

# Aligning Employee Performance Plans with Organizational Goals, Focusing on Results and Measures

Fall 2005

## WHAT IS REQUIRED?

Stated simply, at least one element:

1. is ALIGNED with ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS
  - tells the employee how his or her work relates to the unit's mission, (by several methods):
    - o Program strategic goals cascaded from agency to unit level, or
    - o customer focus, e.g., documented customer service standards, or
    - o adherence to approved work processes, e.g., SOP's, investigations handbook, lab manual, sampling procedures, grading standards, etc.
2. focuses on RESULTS
  - says the person is accountable for something
  - says what is expected of the employee, not just activities
3. has credible MEASURES
  - quantifiable, or
  - verifiable
    - o "fully successful" can be described, and therefore observed and verified

Put the most important work element(s) at the beginning and focus on them first.

## EXAMPLES

**Alignment.** Here is the "before" element title for a GS-1980 Agricultural Commodity Grader (AMS Poultry Grader/Inspector)

Element 1. CRITICAL  
PERFORMS REGULAR INSPECTION AND GRADING WORK

What to do? Determine what organizational goal(s) the element supports and add an explicit statement of alignment below the existing element title, such as:

*This element supports the accomplishment of AMS Strategic Objective 1.10, Agricultural Commodity Grading Services: Provide on-demand user-fee grading services to segregate commodities based on their economically important attributes to increase returns to producers of quality products, and to evaluate and confirm production or manufacturing process conformance to internationally recognized quality assurance protocols administered by AMS.*

Note: The goal cited need not be at the Agency level, but could be from a business or operating plan at the program, division, branch, section, or office level. It is up to the manager of the unit to ensure that unit goals are aligned with the goals of higher level organizations and agency goals.

**Results and Measures.** The “before” standard for fully successful for the above position said:

- 1 Effectively sample products and grades products or inspects product, equipment and facilities. Effectiveness is characterized by attainment of goals, efficient use of time, and adherence to instructions, regulations, and standards.
- 2 Accurately records actual grading and inspection results on worksheets and certificates. Important information is correct and documentation is neat, legible, and in accordance with applicable instructions.
- 3 Routine problems associated with grading or inspection work are resolved with a minimum of supervision.

These imply the results wanted, but are they are worded more in terms of activities than results. Also, they do not say who will determine whether the desired results are achieved.

What to do? Add a results/measures statement before the first bullet in the standard, such as:

*The employee is responsible for accurate grading and inspection results and accurately completed paperwork. Results are measured based on supervisory observations and reviews.*

Here is an example of a performance standard that covers both results and measures very well. This is from an Agricultural Commodity Grader (GIPSA Grain) element titled “Grading”:

*Based on the Quality Assurance Specialist’s analysis of the employee’s separation, critical interpretive factors are determined at an accuracy level of 80-89 percent for DKT.*

