How to use the Rating Scale for Competencies and Goals

The definitions for rating levels is on page two of this guide. See page three for perspective on the numeric rating. Consider the following when applying a rating:

1. Reviews are based on what is in the control of the employee

Sometimes goals are not achieved due to factors other than an employee's effort, knowledge and skill. While outcomes matter, consider the possible constraints on those outcomes and the effort put in by employees.

2. Anchor on "Accomplished"

A self- or employee-review should begin with you having a clear understanding of what "accomplished" performance looks like. In fact, when performance goals and key responsibilities are written, they should describe accomplished work. "Accomplished" is, in a nutshell, doing one's job, not perfectly, but well. If one is assessed above or below this rating, describe how the work exceeded or did not achieve the description of accomplished.

3. "Exemplary" _is_ possible but less common

If you have a clear description of "accomplished" work, and the actual work exceeds that in a number of ways, then the work is "exemplary." Exemplary work could be, for example, achieving greater outcomes than expected (due to the employee's effort), succeeding with difficult problems or challenges, innovating by applying one's expertise and initiative, and being an example to others.

4. Keep "Needs Development" in context

We all can continue our development. If we are new to a role, we will likely be less effective than when we are experienced. These situations do NOT merit a "needs development" rating. This rating applies when an employee has not demonstrated the knowledge or competency to meet the standard of "accomplished" given their current circumstances and expectations. They should be assigned professional development goals and given frequent performance feedback to support becoming accomplished.

5. "Unsatisfactory": A signal to contact you HR Business Partner

This rating should be documented by examples of multiple ways in which performance routinely fails to achieve the level of accomplished. Consult with your HR Business Partner regarding a plan for this employee.

6. Rarely applicable: "Not Applicable/Too New"

Rare. Never for goals and key responsibilities (if it doesn't apply, why is it there?). It may be applicable to competencies if an employee is very new or in a narrowly defined role.

The Performance Review Rating Scale

Exemplary - 4

Performance frequently exceeds critical objectives, competencies, and job responsibilities. Employee has made superior contributions to the department and/or College. Employee models effective behaviors that are an example to others. Employee needs little to no follow-up and direction. Comments are required.

Accomplished - 3

Performance consistently meets most, and may exceed some, critical objectives, competencies, and job responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner. Employee has made the expected contributions to the department and/or College. Employee engages in activities to expand knowledge and skills to improve performance. Critical duties require appropriate supervisory follow-up and direction. Comments are optional.

Needs Development - 2

Performance does not meet some critical objectives, competencies, and job responsibilities on a consistent basis. Employee infrequently engages in activities to expand knowledge and skills to improve performance. Critical duties require more than usual supervisor follow-up and direction. Supervisor has provided, or made available, support, additional training and resources for the employee's development, but performance is lagging the expected pace towards "Accomplished." Comments are required.

Unsatisfactory - 1

Performance does not meet many or most critical objectives, competencies, and/or job responsibilities on a consistent basis. Deficiencies exist and impact performance. Employee requires significant follow-up and direction. Supervisor(s) have provided, or made available, support, additional training and resources to the employee, but performance has remained inadequate. Employee is not developing at an appropriate pace towards "Accomplished." Comments and documentation are required.

Not Applicable/Too New - 0 (Competencies Only)

Employee is newly employed, has a new responsibility, or there was little or no opportunity to perform this competency or goal to be evaluated on this item.

Is A 3.2 Better Than A 3? Making Sense of The Numbers

The numeric scores associated with the review are a product of how the review system is configured but a poor guide for distinguishing levels of performance. Here is why:

- In 2019, there are two different versions of the review with about half of all reviewed employees in each. The distribution of goal category weights is different for each, making a score comparison impossible.

- Moreover, we mistakenly configured one version of the review to only reflect Key Responsibilities in the cumulative average score.

- Even if all reviews had the same weighted category, the number of individual items in each category influences the category score. This leads to differences based on the granularity of documentation and not actual performance.

- Some employees may not have items in, for example, the projects and strategy category, whereas others will have one or more.

How Should We Regard Ratings?

Category ratings are a rough reference at best. Focus on the qualitative review comments for each item.

Do not make decisions based on review scores. Consideration for performance bonuses and personnel issues should be based on documented examples captured in the review. Use the "High Impact Contributions" section to document potentially bonus-worthy work.