

A Supervisor's Guide to Addressing Poor Performance

Problem

Juan Santiago Bell* is a Management Analyst, GS-343-11, in the Planning Department of Naval Activity, White Plains. As his supervisor, you have noticed over the past several months that Mr. Bell's work assignments are generally being submitted to you several days after the deadline. They often are incomplete with back-up material missing, calculations that don't always add up, and written in a manner that requires substantial revision before they can be submitted or used by your office.

The pattern of lateness is new, however, the incompleteness, inattention to details and poor writing and editing are part of a continuing pattern. On 9 October 200X you set the performance standards for the rating year 1 October 200X through 30 September 200X. Realizing that **you** are required to work long hours to get Mr. Bell's work assignments in acceptable final form, you took extra time in explaining what is expected when you set his standards this year. On the first couple of small assignments, the pattern of tardiness, incompleteness and inattention to details continued. It is now mid-November. You decide that it is time to address your concerns with him.

Preface

Dealing with poor performance issues is a challenge for any supervisor. Experienced supervisors often say it is one of the toughest parts of their jobs. Nevertheless, it is key to the success of your organization. Failure to address poor performance slowly eats away at your organization and erodes the confidence of your top performers in you as a leader.

Dealing with poor performance will be time-consuming and frustrating at times, but if done correctly, you can resolve the problem. This guide shows you the steps in the process and provides you advice on what to consider during each step. Poor performance usually only gets worse over time and rarely corrects itself without action on the part of the supervisor. So let's begin.

Insure the performance standards are appropriate

Like almost everything in civilian personnel management, successful performance management begins with a position description. Remember that

* Not his real name

the position description lays out the purpose of the position and the main duties and responsibilities. Performance standards then specify in greater detail what the person is expected to do to perform at an acceptable level. In short, the position description tells what a person is to do and the performance standards tell how well they are to do it. So let us begin with Mr. Bell's position description.

Position Description

Below are excerpts from Mr. Bell's position description. The purpose of the position is to provide information that will be used by management to make decisions. We have highlighted the major duties of the position. It is from the major duties that the critical elements in the performance standard are taken.

POSITION AND ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Position: Management Analyst, GS-0343-11

Purpose of position:

The primary purpose of the position is to provide managers with objectively based information for making decisions on the administrative and programmatic aspects of agency operations and management, by accomplishing a wide variety of assignments concerned with effectiveness and efficiency of programs and operations.

Organization: Planning Department, Naval Activity, White Plains

MAJOR DUTIES:

Studies the structure and/or functions of organizations with interrelated work processes or functions, to resolve substantive issues of moderate scope, and propose new organizational structures, realignments of functions, and/or staffing levels, to improve efficiency. (25%)

Provides substantive management support services in the areas of program cost analysis, annual and multi-year fiscal planning, development of annual work-plans, and/or commercial activity for organizations whose operations are interrelated and fairly stable. (25%)

Provides program support, assessment, and consultation services for interrelated natural disaster programs. (25%)

Conducts management surveys and research projects and provides advisory services on substantive issues of moderate scope and impact to assess the effectiveness of program operations. (25%)

Performance Standards

The performance standards that you have established with Mr. Bell include three critical elements with four standards of performance. If you are interested in learning more about writing a performance standard, we urge you to visit <http://www.ndw.navy.mil/HRO/WritingPerformanceStandards.htm#How> where the process is explained in detail.

Critical Element 1: Conducts Studies

Completed in final form by the assigned date. Clear, concise and grammatically correct writing style. Final product is ready to be issued with only minor modifications for clarification or amplification. Appropriate sources have been consulted, data collected are complete and carefully displayed, back-up material is readily available to support questions, and an executive summary with briefing material is prepared.

Target date for sick leave usage study: 30 June 200X

Target date for telephone usage study: 31 December 200X

Critical Element 2: Plans and Analyses

Completed in final form by the assigned date. Uses appropriate planning and analytical techniques. The data collected supports recommendations and conclusions. Final product is accepted with only minor modifications for clarification or amplification. Back-up data are readily available to support questions, recommendations and conclusions.

Due date for forecasting model: 15 April 200X

Critical Element 3: Supports Programs

A. Defines program needs and allots time to meet reporting dates and allow for contingencies. Provides accurate and timely information, consistent with guiding policies and procedures. Coordinates input with Headquarters and activity codes affected. Tracks, input and takes initiative to overcome delays. Advises supervisor of potential problems.

B. Identifies, coordinates and collects information needed by the accreditation team. Coordinates administrative, housing, information technology and scheduling needs for accreditation team. Activity input is accurate, timely and complete. Tracks follow-up actions and develops and after action report for future reference. Activity follow-up reports are accurate, timely and complete.

Accreditation team visit: 25-28 August 200X

The following are important components to check in reviewing the performance standards you have established.

- ✓ Is there a direct connection between the critical elements and duties and responsibilities in the position description?
- ✓ Are the critical elements essential for success in the position?
Would a person fail to be acceptable if he or she fails to achieve one or more of the critical elements?
- ✓ Do the performance standards connect with each critical element clearly? Do they provide enough guidance to make it clear what is expected for acceptable performance?
- ✓ If timeliness is important, are due dates or target dates clearly identified?
- ✓ As a whole, do the performance standards accurately reflect the purpose of the position?

If the answers to the above questions are “Yes,” then you are ready to proceed. If you believe that some modification is needed, now is the time to draft up the change and prepare for your discussion with Mr. Bell.



Dealing with Poor Performance Problems

Prepare for the discussion

Review whatever work products you have from Mr. Bell thus far this performance year and compare them to the standards you set. Would you judge that the work products are at an acceptable level? If not, where is his performance failing – what critical element and in what way? What needs to be improved? Be specific!!

Hold a Counseling Session with the Employee

Some performance problems can be resolved through effective communication between supervisors and employee. The counseling session has three interrelated purposes:

- ✓ To review your expectations as stated in the performance standards and to make sure that Mr. Bell understands what is expected. He should be encouraged to ask questions about anything that is unclear.
- ✓ To inform Mr. Bell of where his performance may not be meeting the standards. This is where you should provide the specific examples from the work products that you have.
Suggestion: It may be useful to have Mr. Bell repeat what improvement is needed.
- ✓ To ask if there is any additional assistance that he needs in terms of training, supervision, clarification on work assignments, etc.

When Mr. Bell leaves the meeting, he should have a clear understanding of what his standards require, examples of where his performance is not meeting expectations and what assistance you will be providing him, if needed. Since Mr. Bell has experienced difficulties in meeting deadlines, it would be useful to review with him the deadlines set for his assignments and ask if he foresees any reason why those dates are not achievable. This conversation may be all that some employees need.



Effective Counseling Tips

Here are some tips to help you prepare for and conduct effective counseling sessions:

- ✓ Before counseling, make sure you can state clearly what would constitute acceptable performance.
- ✓ Whenever possible, conduct the counseling session in a private place.
- ✓ Arrange adequate time for your comments as well as comments from the employee.
- ✓ Clearly state performance expectations and seek confirmation that the employee understands those expectations.
- ✓ Focus on the poor performance, not on personalities or other distractions.
- ✓ Always maintain a constructive tone, along with a calm and professional demeanor.
- ✓ Seek cooperation, NOT confrontation.
- ✓ Remember that your goal is to improve the employee's performance, not to win an argument with the employee.
- ✓ Try to end the session on a positive note by emphasizing that your mutual goal is improving the employee's performance.

Document the Meeting

Immediately after your discussion, take a few minutes and make dated notes or a memorandum for record on what was discussed in the meeting. This would include any assistance that was offered to the employee. In Mr. Bell's case note that you reviewed his deadlines and offered him an opportunity to advise you of any problems he foresees. If such a note would help reinforce your mutual understanding, share it with the employee.

Update on Performance

After a couple of weeks of meeting deadlines and doing complete staff work on some smaller assignments, you ask for an update on the telephone usage study due 31 December 200X. He admits that he has been focusing his attention on some of the smaller assignments, and will be well into it by the end of the week. He has also attended a four-day course in completing management studies during the past month.

The first week in December you meet with Mr. Bell to review his progress. When he shows you what he has done thus far, it becomes obvious that he has not yet contacted the telecommunications office to request the data that he will need. You remind him that you will be off the last week of the calendar year and will return 3 January 200X. You mention that you expect to receive the study in final form when you return. He agrees to the deadline.

Fearing that he may need some additional help in organizing his time, you work with Mr. Bell to break the study into manageable parts and mutually set target dates for the various parts. You agree to meet in two weeks to review progress. During the mid-December review you note that he has missed two of your mutually agreed upon target dates. You are sure now that the deadline will be missed, but Mr. Bell assures you that he will be working over the holiday period and with almost everyone on leave, he will be able to concentrate on getting it completed by the time you return.

You return on 3 January and the study has not been handed in. You ask Mr. Bell and he requests an additional week. You finally receive it on 17 January and you are not pleased with what you received.

Prepare a Letter of Caution

This correspondence serves as an informal, written caution that the employee's performance is falling below the acceptable level and must improve. A Letter of Caution should be concise in content and give examples of the areas that are not acceptable. Because it is designed to help the employee improve his or her performance, it is retained by the supervisor and not placed in the employee's Official Personnel Folder. A Letter of Caution is not grievable or appealable.

If you know or suspect that personal or health issues may be adversely affecting performance, you should offer the employee the opportunity of free and confidential help through the Civilian Employee Assistance Program.

Employee Assistance Program
Washington Navy Yard
Building 200
Ground Floor
(202) 433-0086

The Letter of Caution Should:

- ✓ Refer to the previous counseling provided on the employee's performance needs for improvement.
- ✓ Provide specific examples of where and how the performance fails to meet the acceptable standard.
- ✓ Give specifics on assistance that will be provided – additional training, closer supervision, scheduled progress meetings, etc.
- ✓ Inform the employee that the letter will not be filed in his or her official personnel folder, but will be retained by you, the supervisor
- ✓ Inform the employee that the letter cannot be grieved or appealed.
- ✓ Consider advising the employee of the availability of counseling through the Civilian Employee Assistance Program if personal or health problems are involved.

[<Click here for sample Letter of Caution>](#)

Follow up on Letter of Caution

You have committed yourself to a biweekly meeting with Mr. Bell to review his progress. You should also be careful to note any performance deficiencies that may need to be addressed by extra training.

At this point we recommend that you begin keeping a log of meetings with Mr. Bell and observations about his work products. The log we have prepared provides an example and gives you a summary of Mr. Bell's progress.

[<Click here for example of supervisory log>](#)

Issue a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

In many cases, the steps you take with employees, such as the counseling and letter of caution described above, will prove very effective in your efforts to avoid or resolve poor performance. However, if an employee continues to perform at an **unacceptable level** in one or more critical elements, you will need to give the employee a formal opportunity to improve his or her performance. You would have to provide written guidance for the employee to improve, which is called a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).



The period of time that the employee will be covered under a PIP, referred to as the opportunity period, depends on the type of work that the employee performs and the amount of time that is reasonable for someone to improve. Minimum opportunity period is 30 days and for occupations such as painter or medical records clerk that may be reasonable. For an analyst like Mr. Bell a more realistic opportunity period might be 60 days. In addition, employees with disabilities may need additional time to improve. If the employee is a bargaining unit member, remember to check the negotiated agreement for a minimum opportunity period requirement.

Guidelines in Writing a PIP

Remember, a PIP is **formal written guidance** given to the employee in order to improve his or her Unacceptable performance in one or more critical elements.



Determine the Unacceptable Performance.

Specify the critical element(s) where improvement is needed. Remember that the PIP is issued because the employee is performing at an unacceptable level and must improve his or her performance to remain in the position.



Specify How to Improve the Performance

Address what is needed to bring the performance up to an acceptable level.



Provide Assistance/Training

Inform the employee of any assistance and/or training that will be provided. This is tailored to the unique needs of the employee and the work assigned.



Make Clear What the Consequences Can Be

Failure will result in reassignment, change to lower grade or removal from Federal service.



Specify the Length of the Opportunity Period

Opportunity periods will vary depending on the nature of the deficiency and the nature of the work. A minimum 30-day opportunity period is required. The length of the opportunity period should be discussed with your Employee Relations Advisor.

NOTE: If an employee under a PIP improves his or her performance to an acceptable level during the rating period but fails again in the same critical element within 1 year from the start of the opportunity period, you may demote or remove the employee without going through another opportunity period.



Important Points to Remember

As the supervisor you must **monitor** your employee's progress in improving his or her performance. Provide the employee with feedback on their progress and if you have agreed to hold meetings with the employee to review progress on projects, then **make sure you keep them**. Consider the evidence of performance and compare with standards and expectations outlined in the PIP. Keep employee informed of any improvement.

There is a tendency among supervisors to take work away from employees who are not performing at an acceptable level. This must be avoided if realistic. The employee **must** have an opportunity to succeed or fail in the work of the position. It is possible to exchange some work among your staff, but be very careful that it is not the work that the employee will be judged on during the opportunity period (PIP). For example, rather than remove the POMPL accreditation assignment from Mr. Bell (because loss of accreditation would adversely impact on the Naval Activity's mission),

another analyst may be assigned to assist with specific parts of the project during the opportunity period.

Although a PIP is a formal notification, it does not involve any additional work on the part of the supervisor. Thus far in the process, you have (1) reviewed the accuracy of the position description, (2) assured that the performance standards addressed the critical elements of the position, (3) counseled the employee on performance expectations, (4) cautioned the employee that his or her performance was not at the acceptable level, (5) provided additional training and supervision and (6) documented deficiencies. The next step is to take this information and place it in a single letter.

[<Click here for sample Performance Improvement Plan>](#)

Document Performance and Provide Feedback

It is important to remember that this is your employee's opportunity to improve his or her performance, not a judgment of whether you have the ability to find ways to produce Acceptable work products. You are there to both assist and assess, not to do the work for him or her.

Things to Do During the Opportunity Period

- ✓ Allow the employee to succeed or fail based on the duties and responsibilities of the position and the conditions of the PIP. Don't take duties away merely to make sure they are completed.
- ✓ Keep every meeting that you have agreed to hold.
- ✓ Keep your employee informed of any progress being made in improvement. Be honest if improvement is not being made.
- ✓ Don't change your behavior toward the employee and do not discuss the opportunity period with his or her co-workers.
- ✓ Continue to keep a log of actual performance and discussions. If performance improves to an Acceptable level, you will not need it. If it does not, you will need to be able to document the deficiencies.
- ✓ Keep copies of all work products that are handed in, if realistic.

[<Click here for continuation of supervisory log>](#)

Prepare Letter Proposing to Remove

If your employee's performance improves to an Acceptable level in the critical element(s) identified in the PIP, then the letter that you prepare simply informs the employee of this fact and removes them from the PIP. Be sure to include the following statement in the letter: "Should your performance in same critical element(s) fail again within 1 year from the start of the opportunity period, you may be demoted or removed the employee without going through another opportunity period." Since we do not expect that this form of letter would be too difficult for a supervisor to write, we have not included a copy in this guide. Check your activity "Delegation of Authority" to determine who can issue a proposal to remove. If necessary, recommend such action. **Reminder: Send a copy of your letter to your Employee Relations Advisor in HROW Code 50 to close out the file.**

If you are not so fortunate and performance does not improve, then you will prepare a letter proposing removal for unacceptable performance.



Make clear the purpose of the letter

Begin the letter with a clear statement that you propose to remove the employee from his or her position



State where the employee has failed to improve

Here you need specifics. The PIP letter itself plus your supervisory logs should contain the specifics and details that you need.



State what you have done as a supervisor to improve the deficiencies

In the PIP you said you would do certain things or provide certain training or work guides. State what you did.



Provide information on employee's rights

State clearly who the deciding official will be, that the employee has the right to a representative, the period of time in which to submit a response to the deciding official, and the amount of official time that will be granted to review files and prepare a response. Check your activities' Delegation of Authority " to determine who will serve as the official



Inform the employee that he or she is still in a duty status

The employee is to continue to come to work and perform assignments until the decision is made on your proposal of removal from the position

The Decision

Since the decision is not within the control of the supervisor, we have not included that portion of the process in this guide. The decision regarding whether to reassign the employee, change him or her to a lower grade (and it is to step 1 of that lower grade) or remove him or her from Federal service involves a wide range of consideration that the deciding official must discuss with the Employee Relations Advisor.

As the proposing official, you may be asked to provide additional documentation or clarification to the deciding official. This is the value of the detailed supervisory log and copies of the work products that the employee has submitted. Do not take a request for further documentation as a statement of "no confidence." Most deciding official want to explore their options and the material that you provide helps to crystallize what option is appropriate. Also, remember that the deciding official is not as close to the case as you are and may want to see examples of the lengths to which you have gone to provide the employee a fair chance of success. If the employee appeals the action, the deciding official will probably have to testify under oath, and seeing sufficient documentation to support the decision is one of the things that we know he or she will be asked about.

Final Note

If at any time during the performance improvement process, the employee raises a medical issue, immediately contact your Employee Relations Advisor for assistance. Laws and regulations on reasonable accommodation change often based on legal decisions, so your Employee Relations Advisor will have the up-to-date information for you.

References

- ✓ Department of the Navy Human Resources Implementation Guide No.430-1 Performance Management Programs
<http://www.donhr.navy.mil/General/guide-430-01.htm>

- ✓ Department of the Navy Human Resources Implementation Guide No.432-1 Performance Based Reduction in Grade and Removal Actions
<http://www.donhr.navy.mil/General/guide-432-01.htm>

- ✓ Office of Personnel Management Guidance on Addressing and Resolving Poor Performance
<http://www.opm.gov/perform/poor/index.html-ssi>

Sample Letter of Caution for Performance Problems

January 31, 200X

From: L. D. Wong, Director, Planning Department
To: Juan Santiago Bell, Management Analyst

Subj: LETTER OF CAUTION

Ref: (a) HROWASHINST 12432.X (current edition)

1. The purpose of this letter is caution you that your current performance is not consistent with the expectations contained in your performance standards. When they were originally set in October 200X, we discussed the critical elements and I provided some clarification as to performance expectations under each critical element. On several times during this rating year, the most recent of which was our discussion on 14 December 200X, I have mentioned areas that you need to improve.

2. I have considered a number of your recent work products and find that overall they do not meet an acceptable level of performance. Below are three examples:

a. Example 1: The target date for the telephone use study was 31 December 200X. When I asked you for the study on 3 January 200X, you said that you would need an additional week to get it in final form. It was not completed until 17 January 200X. Since you would not be able to meet the deadline set for the extension, you needed to come to me *before the deadline*, explain the problems you were having and request an extension. The deadlines assigned for work assignments are to be met unless you receive an extension from me.

b. Example 2: When I reviewed the telephone study, I reviewed the analysis and back-up materials. I noticed that there were unexplained gaps in the data, e.g., no data were included for the month of August 200X and no data were included on Code 100. There was no explanation for the gaps. When asked, you stated that the Code 100 data were stored in a separate file and you must have forgotten to include them. With respect to the August 200X data, you explained that you had not yet received the data from the Telecommunications Office. When I checked with that office, they said that it has been waiting your pick-up since the first week in January 200X.

c. Example 3: In the study itself, you did not clearly state what was the purpose of the study nor did you provide sufficient background information to show why the study was needed. In addition, your recommendations did not follow from your discussion and the associated data. Although I concur with your conclusion that an independent study is needed later this fiscal year on cell phone use and charges, that conclusion does not follow from the data that you included (which does not break out telephone use into convention phones and cell phones). The final draft of the study had

Subj: LETTER OF CAUTION

numerous misspelled words and several grammatical errors. You may want to have a co-worker proofread your final draft to identify and eliminate such errors in the future.

3. I remind you that you have three critical assignments during the remainder of the performance year. By 15 April 200X you are to complete your study of the forecasting model being developed in Code 600 and provide your recommendations on its use in projecting future skills shortfalls. By 30 June you are to complete your sick leave usage study. Finally, in 25-28 August 200X Naval Activity, White Plains will be undergoing its POMPL accreditation. You are assigned as the point of contact between the POMPL team and the Naval Activity. In that capacity you are to insure the team has the accommodations it needs when on site, the activity's inputs provided to the team on time and track follow-up items. Carefully consider the deficiencies noted in the three examples above because they must not be repeated in the remaining assignments. Because each of these assignments is important to the success of our department, I will meet with you every other week on Wednesday afternoon at 1400 to review your progress.

4. In the event you are experiencing personal or health problems, you are advised that assistance is available through the Civilian Employee Assistance Program. You may reach this office at (202) 433-0086. Your visits to and discussions with the Civilian Employee Assistance Program are confidential and you are not charged leave for the initial couple of visits.

5. This letter of caution is being issued to improve specific deficiencies in your current performance. Failure to improve your performance to an acceptable level may result in a proposal to reassign, demote or remove you from your position. In accordance with reference (a), I will retain a copy of this letter in my file and it is not part of your Official Personnel Folder. As such you cannot grieve or appeal it.

(SIGNATURE)

I acknowledge receipt of this letter on

Date Employee's Signature

Copy to: HROW, Code 50

Performance Improvement Log for J. S. Bell

After Letter of Caution

- 2/13 Accepted the final version of the telephone usage study. Data were now complete. The recommendations still did not connect completely with the data. Made connections that were needed.
- Reminded Mr. Bell that the study on the forecasting model was due on 15 April. He admitted that he had not yet begun because of the re-work on the telephone usage study. I suggested that he break the assignment into subtasks and put a target date on the subtasks. He agreed and said he would get it to me by 2/18.
- 2/20 Have not seen list of subtasks, so I sent an e-mail to Mr. Bell reminding him.
- 2/22 Received the list and added several that might be helpful
- 2/27 Discussed the list of subtasks and how they fit together. Asked if he had contacted the Code 600 analyst to obtain a copy of the model along with some training on how it worked. He said he would arrange that by the end of the week.
- 3/5-6 Mr. Bell out sick with the flu.
- 3/13 Mr. Bell showed me the forecasting model and said that he is scheduled to be trained on it on 3/14. A review of his target dates for the subtasks showed that he is behind on requesting the turnover and projected workload data needed to test the model. We worked up an outline of the contents of the memos requesting the data.
- 3/14 Received memo for the data with a due date of 3/19. This was unrealistic and had to change it to 3/22.
- 3/23 Mr. Bell told me he has received the data and will begin on 3/25 to test the model with the data.
- 3/27 Mr. Bell informed me that he was having a problem loading the data. He agreed to call a meeting with the Code 600 analyst and the specialists who provided the data. Decided that we needed to meet every week to insure progress.
- 4/3 Mr. Bell assured me that the data problems were solved and he will have his initial test and observations by 4/5. I reminded him that the final study is due in less than two weeks and what the study must include. He mentioned that he thought he would make the deadline, but may need an extension.
- Also reminded Mr. Bell that he may also want to request sick leave usage data for the study that he is scheduled to have completed by 30 June.
- 4/5 Mr. Bell is sick with a problem with his back.
- 4/8 Mr. Bell ran the first test of the model and needed to discuss findings with the Code 600 analyst. Mr. Bell requests an extension until 4/22. Granted extension, but again told him what is expected in the final study.

- 4/10 Reviewed initial results of model, but Mr. Bell could not answer questions on the relationship between the data and projections.
- 4/15 Mr. Bell e-mailed me answers to the questions raised on 4/10.
- 4/17 Mr. Bell has completed three runs of the model that he wanted me to review because he said it should answer all my concerns. Told him that the final product was a written study with analyses and recommendations and it was due 4/22.
- 4/22 Mr. Bell asked for another extension. When I asked for his work products to date, he produced the data runs for the four tries and some notes that he intends to use in writing his study.

Sample of a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

May 2, 200X

From: L. D. Wong, Director, Planning Department
To: Juan Santiago Bell, Management Analyst

Subj: PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN/OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE

Ref: (a) HROWASHDCINST 12432.1 (current edition)
(b) NAWP memo of 31 Jan 0X

Encl: (1) Your Performance Plan with Standards

1. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with an opportunity to improve your performance to an Acceptable level in accordance with the provisions of reference (a). You are hereby notified that you are not performing your duties and responsibilities at the level expected of a Management Analyst, GS-343-11. If I were to have to rate you today, I regret that I would have to rate you as Unacceptable on two critical elements, specifically, "Conducts Studies" and "Plans and Analyzes".

2. This performance improvement plan (PIP) provides you with a reasonable opportunity to improve your performance to an Acceptable level in the two critical elements mentioned above. The PIP becomes effective today and will continue for the next 60 calendar days. I have attached as enclosure (1) a copy of your current performance plan with standards. These standards along with the information in this letter should guide you in your efforts to raise your performance to an Acceptable level. Failure to improve your performance to an Acceptable level in the two critical elements cited will result in a reassignment, reduction-in-grade or removal.

3. As you may recall during our closeout of last year's rating and the establishment of this year's standards I expressed concern about what I perceived as a possible pattern of tardiness, incompleteness and inattention to details. When we set your performance standards on 9 October 200X, I explained what is expected with respect to each of the critical elements in your performance standards. In mid-November 200X we again discussed what was expected in each of the three critical elements. To help you organize the components of the telephone use study, you and I met twice to break the project into subtasks and set milestones for those subtasks. You also received a one-week extension on that project. In late January you received reference (b), which cautioned you of your need to improve your performance. It contained examples of areas in which you are falling below the Acceptable level and set up a weekly schedule for us to meet. Even with the above efforts, your performance fails to meet the Acceptable level criteria. This PIP is a continuance of efforts to help you improve your performance.

Subj: PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN/OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE

4. During the period of this PIP, you are to report directly to me for problems relating to your performance. We will continue to meet weekly at 1400 on Wednesdays to discuss progress. I will be on travel during the week of 10-14 June 200X. In order to insure progress during that period, we will meet Friday 7 June and Monday 17 June 200X at 1400 to plan for and assess progress during the week I am away. In addition, on Wednesday afternoon 12 June 200X you are to send me an e-mail report of the work you have accomplished. I will be checking my e-mail while on travel and will provide you with feedback. In my absence, Jill Walls will be acting as head and will provide you with any advice and clarification that you may need.

5. The deficiencies in your performance center on two critical elements of your position: “Conducts Studies” and “Plans and Analyzes”.

a. Conducts Studies. The standard for this element states: “Completed in final form by the assigned date. Clear, concise and grammatically correct writing style. Final product is ready to be issued with only minor modifications for clarification or amplification. Appropriate sources have been consulted, data collected are complete and carefully displayed, back-up material is readily available to support questions, and an executive summary with briefing material is prepared.”

(1) In your recent telephone usage and forecasting model assignments you have failed to meet this standard. Even with a one week approved extension on both assignments, the telephone usage assignment was submitted seven days late and the forecasting model was six days late. To assist you in achieving the due date for the sick leave usage study, we will jointly break the study into subtasks and you will propose due dates for the subtasks. Once approved, those subtasks due dates must be met, unless changed by mutual agreement in advance.

(2) The final submission for the sick leave usage study will consist of a point paper of not more than two pages addressing the purpose of the study, background, discussion (including funding), options and recommendations. Attachments are to be used to display back-up material explaining or supporting the points made in the discussion and recommendations. During our weekly discussions of progress I will identify any back-up material that you may be overlooking.

(3) By the words “Clear, concise and grammatically correct writing style. Final product is ready to be issued with only minor modifications for clarification or amplification,” I expect that the two-page point paper to have no more than a total of 3 typographical errors or misspelled words, back-up pages should have no more than 2 typographical errors or misspelled words each. Grammatical errors and editing changes should reflect minor changes in tone or word preference. The “Spell check” feature of Microsoft Words will help you identify potential errors. Additions for clarification or amplification should be minor, being adjustments made for the reading audience. To insure that the final study meets this standard, I suggest that you hand in written drafts to

Subj: PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN/OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE

me for review as subtasks are completed and a final draft of the entire study by 27 June 200X. Any internal memos that will require my signature must have no more than 3 typographical errors or misspelled words.

b. Plans and Analyzes. The standard for this element states: “Completed in final form by the assigned date. Uses appropriate planning and analytical techniques. The data collected supports recommendations and conclusions. Final product is accepted with only minor modifications for clarification or amplification. Back-up data are readily available to support questions, recommendations and conclusions.” In the telephone use study there were unexplained gaps in the data, e.g., no data were included for the month of August 200X and no data were included on Code 100. There was no explanation for the gaps. In the forecasting study you ran the model over three fiscal years. However, instead of using the data for Codes 300, 400 and 500 that were complete for the three years, you selected to compare data from Codes 650, 710, and 790 that were not complete – one covering one year, the others two years. By choosing Codes 300 through 500 you might have noticed that the initial design of the model did not work smoothly over fiscal years.

(1) The requirements for completion by target date and handing in a final product requiring only minor modifications for clarification or amplification have been addressed in detail in paragraphs 5 a (1) and (3) above.

(2) You are responsible for identifying the data sources for your studies and independently to contact them and obtain the needed data. When you need my assistance in requesting the data, provide me with a brief memo to the code involved explaining what you are seeking and the format that you request they be in. Be sensitive to the fact that the codes producing the data may need some time to fulfill your request, e.g., your request in the forecasting model for three years of turnover and projected workload data with a two working day turnaround was unrealistic and had to be modified by me to four working days.

(3) As an experienced analyst you are to select the appropriate techniques to be used to complete the study. The techniques must be appropriate for the data and must support the points made in the discussion and the recommendations drawn. Data must be displayed in a manner that is easy for the reader to follow. Data must be without gaps.

(4) The POMPL accreditation visit will remain as your assignment. It is still your responsibility to develop a plan of actions, milestones and responsible parties so that the accreditation visit is successful and the team has the data, accommodations, equipment, assistance and privacy that it needs. However, I will assign Joan Ents to assist you in achieving certain subtasks and assignments due during the opportunity period. It is essential that you develop your overall plan, so that she can understand what assistance she will be providing.

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6. You have been in your current position for over four years. Last June you successfully completed the seven-day Introduction to Analysis course and in October you successfully completed a four-day course in Completing Management Studies. I do not expect that additional formal training will be needed during this opportunity period.

7. In the event you are experiencing personal or health problems, you are advised that assistance is available through the Civilian Employee Assistance Program. You may reach this office at (202) 433-0086. Your visits to and discussions with the Civilian Employee Assistance Program are confidential and you are not charged leave for the initial couple of visits.

8. At the completion of the 60-day opportunity period, I will make an assessment of your performance. I believe at that time that you will have attained the Acceptable level in both of these elements. You must meet and maintain the Acceptable level on these two critical elements for one year from the beginning of the opportunity period (the date of this letter). Failure to achieve an Acceptable level of performance on either of these elements during the opportunity period or to maintain it during the remainder of the 1-year period may result in removal or reduction in grade without any further opportunity to demonstrate Acceptable performance.

9. If you have any concerns or questions about this letter or require any additional guidance on what is expected of you, please let me know as soon as possible. Keep in mind that it is important that you refer to the requirements laid out above throughout the opportunity period. Please sign and date a copy of this letter, which serves only to acknowledge your receipt of it.

(Signature)

I acknowledge receipt of this letter on

Date Employee's Signature

Copy to: HRO-W, Code 50

Performance Improvement Log for J. S. Bell

After PIP

- 5/8 Reviewed Mr. Bell's plan for completing the sick leave usage study. Adjusted three milestones and reminded him that he needed to formally request the data from the Time and Attendance staff. Since 17 May is the end of the pay period, I suggested that he provide his written request to me by 1200 on 5/10 at the latest.
- 5/10 Received draft request to Time and Attendance at 1530. It did not contain information on the format that the data were needed it nor the date they were required by. Went to find Mr. Bell but he had departed for the weekend.
- 5/13 Returned the draft request to Mr. Bell at 0900. Showed him what was missing and informed him that I would be in meetings all afternoon, so I would need to sign it out by 1200. Found the request on my chair when I returned at 1630. Signed it and placed it on Mr. Bell's desk.
- 5/15 Received update on progress on three subtasks. Excel templates are completed and he has drafted an explanation of the codes he plans to use in the study. He mentioned that he would not be receiving the data requested until 5/21 because of payroll downtime.
- 5/20 Sent an e-mail to Mr. Bell reminding him that he needs to prepare a plan of action, milestones and responsible parties for the POMPL accreditation. Told him we would discuss it during our meeting on 5/22.
- 5/22 Mr. Bell received the sick leave data from Time and Attendance on 5/21. Has the data loaded into excel spreadsheet and described how he plans to compare and display use by department by the end of the week. Asked for his plan for the POMPL accreditation and he admitted that he had not yet started because he was so involved in loading the sick leave data. Mr. Bell said he would have the plan to me by 1200 Friday 5/24. Reminded him that this was a three-day holiday weekend.
- 5/24 Discussed Mr. Bell's POMPL plan. Adjusted the order of the actions and due dates. Needed to add actions relating to making housing arrangements, office space and phone lines. Asked if he had contacted the POMPL accreditation team leader yet and obtained their data needs. Reminded him that the NMCI office will need 45-day lead-time if computers and phone lines need to be installed. All in all, the plan is realistic and acceptable. Assigned several items to Ms. Ents and reminded Mr. Bell that he agreed to contact the team leader by the end of the day.
- 5/29 Asked Mr. Bell to provide me with an oral summary of the method that he planned to employ in analyzing the data provided in the sick leave usage study. His approach of summarizing and averaging usage by department and division seemed appropriate as a first cut. Reminded him that the purpose of the study is to identify potential problem areas, trends and changes that are causing lost time. Mr. Bell agreed that he would need to "get more granularity" after he saw how the data fell out. Mr. Bell said that by the time that he had tried to contact the POMPL team leader he had left for the weekend. He will try to reach him today.

- 5/31 POMPL data requirements arrived – 14 pages!! Told Mr. Bell he needed to decide which codes can provide the data and invite them to a meeting to decide where the data reside and who will provide them. Mr. Bell asked if that could be given to Ms. Ents since he was busy with the sick leave study. Told him that he must organize and oversee the data collection and response but the Ms. Ents would collect input and formulate the data files for submission to the POMPL team. Asked Mr. Bell what the due date was and he admitted that he wasn't sure but toward the end of June. Reminded him that he needed a plan.
- 6/3 Sent e-mail to Mr. Bell saying that I wanted to review the data he had analyzed for the sick leave study since he had set a 5/31 date for the initial graphic displays.
- 6/4 Received e-mail from Mr. Bell saying that he discovered that the April data were from the wrong year and had notified Time and Attendance of the error. They would provide the correct data by COB 6/4. Told him I still wanted to see his spreadsheets and graphs when we meet tomorrow.
- 6/5 Review of data on spreadsheets showed a reasonable approach, although the new April data still needed to be added. Graphic displays were easy to understand. Told him that for the initial display of gross usage, this was Acceptable. Asked about the meeting for gathering the POMPL data. Mr. Bell said that he was preparing the memo for the meeting later today. I informed him that his planning and organizing of projects is still Unacceptable. He fails to appreciate that gathering data takes time and coordination. Without planning ahead and assigning realistic response dates, deadlines are missed – which is one of his biggest problems. Finished by saying that his progress on the leave study is Acceptable, but he is failing in Planning and Analyzing. Reminded him that we will meet on Friday because I will be away next week
- 6/7 Mr. Bell presented me with a draft of a memo to sign for the POMPL data meeting. Could not sign the memo as written because there were 4 typos and one sentence fragment. I also asked if he had reserved the conference room and checked to see if the code reps could make it. Mr. Bell asked if we could delay our meeting for one hour while he made the checks and corrected the memo. Signed memo out. Reviewed spreadsheets and graphics now that the April data were included. Told Mr. Bell it was a good start, but that I wanted to have him e-mail me by 6/12 about his plans to “bore into the data.”
- 6/13 Reviewed e-mail from Mr. Bell proposing how he would be looking for trends and problem areas on Mondays and Fridays, around holidays, especially within specific departments. Suggested he consider other variable such as occupation, grade, age, etc. Mr. Bell e-mailed me back and said he would revise his approach to include them and discuss it with me when I return.
- 6/17 Asked how POMPL data meeting went. Mr. Bell said that there were several “no shows,” but he scheduled another meeting for 6/20. Told him he needed to get the data requirements to the responsible supervisors by hand carrying them. Reviewed his approach to analyzing demographic and departmental differences in sick leave usage. Reminded him that a draft point paper with purpose and background sections finished should be completed by 6/19 as well as a rough outline of the discussion and analyses to be included in the back-up material.

- 6/19 Statement of purpose and background section done. Analysis and discussion outline is too broad. Told Mr. Bell to look at five or six departments having the highest average sick leave usage. Asked about the POMPL data collection. Still had not met with two codes, but meeting is set for 6/20. Told Mr. Bell that the sections he prepared on purpose and background were Acceptable and were a good start for the final summary paper. However, he was still Unacceptable in Planning and Analyzing. He only had 11 days until his sick leave usage study is to be completed. Told him he should have all data displayed and analyzed (in written and graphic format) to me by COB 6/25, so we can discuss on 6/26.
- 6/25 Received data displays and graphs but no written analysis. In reviewing spreadsheets, I noted two of the five codes with the highest leave usage rates were codes with fewer than five civilians. In one of the codes a woman had recently had a baby and the other a man suffered from cancer. A third code had reported abnormally large number of absences twice during winter for flu and then severe bronchitis plus the code works outdoors. One code has 20 civilian employees above the GS-7 level who average 3.2 sick days per year and 15 GS-7 and below employees who average 13.7 days of sick leave. Mentioned that since 6/30 was a Sunday the study would be due COB 7/1.
- 6/26 Pointed out some of my observations noted above. Mr. Bell said that he had not yet “bored into that data,” yet because he was still focusing in on the “big picture” that he needed to put the study in perspective. Told him that he needed to finish his analysis and pull everything together because the initial draft of the final study is due to me COB 6/27.
- 6/27 Mr. Bell asked for an extension until 0800 on 6/28 for the initial draft. Granted it, but reminded him it must include the two-page summary paper plus the back-up material.
- 6/28 Reviewed Mr. Bell’s draft and found it confusing and incomplete. Mentioned the following during our discussion: Discussion did not clearly tie to back-up data and graphs. Recommendations were too broad and were not clearly supported by data. Needed to tie data to trends and trends to recommendations. Told him if he got revisions to me by 1600 today, I would stay late and give him feedback. He said that he planned to work on the study all weekend.
- 7/1 At 1600 Mr. Bell submitted the final version of the sick leave usage study.
- 7/2 Reviewed the final submission and noted the following:
- Due date was met with summary paper and back-up material as required
 - Study was in proper format
 - Seven typos or misspelling in the summary paper. Two sentence fragments and three subject-verb disagreements. Back-up pages averaged four typos per page.
 - Discussion section does not track with data, e.g., discussion of data for chart 5 is contained under chart 4.
 - Recommendations 1 and 2 are too broadly stated to be useful. Recommendation 3 relating to possible sick leave abuse at the GS-7 and below level in Code 950 appears to be accurate but is not properly backed up with data.
 - Back-up data needs to be broken into sections, so it can be easily referred to in the summary paper
 - Flow of explanation from broad to specific in back-up data is missing. Current format mixed support for recommendations 1 and 2 with specifics for recommendation 3. By rearranging discussion and data, data for recommendations 1 and 2 would be supported

by overall trends and could then be followed by discussion + data on specific recommendations.

Made written suggestions and discussed with Mr. Bell. Gave him until COB 3 July to make corrections. Mentioned that although he had handed the study in by the due date, because it required major revisions, he must be considered as missing the due date.

- 7/3 Received re-write from Mr. Bell at 1600 today. He assured me that the corrections and changes were made. Asked him to leave me both a hard copy plus a disk of all his files because I intend to work on it over the holiday weekend.
- 7/8 Revised Mr. Bell's paper and back-up analysis. Took 6 hours of uninterrupted work at home. Shared revisions with Mr. Bell and explained why I made the changes that I did. He looked through the study in its new format and said he saw why I made the changes. Informed Mr. Bell that although at times he had showed improvement, his work did not meet the standards for the Acceptable level in either critical element.
- 7/9 Received phone call from POMPL team leader saying that the data he needed was almost 2 weeks late.

Sample of a Letter of Proposed Removal For Unacceptable Performance

July 12, 200X

From: L. D. Wong, Director, Planning Department
To: Juan Santiago Bell, Management Analyst

Subj: PROPOSAL TO REMOVE FOR UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE

Ref: (a) HROWASHDCINST 12432.1 (current edition)

Encl: (1) Performance Improvement Plan/Opportunity to Improve
(2) Sick Leave Usage Study with comments (7/1)
(3) Draft POMPL data meeting memo with corrections
(4) Revised Sick Leave Usage Study with comments (7/3)

1. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that I propose to remove you from your position as Management Analyst, GS-343-11, and from the Federal service, for Unacceptable performance under the provisions of 5 CFR Part 432, as implemented in reference (a). This proposal is based upon your Unacceptable performance in the following critical elements: (1) Conducts Studies and (2) Plans and Analyzes. This action, if taken, will be effected no earlier than thirty (30) calendar days from your receipt of this proposal.

2. After several months of informal counseling, on 13 January 200X I issued you a Letter of Caution containing examples of where your performance needed to improve and the assistance that would be provided to you. By 2 May 200X your performance still was not meeting the Acceptable level specified in your performance standards established for this year and I issued you a letter placing you on a 60-day Performance Improvement Plan/Opportunity to Improve, a copy of which is attached as enclosure (1). In that letter I stated that your performance was Unacceptable in the two critical elements mentioned above and provided you with an opportunity to demonstrate Acceptable performance. During the 60-day opportunity period (2 May 200x through 1 July 200X), you failed to achieve the required level of performance in either conducting studies or planning and analyzing. My reasons for making this proposal are as follows.

3. During the opportunity period I met with you every Wednesday except during the week of 10-14 June 200x during which I was on travel. To insure that you received the assistance that you may have needed in my absence we met on Friday 7 June 200X before I left and again on Monday 17 June 200X when I returned. In addition, we exchanged

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e-mail messages during my absence. The purpose of these meetings was to allow you to demonstrate to me that you were making progress in conducting the two projects assigned to you, namely the sick leave usage study and the POMPL accreditation site visit. During those meetings efforts were made by me to assist you in planning the projects, determining which analytical methods would be used, gathering, analyzing and displaying data, writing the final report and meeting scheduled deadlines. Although some improvement was made in meeting deadlines and displaying data, your performance overall remained Unacceptable.

4. With respect to conducting studies, your PIP stated that improvement needed to be made in three areas:

a. Meeting Deadlines: The PIP stated that we would jointly break the sick leave usage study into subtasks, due dates will be assigned and those dates will be met unless changed by mutual agreement in advance. This was accomplished and for the most part you met all deadlines. With respect to the POMPL assignment, the POMPL team set a date for a submission of the data they requested by 27 June 200X. On 9 July 200X I received a phone call from the POMPL team leader saying he had not received the required data and that the deadline had passed almost two weeks ago. Reminders about gathering the data were made on 5/24, 5/31, 6/7, 6/17, 6/19. In this sub-element you are Unacceptable.

b. Study Format: The PIP contained specific format required in the sick leave usage study. You complied with the requirement in terms of preparing a two-page point paper with back-up material designed to provide amplification and clarification. In this sub-element you are Acceptable.

c. Grammar and Spelling: The PIP stated that "I expect that the two-page point paper to have no more than 3 typographical errors or misspelled words, back-up pages should have no more than 2 typographical errors or misspelled words. Grammatical errors and editing changes should reflect minor changes in tone or word preference.... Any internal memos that will require my signature must have no more than 3 typographical errors or misspelled words." Your 7/1 submission of the sick leave usage study had seven typos or misspelling in the summary paper itself as well as two sentence fragments and three subject-verb disagreements. Back-up pages averaged four typos per page. I was unable to sign the memo prepared to gather the data for the POMPL team as written because there were 4 typos and one sentence fragment in the draft you prepared. In this sub-element you are Unacceptable. A copy of the study and the initial draft of the POMPL data meeting memo with errors noted are attached as enclosures (2) and (3) respectively.

Overall, I judge your performance in the first critical element Conducts Studies as Unacceptable.

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5. With respect to plans and analyzes, your PIP stated that improvement needed to be made in four areas:

a. Completion by Target Date: Although the sick leave usage study report was submitted by the due date of 7/1, there were a number of deficiencies in that report to require that it be returned to you for revision. Even after you submitted on 7/3 (two days after the original deadline), it took me six hours of uninterrupted time to put the study in final, releasable format. Some of the deficiencies I noted are listed in paragraph 5 c below. Additional comments and suggestions are written in the margins of enclosure (2). In this sub-element you are Unsuccessful.

b. Obtaining Data: With respect to obtaining the necessary data to complete the sick leave usage study, Mr. Bell's performance was Acceptable. Although you did not clearly specify the format for the data or the date it was required, that was corrected. You obtained the data in sufficient time to conduct the analysis and made adjustments to obtain the April data that were missing. As discussed in paragraph 4a above (Meeting Deadlines), you failed to act quickly enough and failed to follow through in collecting the data for the POMPL accreditation review. As a result our submission was over two weeks late. In this sub-element you are Unacceptable.

c. Selecting Analytical Techniques and Drawing Conclusions: The performance standard that we established on 9 October 200X and quoted in your PIP states: "Completed in final form by the assigned date. Uses appropriate planning and analytical techniques. The data collected supports recommendations and conclusions. Final product is accepted with only minor modifications for clarification or amplification. Back-up data are readily available to support questions, recommendations and conclusions." Your PIP further states: "As an experienced analyst you are to select the appropriate techniques to be used to complete the study. The techniques must be appropriate for the data and must support the points made in the discussion and the recommendations drawn. Data must be displayed in a manner that is easy for the reader to follow. Data must be without gaps." On 5/8, 5/15, 5/22 and 6/5 we met and discussed the analytical approach that you were taking, the data you would need and the various comparisons and displays that expected to use in the final study. You noted that the April data last year was missing and obtained it without delay. On 6/13 we exchanged e-mail messages about possible trends and problem areas. All that you proposed was Acceptable although I did mention on several occasions that there would be a need to "look deeper into the data" to find hidden issues and trends.

On 6/19 I mentioned that your outline of what you planned to include in the analysis and discussion sections of the study was too broad. At that time we reviewed a number of specific data comparisons that would "bore into the data." On 6/26 we reviewed your displays and graphs, but you had not yet submitted the written analysis. I expressed several concerns about the observations made about the top five codes. You stated that you were still focusing on "the big picture," and had yet "bored into the data." Your

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initial draft of the study, submitted on 6/28, was confusing and incomplete. I made the following observations: Discussion did not clearly tie to back-up data and graphs. Recommendations were too broad and were not clearly supported by data. Needed to tie data to trends and trends to recommendations. In the final submission of 7/1, I noted the following deficiencies that required revision:

- Discussion section does not track with data, e.g., discussion of data for chart 5 is contained under chart 4.
- Recommendations 1 and 2 are too broadly stated to be useful. Recommendation 3 relating to possible sick leave abuse at the GS-7 and below level in Code 950 appears to be accurate but is not properly backed up with data.
- Back-up data needs to be broken into sections, so it can be easily referred to in the summary paper
- Flow of explanation from broad to specific in back-up data is missing. Current format mixed support for recommendations 1 and 2 with specifics for recommendation 3. By rearranging discussion and data, data for recommendations 1 and 2 would be supported by overall trends and could then be followed by discussion + data on specific recommendations.

Although the analytical approaches you selected and we discussed during the course of the study were Acceptable and ultimately supported some excellent recommendations, you were never able logically or clearly to connect data to trends and trends to recommendations. Even in your 7/3 revisions, the data and charts and graphs in the back-up material are not easy to track with the written analysis, discussion and recommendations sections of the study. With these deficiencies, even in the revised version of the study, the recommendations would not in my opinion have been adopted by the Executive Steering Group without re-writing the entire report. Enclosure (4) contains a copy of that submission with my comments and notes in the margin. I completed that re-write on 7/8. In this sub-element you are Unacceptable.

d. Planning for POMPL accreditation: On 5/22 I had to remind you that you needed a plan with subtasks because you would be receiving assistance from another analyst. On 5/24 I reminded you to contact POMPL team leader. On 5/31, when POMLP data request arrived, I had to remind you that you needed to organize and oversee the data collection and response. On 6/5 I reminded you that you needed to hold a meeting with representatives of the codes involved and to submit your data requests. During our discussion on 6/5 I informed you that your planning and organizing of projects is still Unacceptable. I specifically mentioned that you fail to appreciate that gathering data takes time and coordination. Without planning ahead and assigning realistic response dates, deadlines are missed – which is one of your biggest problems. Because of insufficient planning, follow-up and attention to deadlines, our submission was two weeks late. In the sub-element you are Unacceptable.

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Overall, I judge your performance in the second critical element Plans and Analyzes as Unacceptable

6. During the opportunity period, you were given every opportunity to improve to the Acceptable level but failed to do so. It is my conviction, based on your Unacceptable performance, that you are unable to handle all the aspects of the position you hold. Therefore, based on your Unacceptable performance in the two critical elements, Conducts Studies and Plans and Analyzes, as described above, I am proposing your removal from your current position and from the Federal Service.

7. You have the right to respond to this notice both orally and in writing, to prepare and present your response, and to provide evidence in support of your response if you elect to make one. You have the right to represent yourself, or to be represented by an attorney or other individual. Designation of your representative must be made in writing to **[insert Employee Relations Specialist's name]** within 7 calendar days of your receipt of this memorandum. You will have 15 calendar days to present your oral and/or written response to Commander John P. Holt, Chief of Staff, who will be the Deciding Official on this proposal. Consideration will be given to extending the 15-calendar day answer period if you submit a written request to Commander Holt stating your reasons for desiring more time. If you choose to make an oral reply, either in lieu of or in addition to a written response, you should contact Commander Holt's secretary at (202) 114-4605 to schedule an appointment for you to make your response. You will be allowed a reasonable amount of official time, not to exceed 4 hours, to review the evidence in support of the reasons advanced in this proposal, and to prepare your reply. Documentary evidence relied on to substantiate the reason for this proposal is available for your review. Please contact me if you wish to schedule the use of official time or to review the documentation.

8. You will receive a written notice of Commander Holt's decision as soon as possible after all the evidence in your case, including your written and/or oral reply and all associated documents, has been reviewed and considered. If you do not respond, the decision will be issued after the time allotted for your response has elapsed. If it is determined that your removal is warranted due to an Unacceptable level of performance, the decision notice will explain applicable grievance and appeal procedures and how to exercise them.

9. You will remain in a duty status during the notice period of this letter. If you do not understand the reasons given for proposing to remove you, you may contact me for further explanation. Please sign and date the attached copy of this letter, which serves only to acknowledge the date on which you received it.

(Signature)

Subj: PROPOSAL TO REMOVE FOR UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE

I acknowledge receipt of this letter on

Employee's Signature

Date

Copy to: HROW, Code 50