* From Supervisor 　* From Employee	Cadwell, 1995 Grote, 1996 Grote, 2002 Roberts, 2002
* **Signatures**	Grote, 2002 Grote, 1996 Roberts, 1998

The next chapter will discuss the methods used for this study, along with the associated strengths and weaknesses. Chapter three also provides a discussion of the study of population, the coding sheet, and that data collection method.

Chapter Three
Research Methodology

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the methodology this study utilizes. This study uses content analysis to gauge the 42 Texas mid sized state agancies' performance appraisal forms. Data is collected through content analysis of Texas state agencies' performance appraisal forms. In addition, this chapter describes the operationalizational of the assessment criteria developed in the conceptual framework.

Research Technique

Content analysis is the research method used to assess the employee performance appraisal forms of Texas state agencies. Babbie (2004, 314) defines content analysis as "the study of recorded human communications, it allows researchers to examine written documents." Babbie (2004, 314) also states that "content analysis is well suited to the study of communications and to answering the classic question of communication research: 'Who says what, to whom, why, how, and with what effect?'" While a social scientific research topic might be studied by observing individual people, content analysis provides another approach (Babbie 2004, 314). The data is collected through content analysis of Texas state agencies employee performance appraisal forms. Therefore, this methodology is appropriate for this type of research.

"Content analysis is essentially a coding operation. Coding is the process of transforming raw data into a standardized form. In content analysis, communications are coded or classified according to a conceptual framework," (Babbie 2004, 318). Table 3.1 shows the conceptual framework used in this paper and shows how it is operationalized. The conceptual framework and coding sheet is one-to-one, hence the coding sheet is presented.

TABLE 3.1
Operationalizational Chart and Coding Sheet

Component	Included	Partial	Not Included
Job Requirements			
Based on Job Description			
Meets Job Performance Standards			
Applies Knowledge Effectively to Job Duties			
Quality of Work			
Meets Standards			
Completes Tasks in a Timely Manner			
Communication Skills			
Effective Listening			
Clear Written Communication			
Clear Verbal Communication			
Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork			
Assists Others			
Open to Diverse View Points			
Contributes in a Team Environment			
Establish Positive Working Relationships			
Adaptability			
Flexible			
Effectively Handles Pressure/Deadlines			
Open to New Responsibilities/Duties			
Dependability			
Effective Follow through			
Attendance			

Component	Included	Partial	Not Included
Goals			
Short Term			
Long Term			
Other			
Comments			
From Supervisor			
From employee			
Signatures			

Strengths and Weaknesses of Selected Research Method

Like other research methodologies, content analysis has both advantages and disadvantages. Babbie (2004, 323-324) discusses a few advantages and states that possibly the greatest advantage of content analysis is that it saves both time and money. Safety is another advantage because it is usually easier to repeat a portion of the study than it is in other research methods. Finally, content analysis has the advantage of unobtrusive measures. Babbie (2004, 324) discusses two disadvantages. First, it is limited to the examination of recorded communications. Since the research purpose was to examine the form itself, is not generalizing to the performance appraisal process. This is both a strength and weakness. The strength is that content analysis enables a systematic analysis of the form. The weakness is that a strong form may have no connection to employee performance. Perhaps the forms are corrupted (supervisors are dishonest) or the forms are not used. This study cannot determine this. On the other hand, it is difficult to imagine an effective performance appraisal system that used a poorly constructed form to direct inquiry and collect data. Analysis of the form has merits in its own right. Content analysis directed by a sound framework is the best way to systematically study a form.

Population of Study

The Texas state agencies to be examined are non-educational institutions that employ 50 to 1000 employees. The purpose of looking at these particular agencies provides a sufficient number of agencies for a preliminary analysis of the performance appraisal forms used by Texas state agencies. Information on the state

agencies was gathered from the State Auditor's Office website (www.sao.state.tx.us).

This criteria allows for fifty-one agencies to be assessed, however, performance

appraisal forms were gathered from twenty-seven of the fifty-one agencies. An email

(see Appendix A) was sent out to the human resources directors, asking for their

performance appraisal forms. Some agencies did not respond, some chose not to

participate, one did not use performance appraisals, and two agencies were in the

process of revising their form and did not wish to participate. Table 3.2 lists the

agencies alphabetically, and includes the number of employees as well as if the

performance appraisal form was received.

TABLE 3.2
Agency / Number of Employees / Status

Agency	Number of Employees	Status
Adjutant General's Department	615	No Response
Alcoholic Beverage Commission	640	Received
Animal Health Commission	191	Received
Board of Nurse Examiners	76	Received
Board of Pharmacy	54	No Response
Building and Procurement Commission	364	No Response
Court of Criminal Appeals	69	No Response
Department of Agriculture	483	Under Revision
Department of Banking	151	Received
Department of Housing and Community Affairs	270	No Response
Department of Information Resource	196	Received
Department of Licensing and Regulation	229	Received
District Courts (Comptroller's Judiciary Section)	584	No Response
Employees Retirement System	276	Received
General Land Office	561	Received
Historical Commission	104	No Response
Juvenile Probation Commission	55	No Response
Legislative Budget Board	138	Under Revision
Library and Archives Commission	170	Received
Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner	52	No Response
Office of Injured Employee Counsel	82	No Response
Office of Rural Community Affairs	63	Received
Office of the Governor	241	Received
Preservation Board	139	Received
Public Utility Commission of Texas	179	Received
Racing Commission	68	Received
Railroad Commission	686	No Response
Real Estate Commission	80	Received
Secretary of State	231	Received
Securities Board	83	No Response
Soil & Water Conservation Board	61	No Response
State Auditor's Office	191	Received
State Bar of Texas	274	Received
State Office of Administrative Hearings	101	Received
State Office of Risk Management	120	Received
Supreme Court of Texas	63	No Response
Teacher Retirement System of Texas	433	Received
Texas Department of Savings and Mortgage Lending	56	No Response
Texas Education Agency	764	Received
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board	272	Received
Texas House of Representatives	715	No Response
Texas Judicial Council Office of Court Administration	170	Received

Texas Legislative Council	386	Received
Texas Lottery Commission	303	No Response
Texas Medical Board	129	No Response
Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired	254	No Participation
Texas School for the Deaf	348	Received
Texas Senate	488	Does not use PA
Texas Transportation Institute	341	No Response
Veterans Commission	94	No Response
Water Development Board	259	Received

(www.sao.state.tx.us 2006)

Data Collection

A talley sheet is used to record data for the items on the coding sheet. Frequency is the statistical method used to analyze the data. Frequency is a description of the number of times the various attributes of a variable are observed in a sample (Babbie 2004, 401). Therefore, frequency and percentages are used to indicate number of objectives each agency had on their performance appraisal form.

Chapter Summary

Content analysis is the research technique used in this study. The research purpose was connected to the conceptual framework through operationalization process. The next chapter displays and organizes the results of this study.

Chapter Four
Results

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the results of this study. The findings are used to assess the performance appraisal form used by Texas state agencies, using the ideal characteristics developed earlier. The results of the content analysis performed are presented in this chapter.

Job Requirements

Table 4.1 reveals that 81% of Texas state agencies have a job knowledge component on their performance appraisal form. Only five (19%) of the appraisal forms assessed did not base their performance appraisal on job description. For "meets job performance standards" twenty-three agencies included it on the form, and most of the forms included space for specific examples that the employee demonstrated. Only four (15%) agencies did not include it in any way on their form. Results revealed that 82% of Texas state agencies' performance appraisal form, did include "applies knowledge effectively to job duties." In other words, over 80% of the state agencies' performance appraisal forms included a job knowledge section as well as the components in the section. For a best practice example, please see **appendix B.**

TABLE 4.1
Job Requirements

Job Requirements N=27	Included	Partially Included	Not Included	Total
Based on Job Description	59%	22%	19%	100%
Meets Job Performance Standards	59%	26%	15%	100%
Applies Knowledge Effectively to Job Duties	56%	26%	18%	100%

Quality of Work

Improving quality of performance is one of the primary goals of the entire

performance appraisal process (Grote 1996). Table 4.2 reveals that 81% of Texas

state agencies include "meets standards" as part of the quality of work section on their

performance appraisal form. Also, 82% of the agencies provided a section for

"completes tasks in a timely manner." More importantly, only five of the twenty-

seven agencies did not provide a quality of work section.

TABLE 4.2
Quality of Work

Quality of Work N=27	Included	Partially Included	Not Included	Total
Meets Standards	62%	19%	19%	100%
Completes Tasks in a Timely Manner	56%	26%	18%	100%

Communication Skills

Effective communication is an essential component of organizational success,

both written and oral. Effective communication also includes effective listening.

Table 4.3 reveals that only 59% of agencies included "effective listening" as part of

the communication skills on their form. For "clear written communication", 67% of

the agencies included it on the form, and 3 agencies asked for examples if necessary.

Seventeen (63%) agencies included "clear verbal communication" as part of the

communication skills area. For a best practice example, please see **appendix C.**

TABLE 4.3
Communication Skills

Communication Skills N=27	Included	Partially Included	Not Included	Total
Effective Listening	56%	3%	41%	100%
Clear Written Communication	56%	11%	33%	100%
Clear Verbal Communication	56%	7%	37%	100%

Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork

Interpersonal skills and teamwork are an important part of the job, if one can't

play well with others, one will never accomplish the work mission. In the

interpersonal skills / teamwork category, 63% of the agencies included "assists

others," "establish positive working relationships" and "open to diverse view points"

on the form. Sixteen (59%) agencies included "contributes in a team environment.

For those forms that included the interpersonal skills / teamwork category, the forms

also included space to provide specific examples if necessary. For a best practice

example, please see **appendix D.**

TABLE 4.4
Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork

Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork N=27	Included	Partially Included	Not Included	Total
Assists Others	48%	15%	37%	100%
Open to Diverse View Points	37%	26%	37%	100%
Contributes in a Team Environment	48%	11%	41%	100%
Establish Positive Working Relationships	41%	22%	37%	100%

Adaptability

It is important for employees to demonstrate a willingness to learn new job skills, effectively handle pressure and meet deadlines, and to be flexible with the work flow in order to become a more valuable asset to employers. Eighteen out of the twenty-seven agencies included "open to new responsibilities / duties" section of the adaptability criteria. For "effectively handles pressure / deadlines" 66% of the agencies included it on the form. "Flexibility" was included on seventeen agencies forms. For best practice, please see **appendix E.**

TABLE 4.5
Adaptability

Adaptability N=27	Included	Partially Included	Not Included	Total
Flexible	41%	22%	37%	100%
Effectively Handles Pressure/Deadlines	33%	33%	33%	100%
Open to New Responsibilities/Duties	41%	26%	33%	100%

Dependability

Table 4.6 reveals that 75% of Texas state agencies included "effective follow through" under the dependability category on their performance appraisal form. Eighteen agencies (67%) included "attendance" and several agencies included a place for number of excused absences, non-excused absences, and tardies. For best practice, please see **appendix F.**

TABLE 4.6
Dependability

Dependability N=27	Included	Partially Included	Not Included	Total
Effective Follow through	48%	26%	26%	100%
Attendance	45%	22%	33%	100%

Goals

Work goals are the things a staff member must achieve during the evaluation period. Work goals are outputs or outcomes that describe what the results of successful performance should look like; they do not list every single step along the way. Fifteen (56%) of the Texas state agency forms evaluated contained both "short term" and "long term" goals under the goals category. Nineteen (70%) agencies included "other" as part of the goals category. As most of the forms read, the "other" was for additional tasks to achieve the long or short term goals stated. The other four that did not include a specific spot for the long or short term goals, the "other" section was the catch all for specific goals. For best practice, please see **appendix G.**

TABLE 4.7
Goals

Goals N=27	Included	Partially Included	Not Included	Total
Short Term	37%	19%	44%	100%
Long Term	37%	19%	44%	100%
Other	48%	22%	30%	100%

Comments

To maximize the benefit of a performance appraisal, the form should include a section for comments. Twenty-one out of the twenty seven agencies included a space for additional comments from supervisors on the form. Twenty-two out of the twenty-seven agencies included a space for employee comments. For best practice, please see **appendix H.**

TABLE 4.8
Comments

Comments N=27	Included	Partially Included	Not Included	Total
From Supervisor	63%	15%	22%	100%
From employee	74%	7%	19%	100%

Signatures

Signatures can act as a check to ensure accountability. Table 4.9 shows that twenty-six out of the twenty-seven agencies included a space on their forms for signatures. In addition to the standard supervisors and employee signatures, seven agencies included a space for a human resources representative signature to ensure that the procedural requirements were met. For best practice, please see **appendix I**.

TABLE 4.9
Signature

Signatures N=27	Included	Partially Included	Not Included	Total
	96%		4%	100%

Chapter Summary

  This chapter summarizes the statistical analysis for each component in the

model performance appraisal form. The overall findings reveal that the majority of

state agencies do use the components, and some may need to be defined more clearly.

Chapter Five
Conclusion

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is three fold. The first purpose was to describe an ideal model of employee performance appraisal form. This study also was to gauge selected Texas state agencies performance appraisal forms using the model. Finally, the study sought to make recommendations to improve the performance appraisal forms.

This chapter presents the overall results of this study and will identify whether the components of the performance appraisal form met the ideal characteristics developed through the literature. Recommendations are made for improvements, as well as other components that were used by some agencies.

Overall Conclusions and Results

The overall results and recommendations are presented in Table 5.1. As revealed in the table, the performance appraisal forms used by Texas state agencies either meet, or somewhat meet the ideal characteristics of the performance appraisal form developed in the conceptual framework. "Meets" indicates that the agencies meet the component, and "somewhat meets" indicates that the agencies partially meet the component.

TABLE 5.1
Overall Results and Recommendations

Component	Meets Ideal Type	Recommendations
Job Knowledge	Partially Meets	There needs to be more explanation on criteria expected to apply knowledge effectively to job duties.
Quality of Work	Partially Meets	
Communication Skills	Somewhat Meets	
Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork	Somewhat Meets	
Adaptability	Somewhat Meets	This section needs to be defined more by all agencies. The agencies that did not include it, should establish their own standards suited for their agency, and implement in their performance appraisal form.
Dependability	Somewhat Meets	Attendance is an important part of this section, and agencies should implement an area that coincides with their agencies attendance policy.
Goals	Somewhat Meets	This section needs the most definition and implementation. Without goals, what does the employee have to work to achieve.
Comments	Partially Meets	
Signatures	Meets	

Meets = 90%+ / Partially Meets = 60 - 80% / Somewhat Meets = Less Than 60%

Other Observations

When evaluating the various agency forms, there were other components that some agencies had on their form, which could be useful to other agencies. The components are shown in Table 5.2. The definition of the component was compiled from the agencies that established the criteria for using it on their form. An overall best practice for an ideal performance appraisal form, please see **appendix B**.

TABLE 5.2
Possible New Components

Component	Used By	Recommendation
Leadership – motivates other employees, strives to obtain highest achievement levels from others, delegates when necessary. **See Appendix J**	* Texas Judicial Council Office of Court Administration * Department of Licensing and Regulation * Real Estate Commission * Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board	This is an excellent criterion for those that are in management or supervisor roles, as well as for those that are on management or supervisor tracks.
Training and Development – assess needs, develops & implements plans to meet goals. and/or attends classes to advance knowledge & skills. **See Appendix K**	* Texas Judicial Council Office of Court Administration * Office of the Governor * Employees Retirement System * State Office of Administrative Hearings * Animal Health Commission * Texas Education Agency	This can be beneficial to show the rater that the employee is willing to advance for the agency thru training.
Planning and Organization – manages concurrent assignments, initiates ideas for continual improvement. **See Appendix L**	* Library and Archives Commission * Employees Retirement System * Office of Rural Community Affairs * Department of Licensing and Regulation * Racing Commission * Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board	This can benefit the overall agency to make sure that the goal of the agency continues to be reached in an effective manner.
Human Resource Representative Signature – to ensure conformity with the procedural requirements, and to ensure that the evaluation does not discriminate, and also to ensure that ratings are supported by objective, and job related. **See Appendix M**	* Secretary of State * Office of Rural Community Affairs * Department of Licensing and Regulation * State Office of Administrative Hearings * Public Utility Commission of Texas * Water Development Board * Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board	After seeing this on several forms, the importance became apparent. All agencies delivered the completed performance appraisal form to the HR dept. for records. However, the department may or may not read the actual appraisal. The HR signature ensures that the appraisal does not violate any laws, that can hurt the agency.

Conclusion

This study attempted to address the gap in knowledge, since there has been no systematic analysis on the performance appraisal forms used by Texas state agencies. The practical ideal performance evaluation form that was developed can be implemented by all state agencies. It is hoped that the agencies will use this study as a reference to review their existing performance appraisal forms and make revisions as necessary.

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APPENDIX A

Good Afternoon,

My name is Mindy Martinez and I am a public administration graduate student at Texas State University. I am in the early stages of my applied research project, and I have decided to explore employee performance evaluations/appraisals.

Some back ground information why:
I am a current human resources assistant. I am new to the working field and I only have 3 months of experience.

Ever since it was discovered that employee performance held the key to success, there have been continuous efforts to understand what optimizes performance, and how performance evaluations/appraisals can be used as a vital observation tool (Kressler 2003, 3). This topic is important because performance evaluations/appraisals are an important part of our jobs, and if used correctly, they could be used as a powerful tool. They should guide future development, leverage existing strengths, and address skill deficiencies.
If performance evaluations/appraisals are fair, and if the evaluatees know what to expect, then the process will be easier on everyone.

I am interested in knowing what different state agencies in Texas have in their performance appraisal forms. I am inquiring for a copy of your agency's appraisal form, as well as the procedures if applicable. If for any reason your agency is unable to give out the performance appraisal form, I understand. However, please inform me of it.

If I can be of any assistance in answering questions about my project, I am more than willing to. If you would like to contact my Professor Dr. Patricia Shields, I can provide you with her contact information.

Thank you in advance,
Mindy Martinez
mm1189@txstate.edu

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE PLAN AND EVALUATION FORM

EMPLOYEE'S NAME:	EMPLOYEES CLASSIFICATION TITLE:	EVALUATOR'S NAME:
EMPLOYEE'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER:	EMPLOYEE'S WORKING TITLE (if different):	EVALUATOR'S TITLE:
EMPLOYEE'S DIVISION/SECTION:	EVALUATION PERIOD:	DATE OF EVALUATION:

PERFORMANCE RATING SCALE FOR INDIVIDUAL TASKS IN THE PERFORMANCE PLAN	
Exceeds Standards (ES)	Results exceed expectations on a consistent basis. Makes significant contributions beyond job responsibilities.
Meets Standards (MS)	Consistently meets expectations. Describes performance of majority of employees. Fully competent valuable employee.
Meets Most Standards (MM)	Meets most expectations. Used as a developmental aspect to address a new or inexperienced employee's performance in learning new areas. Also used to address an employee's deficiencies or instances where an employee's job performance has regressed.
Does not Meet Standards (DMS)	Failed to achieve results expected. Improvement needed to reach competent level.
Not Applicable (N/A)	Factors outside of employee's control prevent meaningful evaluation; seasonal or cyclical aspects of the task minimize appropriateness of the task during the evaluation period.

Performance planning and evaluation system is an ongoing process that consists of performance planning, feedback, and discussion, periodic progress reviews, and an annual performance evaluation. This form should be used as a communication and planning tool. This is a formal written document that assures mutual understanding between each employee and supervisor of what is to be expected and how those expectations are to be met.

FUNCTIONAL JOB DESCRIPTION
Provide a broad, general summary of the job duties, including who the position reports to, travel requirements, and supervisory responsibilities, if any.

PERFORMANCE PLAN	PERFORMANCE EVALUATION	
(#) Job Task:	Summary of Actual Performance	Rating

Performance Standard		ES, MS, MM or DMS

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

CORE DIMENSIONS	Performance Evaluation	RATINGS
All Core Dimensions as described below are Primary Job Duties.	Summary of actual performance	Exceeds (ES),Meets (MS), Meets Most Standards (MMS), Does Not Meet Standards (DMS), Not Applicable (N/A)

1-5 Apply to All Employees

1.	Quality Customer Service: (Who are our customers? Customers of represent a universal population, both internal and external.)		
Takes prompt, attentive action to address customer needs.		
Follows through on tasks, meeting schedules and deadlines.		
Conducts self in a business-like manner and applies knowledge effectively in performance of job duties.		
Delivers promised services in a timely, friendly, and consistent manner.		
Uses a considerate and tactful approach in serving customers.		

2.	Teamwork:		
Gives priority to goals of the team		
Fulfills commitments and obligations to others.		
Contributes to team tasks and projects.		
Follows through on tasks in a timely manner.		
Develops and maintains effective work relationships.		

3.	Communication		
Degree to which employee comprehends others and expresses self appropriately.		
Encourages others to express opinions and ideas.		
Listens and fully understands the ideas and views of others.		
Presents pertinent ideas and information clearly and concisely.		

Promotes discussion by probing and building on the ideas of others.	

4.	Initiative/Innovation		
Willingly accepts additional assignments.		
Volunteers for assignments outside the normal parameters of job description.		
Presents workable alternatives upon completion of analysis of situation.		
Combines ideas and information to reshape goals in ways that reveal new possibilities.		
Initiates ideas for continual improvement.		

5.	Flexibility/Adaptability		
Displays versatility in meeting changing needs of clients and co-workers.		
Handles multiple tasks concurrently.		
Customizes approach to task, situation, problem, or customer.		
Accepts new tasks, surroundings, priorities or procedures willingly.		
Readily acquires and applies new skills and techniques.		

6-10 Apply to Managers/Supervisors

6.	Leadership		
Ensures that the division's goals are consistent with the Agency's Strategic Plan.		
Motivates employees to meet goals.		
Strives to obtain highest achievement levels from others.		
Establishes an open and trusting work environment.		

Builds and maintains credibility in business relations with others.		
Accepts responsibility and is accountable for decisions made and actions taken.		
Delegates work responsibilities based on strengths, developmental needs and workload.		

7.	Training		
Helps staff members understand how their jobs contribute to the Agency's goals.			
Assesses needs, develops a plan and implements training to meet the organization's goals.			

8.	Administrative/Human Resources Function		
Manages personnel functions such as selection, disciplinary actions, performance reviews, leave, etc.			
Assures documentation is appropriate, complete, accurate, and submitted timely.			
Meets with employees regularly regarding performance.			
Effectively manages all available resources.			
Notifies appropriate staff prior to implementing decisions.			

9.	Problem Solving		
Recognizes problems.			
Effectively follows up on problems and decisions.			
Listens to and addresses employee concerns, providing feedback that is effective for the situation.			
Uses a logical and rational approach to problem solving.			
Appropriate solutions are offered for problems.			
10.	Team/Workgroup Building		
Keeps upper management and staff			

informed regarding team goals and progress.	
Effectively builds consensus.	
Facilitates meetings to achieve objectives and maintain trust and mutual respect among members.	
Emphasizes cooperation among members of the team.	

STATEMENT:	Overall Performance Rating Summary For All Tasks Combined: *(Check One)*			
I have read, understand, and agree to perform the above job tasks for the functional job description of the staff position which I hold. I also understand the specific performance standard(s) for each of the job tasks and agree to perform these tasks in accordance with those standards. I have also received a copy of, have read and understand the Code of Ethics for Public Service. I agree to perform the duties of the position in accordance with the provisions of this performance plan and the Code of Ethics, including Agency Work Rules.	Exceeds Standards (in all areas)	Meets Standards (in all areas including priority areas)	Meets Most Standards (primarily in priority areas)	Does Not Meet Standards
	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____ Employee _____ Supervisor Acknowledgement				

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PLAN: *(Use this area to plan for developmental activities that will improve the employee's current job performance and/or better prepare the employee for future job assignments and responsibilities.)*

EVALUATOR'S ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: *(including comments about essential job functions as well as performance dimensions)*

Evaluator Signature	Date

Employee's Comments (Optional): *NOTE: Your signature does not necessarily mean that you agree with this evaluation. Rather, your signature indicates that you have read, understood, and discussed this evaluation with your supervisor.*

Employee Signature	Date

Second Level Supervisor's Acknowledgment:

Signature	Date

Administrative Director's Acknowledgment:

Signature	Date

Appendix C

DIMENSIONS	COMMENTS

1 Unacceptable/Needs Significant Improvement-The employee's performance is substantially below requirements.

2 Needs Improvement-The employee's performance is below the requirements for the job and must improve to be satisfactory.

3 Satisfactory-The employee's performance meets the full job requirements.

4 Good/Valued Contributions-The employee's performance is beyond the requirements for satisfactory performance for the job.

5 Truly Exceptional-The employee's performance is extraordinary, approaching the best possible for the job.

N/A This designation is used when a performance item does not apply to the employee's job duties.

COMMUNICATION
* Employs effective listening skills ....
* Conveys accurate and clear information in written form ....
* Conveys accurate and clear information verbally ....

0.00

0.00

PERFORMANCE PLAN AND EVALUATION

COMMENTS (required for excellence rating of equal to or greater than 4.0; Comments & Plan of Action required for rating of less than 3.0)

9. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS	• Establishes and maintains effective work relationships • Uses interpersonal skills to achieve job responsibilities • Works cooperatively in a team environment • Handles conflict in an effective manner			0.00

Appendix E

Employees Retirement System of Texas Performance Planning and Evaluation Form		
Employee Name	**Evaluation Period** From Date: To Date:	**Type of Evaluation** Annual
Classification Title:	**Division:** **Administration**	**Section:**

Performance Ratings		
1 **Does Not Meet Standard** Results did not meet standards in one or more areas	**2** **Meets Performance Expected** Results consistently met standards	**3** **Exceeds Performance Expected** Results exceeded standards in most areas

Performance Factors and Standards	Performance Ratings and Comments
1. Adaptability ☐ Check if critical performance factor. Is flexible; able to deal with a variety of problems/tasks; able to work under pressure and deal with stressful situations; willing to learn new procedures.	Rating: 1 Does Not Meet (Comments required for rating 1 or 3)

Appendix F

SECTION I - GENERAL PERFORMANCE FACTORS

(1) Unsatisfactory	(2) Needs Improvement	(3) Meets Requirements	(4) Exceeds Requirements
A. QUALITY - The extent to which work produced meets expected standards for accuracy and thoroughness.			
1 Constant errors - seldom acceptable	2 Frequent errors - repeated rejections	3 Occasional errors - generally high quality	4 Consistently few errors - exceptionally high quality
D. DEPENDABILITY - Timeliness; compliance with instructions; punctuality; attendance.			
1 Too unreliable for position requirements	2 Sometimes unacceptable	3 Fully meets requirements	4 Exceptionally reliable
COMMENTS:			

VIII. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

A. Employee's Goals for Next Year

- Identify goals for the following year and next several years
- Consider how those goals can be accomplished (Do you have a "plan"?)
- Identify aspects of your job (case load, supervisor/home team, legal experience, home v. field office) that help or hinder accomplishing these goals.
- Assess your performance since last review and indicate progress, if any and in what area(s), that has taken place.
- Consider whether education, personal improvement, special assignment, or other functional/divisional experiences would increase your potential for advancement.
- Consider what other positions within the agency would be appropriate as a next step in your career path based on your stated goals and more recent performance and demonstrated qualifications.

GOALS:

B. Reviewer's Recommendation and Comments

- Consider the employee's contribution to SOAH the past year.
- How do you envision the employee's contribution to SOAH in the following year and next several years.
- Identify aspects of the employee's job (case load, supervisor/home team, legal experience, home v. field office) that help or hinder accomplishing these goals.)
  Assess the employee's performance since last review and indicate progress, if any and in what area(s), that has taken place.
  Consider whether education, personal improvement, special assignment, or other functional/team experiences would increase the employee's potential for advancement.
- Consider what other positions within the agency would be appropriate as a next step in this employee's career path based on his/her stated goals and more recent performance and demonstrated qualifications.

RECOMMENDATION:

- ☐ Eligible for promotion to _____
- ☐ Reclassification to _____
- ☐ Eligible for merit increase
- ☐ Demotion to _____
- ☐ Probation, duration: _____ (List conditions of probation under "Reviewer Comments" below.)
- ☐ Termination

Comments

REVIEW BY MANAGER:

Appendix H

Employee Information

Employee's Name	Employee's Title

Employee's Comments

Supervisor's Comments

Director's Comments

Signatures

Employee's Signature	Date
Supervisor's Signature	Date
Department Head / Division Director's Signature	Date

5. **Signature of the employee and the supervisor as a statement of agreement.** <u>**If the employee does not want to sign a statement of agreement, skip to the next and final item.**</u>

We agree to work together on the items identified in this Performance Improvement and Plan of Action and to make every effort to reach the goals and expectations defined.

Supervisor's Signature_____   Date_____

Employee Signature_____   Date_____

Next Review Date_____

6. **Signature of the employee and the supervisor only as verification that the employee has received a copy of the document.**

Supervisor's Signature_____   Date_____

Employee Signature_____   Date_____

I understand that my signature only verifies that I have received a copy of this document, and not necessarily that I agree with its contents.

For Employees with Supervisory Responsibilities:

Employee Job Performance Ratings				
1 Unsatisfactory Performance Performance did not meet job requirements in one or more areas for accuracy, quality, timeliness &/or volume of work produced	2 Improvement Needed Performance is below job requirements, improvement is anticipated, occasionally did not meet job requirements for accuracy, quality &/or timeliness of work produced	3 Meets Expectations Consistently meets & fulfills the normal job requirements with some strong points	4 Exceeds Expectations Good performance that is consistently beyond normal requirements and competence, often exceeds expectations	5 Exceptional Performance Consistently & substantially exceeding expectations, consistently produces work with exceptional accuracy, quality & timeliness

Performance Factors and Standards for Supervisory Staff No Single Factor's Weighted Value May Exceed 50% (.5)		*(Weight as % x Ratings = Results)*		
		Weighted Value of Factor to Position	Ratings	Results
S-4. LEADERSHIP	• Leads by example • Leadership style sets positive norms for group behavior • Encourages high achievement • Instills a sense of responsibility in employees • Encourages open communications • Shares information with employees that will affect them • Seeks employee feedback • Recognizes employees' accomplishments • Accepts responsibility • Understands how, and works, to motivate employees • Effective in improving employee morale • Initiates change when necessary • Sets/understands Division's, Department's and/or agency's mission and goals			
COMMENTS (required for excellence rating of equal to or greater than 4.0; Comments & Plan of Action required for rating of less than 3.0)				
S-5. PLANNING/ORGANIZING	• Has a vision for work group; initiates plan to achieve it • Emphasizes planning for self and subordinates • Anticipates needs/problems; plans relevant actions • Sets ambitious, but realistic goals and deadlines • Maintains the long-term perspective • Coordinates resources and people effectively to achieve a balanced workload • Organizes effective work teams • Develops and supports programs/goals to assist with agency's mission & goals			
COMMENTS (required for excellence rating of equal to or greater than 4.0; Comments & Plan of Action required for rating of less than 3.0)				

Training and Development Activities

Training/Development Activity:

Expected Benefit:

Results Achieved:

Training/Development Activity:

Expected Benefit:

Results Achieved:

Training/Development Activity:

Expected Benefit:

Results Achieved:

Hard Copy Users: Copy page as needed, or attach supplemental page.

Supervisor Score				Performance Elements	Employee Score			
E =4	M=3	N =2	U =1	**Planning and Organization**	E =4	M=3	N =2	U =1
☐	☐	☐	☐	1. Uses time and resources efficiently	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	2. Prioritizes and plans work activities	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	3.Handles multiple tasks effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	4. Integrates changes smoothly	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	5. Exhibits good judgment	☐	☐	☐	☐

Score/Total ☐

Comments:

Score/Total ☐

My supervisor has reviewed and discussed this
performance Review with me. My signature does not
necessarily indicate my agreement with this evaluation.

☐　I have responded on an attached sheet of paper.
☐　I have not responded on an attached sheet of paper.

(Supervisor's Signature)	(Date)

(Employee's Signature)	(Date)

(Division Director's Signature)	(Date)

(Human Resources)	(Date)

(Executive Director/Deputy Executive Director's Signature)	(Date)