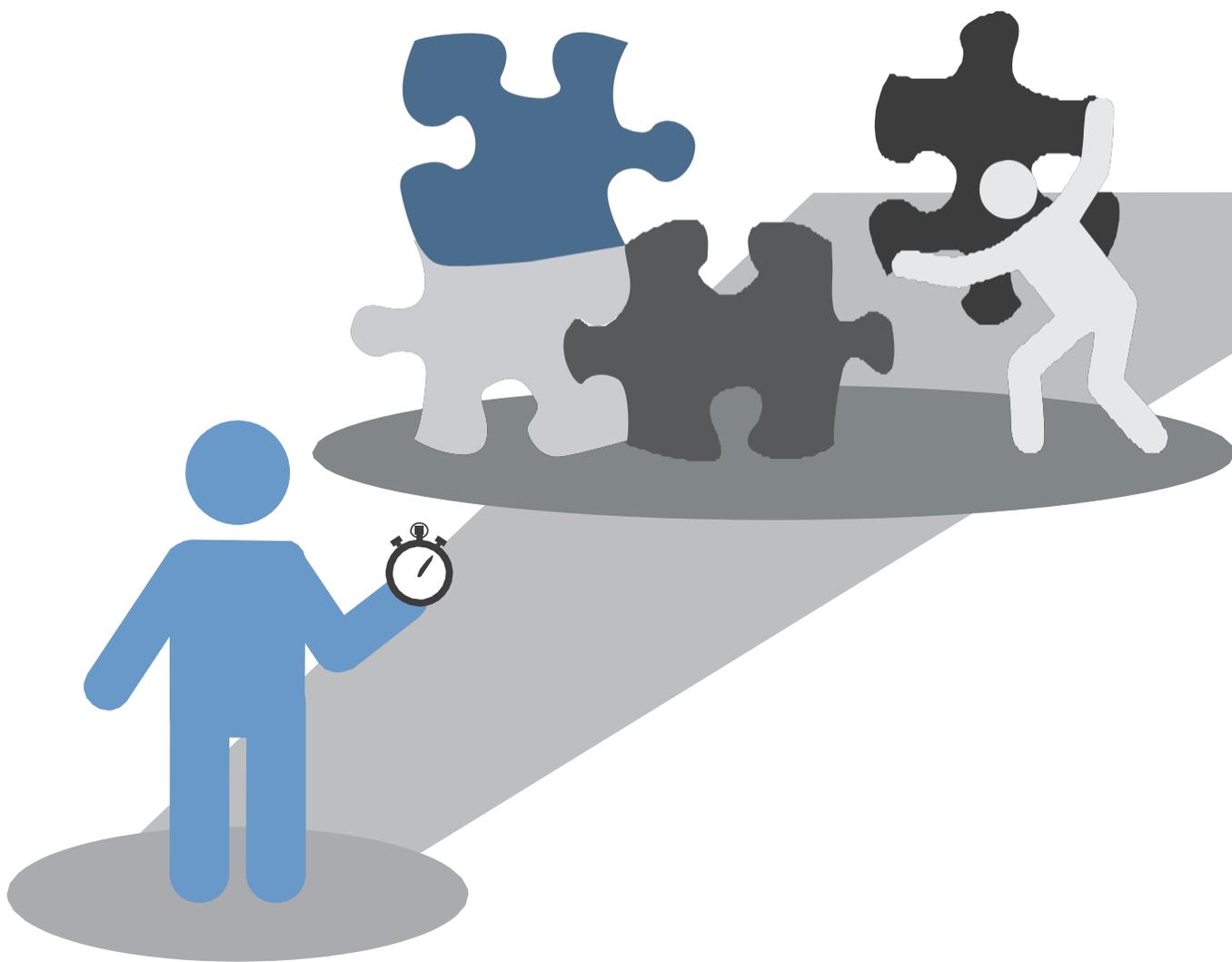


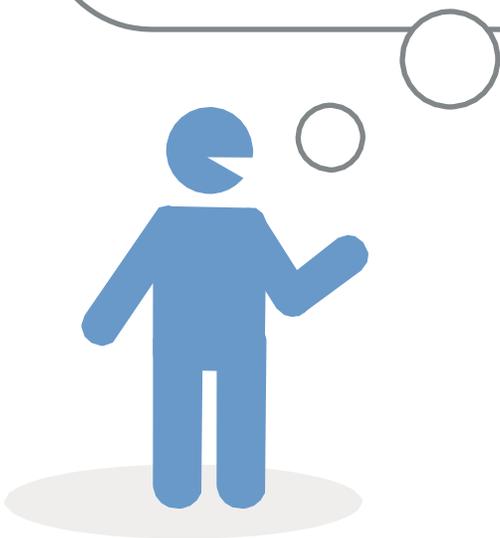
# MID-POINT PERFORMANCE REVIEW



United Nations  
Performance  
Management

# The Mid-Point Review Meeting

The mid-point review, which occurs six months into the performance cycle, is a meeting between the staff member and his/her manager. It is an opportunity to assess and discuss the progress of the goals that were set at the beginning of the performance cycle. The manager should be providing ongoing feedback to a staff member but the mid-term review offers a more formal occasion to address any performance issues that may have arisen, and/or to discuss major shifts in work priorities that would affect the staff member's goals. It is also an opportunity to discuss progress made on the learning goals that the staff member set for him/herself. The mid-term review is also an opportunity to note where support and additional resources might be necessary.



Both the manager and the staff member need to prepare for the review meeting



## Managers

- Set aside sufficient, uninterrupted time for the meeting – try not to re-schedule.
- Discuss new Department/Section/Unit priorities, and how these affect the staff member's work. Should goals be revised or remain the same?
- Prior to the meeting, review the initial, agreed-upon goals and assemble examples of performance (good or bad)
- Check your records to see if the staff member took on any development activities (e.g., training course). Ask the staff member if it impacted his/her work. Be prepared to talk about further developmental opportunities (e.g., on-the-job learning)



## Staff Members

- Prepare a summary list of challenges or problems you faced, how you dealt with them and the results.
- Be prepared to comment on your performance: Base your response on concrete examples of meeting or exceeding goals as well as unmet goals.
- Think of ways to enrich your current job.
- Review any discussions on short or long-term career plans and learning goals and their progress.
- Prepare feedback. If there is something that your manager could do more –or less of–to be supportive to your work.

# The Mid-Point Performance Discussion

## The Meeting Flow



It is up to the manager to create a comfortable atmosphere; As the mid-point review may be a bit stressful for some, chat a bit informally to begin the conversation.

Ask the staff member to begin the discussion by having him/her review accomplishments over the past six months, highlighting achievements and challenges. Ask them to comment on situations that have affected performance.



Identify together what was produced or delivered in measurable terms. Use concrete examples and give feedback about what was positive or negative. Discuss unanticipated new goals or goals that need to be dropped.

Recognize and show appreciation for work well done.



Raise any performance issues identified during the discussion, giving concrete examples and decide on actions together for correcting or improving the issue.

Ask what you, as a manager, might do more of or less of to support their work.

Check the progress of ongoing development and learning goals. Discuss your observations on the staff member's competencies – the stronger ones as well as those that need development. Give examples.



# Tips for a Productive Performance Conversation

## BE OPEN

Be open to exploring the other person's story or perspective. Try not to over-generalize, personalize or dwell on negative details exclusively. Understand that two perspectives can exist in the same universe.

## LISTEN AND ANALYZE

Pay attention to what is being said, both content and feelings; check for understanding by paraphrasing; acknowledging feelings. Ask questions for more information. Be empathetic; try to put yourself in the other's shoes to understand their perspective. Don't jump to conclusions. Look for the totality of the situation. Identify the gaps between the two perspectives.

## STAY COMPOSED

Manage your emotions. Take a break if the discussion is heated; decide on how you will react and try not to overreact. Resist the urge to vent the full force of your emotions. If needed, ask for another meeting in a few days.

## PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Focus on the problem not the person. Express your views based on facts and concrete examples. Discuss the effect of poor performance on results and/or relationships. Manage your language by speaking respectfully and giving feedback in a culturally sensitive way. Always show appreciation for good work.

## SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS

Identify options that meet both sides' important concerns. Identify actions that will improve the situation moving forward. Identify what is still missing and things you do not understand. Think small and build a foundation of small successes; break problems into small pieces so they can be resolved in easily achievable stages.

# The Performance Improvement Plan

If, as a manager, you have noted a performance problem that you believe needs to be documented in writing, the midpoint review provides an opportunity to introduce a Performance Improvement Plan.

If a performance issue is minor, you might choose to simply have a performance discussion, which culminates in a simple set of actions for follow-up on performance gaps. While not formally delivered in writing, you should always document this sort of discussion in an email to the staff member so that there are no misunderstandings. Always involve the second reporting officer as s/he has a role in developing performance improvement plans and, generally, mediating any disagreements between the first reporting officer and the staff member.

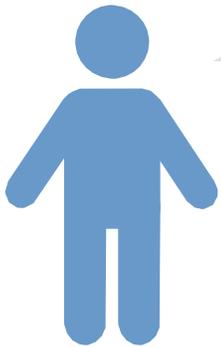
A Performance Improvement Plan is a more formal, documented note of a performance problem that is either chronic or more acute. The plan should:

1. State performance to be improved; be specific about deadlines and measurable outputs, and cite examples.
2. State the level of work performance expected.
3. Identity and specify the support and resources required to achieve improvements.
4. Specify follow-up meeting times including how often you would like to meet. Specify the measurements you will consider in evaluating progress.

# Trying Something New Receive Feedback as a Manager

Performance discussions frequently go in one direction, namely from the manager to the staff member. Improving performance is actually a two-way business and requires that managers/manager receive feedback from staff members on what they can do better. Performance discussions with staff provide an opportunity to receive feedback on your managerial style and behaviors.

Some possible questions you can ask your staff members:



Is there additional support that you would like to see from me that I don't always provide to you?

Are there any issues affecting the performance of our unit that you would like to bring to my attention?

Is there anything that I do that sometimes causes confusion or sends mixed messages?

Can you think of ways that I might make your work more challenging?

Are there any successes or achievements in our unit that I need to recognize and celebrate?

Is there anything you think I should do make our work environment more inclusive?

# Working with Different Communication Preferences

Take your and your staff member's preferred style of working into account when preparing for a performance review. For example:

1

Some people are highly operational and like to deal with facts, data, logic and details in the here and now. For discussions with them, it's important to prepare in advance, list pros and cons, present specifics, use time tables for actions and provide tangible, practical evidence to support your case or proposals.

2

Some people prefer to obtain information verbally, others in writing. So consider whether you might want to share an idea or suggestion with a colleague through an email before discussing it, to allow some time for reflection and consideration. Let your colleague know in advance why you would like to meet with him/her.

3

Some people may be very direct and to the point in their communication, others more indirect and subtle. The more direct ones may not like performance discussions that are long-winded or provide too much context or history of a problem before getting to the point. People with this direct communication style preference may not absorb indirect messages. If you are working with a colleague who prefers indirect communication, especially for negative feedback, you will have to convey your feedback more subtly.

4

Some people may be time-conscious and impatient. The rush to get things done may make them appear impersonal and not very warm. They may prefer to get straight to business without much small talk or socializing. They may not listen well and interrupt mid-sentence. So be careful not to ramble or waste time. If you have a serious issue to discuss, you should request a longer appointment.