

Performance Management and Development Policy

Policy Statement

Attracting, developing and retaining a skilled and valued workforce are key corporate initiatives of the Ombudsman's office. The Ombudsman is committed to providing appropriate direction, information, support and resources to staff so that they can perform to the best of their ability and achieve their potential.

Our performance management and development process and agreements provide a framework to:

- Develop and retain skilled employees;
- Acknowledge the valuable contribution employees make in the achievement of the Ombudsman's operational and strategic goals; and
- Assist employees achieve their professional and personal career goals.

Its prime purpose is to allow a line manager and staff member to participate in a process of planning, assessment and feedback, for the purpose of improving individual and organisational performance. Recognition for a job well done encourages and motivates an employee to continue to do their best.

Line managers are accountable for initiating Performance Management and Development Agreement (PMDA) discussions. Responsibility for developing our performance management and development processes rests jointly with line managers and staff members.

The PMDA process involves a 12 month cycle of planning and reviewing performance, incorporating both formal discussions and regular informal feedback.

This policy does not cover substandard performance which is covered by the Performance Problem Solving Policy.

Application of Policy

This policy applies to all employees.

Standard

Public Sector Standards in Human Resource Management – Performance Management Standard.

Definitions

Line manager – an employee's direct supervisor.

Reviewer – generally an employee's line manager, but can be a supervisor at level (e.g. Team Leader).

Reviewee – an employee being reviewed.

Principles

The Ombudsman's office recognises the following principles as the most important features of the PMDA process:

- Performance management and development planning is a two-way process, involving both employees and line managers. It provides an opportunity to build trusting relationships between the participants.
- Performance management also provides an opportunity to reinforce the links between the work of individual employees and the work of the Ombudsman's office.
- Employee performance is assessed on objective, job-related criteria, developed and understood in advance by both the line manager and the employee.
- Job performance assessment is based on observable job behaviours rather than personality factors.
- Setting realistic and attainable objectives for future performance and identifying development needs is as important as evaluating past performance.
- Commitments made during the performance management and development process (e.g. provision of development opportunities) are honoured. Responsibility for meeting any commitments made in respect of training and development is shared between the line manager (the reviewer), the employee (the reviewee), and the Ombudsman's office (represented in this instance by our Senior Human Resources Consultant).
- If an employee believes a decision breaches the Public Sector Standard on Performance Management, and they have been adversely affected by this decision, they have an opportunity to seek a review (i.e. submit a breach claim) as detailed at www.opssc.wa.gov.au

Procedures

Objectives

The objectives of the Performance Management and Development process are:

- To encourage communication of both the employee's and the Ombudsman's expectations and goals.
- To let the employee know how they are doing on the job through an evaluation of job-related attributes, behaviours and results.
- To build stronger performance in both employees and line managers.
- To be a tool for counselling and career planning, identifying what training and development is required
- To build a permanent record of performance.

General Process

- The performance of each employee will be reviewed formally and in writing on at least an annual basis. Additional reviews may be required when performance is not meeting standards. Supervisors are encouraged to provide regular informal feedback to employees other than in the formal PMDA context.
- The performance review should be conducted in a formal and private setting with the supervisor or manager. As a matter of courtesy it is expected that every effort will be made to ensure that the review is conducted without interruption.
- In some circumstances (such as reviewers and reviewees being of the same level) or where the reviewee reports to more than one person, a senior officer or another officer may participate in the review.
- The employee's strengths should always be acknowledged and good performance reinforced.
- If the employee has a conflict or concern with the review, this should be documented as part of the review.
- Where the employee has identified a potential personality conflict with his/her supervisor another senior officer may be asked to participate in the review.
- The PMDA documentation is confidential and access is limited to the reviewer, reviewee, and nominated HR personnel and management staff with delegated authority.

Schedule

- It is the reviewer's role to initiate the PMDA discussion.
- At least one month in advance of the formal planning date (or at the appropriate time, the review date), the reviewer will notify the employee (reviewee) that they are due for

a planning / review meeting. This should allow adequate time to prepare for the meeting and set a mutually convenient meeting time.

- The reviewee will prepare a brief self-assessment by making notes on the PMDA form (Part 1) and send it to the supervisor at least one week before the planning meeting (and when due, the review meeting).
- In the case of new employees or secondees a planning meeting should be held within three months of commencing employment. For new employees from outside the sector, a review meeting must be held at least one month before the end of the probation period. If there is the possibility that the employee will not be made permanent at the end of the probation period, the Senior Human Resources Consultant should be advised immediately to enable appropriate action to be taken prior to the end of the probation period.
- Subsequently a formal Performance Management and Development Agreement meeting will be held every twelve months.
- In the case of promotion the schedule is to commence again.

Performance Management and Development Process

Our Performance Management and Development process is intended to help employees and line managers do a better job. Employees need to know exactly where they stand in relation to what is expected of them and established standards of performance. An employee is done a disservice by an evaluation that is non-specific, glosses over areas that need improvement, or is unduly harsh.

To ensure reliability, performance planning and review needs to be done with great care and analysis of each employee's achievements. Reviews done hastily or not conscientiously will inevitably result in inequities and eventual dissatisfaction with the system.

The Performance Management and Development process involves:

- Part 1: Planning for the Year Ahead; and
- Part 2: Performance Review - Reflecting on the Past Year.

Part 1 of the Performance Management and Development Agreement is where the reviewer and the reviewee:

- Discuss the Summary of Responsibilities contained within the JDF;
- Agree on work and career goals and objectives for the reviewee for the coming year;
- Discuss the behaviours expected of all staff (which have been identified); and

- Discuss areas requiring further development and agree on a development plan for the next year.

Both parties are expected to honour these commitments. However it is recognised that there may be some adjustments required due to changing work requirements or development needs. If substantial changes are needed (e.g. due to changed direction for the Office or the Team or due to reallocation of work within the Office due to unexpected long term staff absences), the goals should be reviewed.

Part 2 is where the reviewer and reviewee assess the extent to which each of the areas discussed at Part 1 were achieved. The comments under Part 2 of the PMDA should be personalised for each employee. Line Managers should feel free to add statements to clarify any aspects that deserve special attention. Both the reviewer and reviewee comments should be recorded on the PMDA form.

Finalising Comments, Sign-Off and Records Management

- Occasionally, completed reports will be submitted to a more senior manager for endorsement prior to approval by the reviewer, in order to promote consistency and fairness in the assessment of staff within the same team.
- Both the reviewee and reviewer will sign the Performance Management and Development Agreement Form to indicate that the review has occurred. The employee's signature does not necessarily mean agreement with the reviewer's assessment.
- The completed PMDA form (Part 1) is to be kept with the reviewer and filed in the employees Performance Management and Development temporary working file. Both the manager and employee should retain a copy of the completed form.
- The completed PMDA forms (Part 2), together with the previously completed PMDA form (Part 1), is to be sent to HR for inclusion on the reviewee's Performance Management and Development file. Both the manager and employee should retain a copy of the completed form.

References

Resolution of Disagreements (if applicable)

Performance Management and Development Agreement Form

Guidelines for Completing Performance Management and Development Agreements.

Performance Problem Solving Policy

Authorisation & Contacts

Authorisation

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