

COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT USER GUIDE

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PREFACE

The Colorado School of Mines Performance Management System and this associated *Performance Management User Guide*, and performance forms were created in accordance with State of Colorado statutes, Performance Management guidelines, and Rules and Procedures of the State Personnel System. They were developed with input from employees and managers, approved by the administration of the Colorado School of Mines, and are intended to be dynamic and flexible to meet the diverse work situations of the employees of the Colorado School of Mines. This *User Guide* has been revised to include state personnel rules changes effective in April 2007.

Performance management is critical to success at all levels within the organization. A good performance management system should link employee goals and behaviors to the organization's strategic focus and program directions. If goals are developed properly, their achievement may be more easily associated with employee accomplishments – which then may be recognized and rewarded. To this end, the Colorado School of Mines performance management system has been designed to encourage collaborative efforts between supervisors and employees, with emphasis on continuous feedback and improvement.

I. Overview

As a planning and communications tool, performance management helps align employee efforts with department and school priorities. It is a fluid process built on open, ongoing communications in order to foster trust and develop a work environment that focuses on service, improvement and productivity. Done well, performance management provides valuable feedback, identifies contributions, and helps employees strengthen job-related knowledge and skills.

Successful performance management systems include the following characteristics:

- ◆ Campus-wide responsibility and accountability for the success of the process.
- ◆ Alignment of individual and team efforts with departmental objectives.
- ◆ Employee and supervisor collaboration and communication during all phases of the process.
- ◆ Managers, supervisors, and employees consider and define **what** needs to be accomplished and **how** to accomplish it. These “**what** and **how**” elements are interdependent and combine to represent an individual’s performance objectives.
- ◆ Managers, supervisors, and employees develop qualitative, quantitative, or other measures to assess how well these “**what** and **how**” elements are accomplished.
- ◆ An overall work environment that focuses on service and improvement, and is supportive and nurturing.

The Mines Performance Management system was developed with these characteristics as basic values. It is divided into three components: Planning, Coaching and Feedback, and Evaluation. The process should be used throughout the year to enhance employee performance. Planning is discussed in Section II, Section III covers Coaching and Feedback, and Section IV explains Evaluation.

Three factors are critical to the success of the performance management process:

- 1) Careful consideration given to planning and priorities.
- 2) Ongoing communication between supervisor and employee.
- 3) Documentation of planning, decisions, communications, reviews, and evaluations.

Supervisors are responsible for performance management. To do this, communication should be open and frequent. It can be initiated by either the supervisor or employee. Employees need to know about job expectations and supervisors need to know about problems and new situations. Both should document events that affect the performance plan, evaluation, and what is being evaluated. The *Performance Management Plan and Evaluation* form has narrative sections for these purposes.

Performance Management should be collaborative; that is, employee and supervisor work together on developing the performance plan. However, supervisors are ultimately

responsible for the use of the performance management systems, the establishment of performance plans, and conducting timely performance reviews.

To start the performance planning process, supervisors may decide to do some work without the employee's input. For example, a supervisor of three employees who have essentially the same duties could develop the initial objectives and draft narrative sections. However, the supervisor must have individual meetings with each employee, and all employees need to understand the terms of the plan and how each objective will be evaluated.

TIMELINES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- For new hires, supervisors are to create a performance plan within 30 days of the new employee's hire date.
- Supervisors and employees are to create annual performance plans each **April**.
- Supervisors are not required, but are strongly encouraged, to give an evaluation to new employees who begin employment January through March. If the supervisor does not give a rating, the default rating of Meets Expectations will be assigned to the new employee.
- The same annual planning and evaluation cycle must be used for all Classified employees of the Colorado School of Mines – **April 1 through March 31**.
- Each supervisor is required to hold and document at least one coaching/progress review meeting (not later than **October**) for all permanent, classified employees.
- The final annual performance evaluation and review meeting occurs in March of each year.
- Employees who have received promotions, or have been assigned different duties, should have performance plans created or modified as soon as possible after the change of duties, but not later than 30 days after the changed assignment.

Performance management relies heavily on continuous, frequent communication and feedback, especially when there is a need for improving job performance.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND PENALTIES

If a supervisor fails to meet the March deadline to complete the annual performance evaluation, Mines will grant the supervisor a 30-day grace period. If the supervisor fails to complete the evaluation within the grace period, Mines will invoke the State Personnel Board Rule 6-5:

Designated raters shall be evaluated on their performance management and evaluation of employees. Absent extraordinary circumstances, failure to plan and evaluate in accordance with the department's established timelines results in a corrective action and ineligibility for achievement pay. If the individual performance plan or evaluation is not completed within 30 days of the corrective action, the designated rater shall be disciplinarily suspended in increments of one workday following the pre-disciplinary meeting. (7/1/07)

A reviewer must sign the rater's evaluation of an employee. If the rater fails to complete an individual performance plan or evaluation, the reviewer is responsible for completion. If the reviewer fails to complete the plan or evaluation, the reviewer's supervisor is responsible, on up the chain of command until the plan or evaluation is completed as required. If a rating is not given, the overall evaluation shall be "meets expectations" until a final rating is completed.

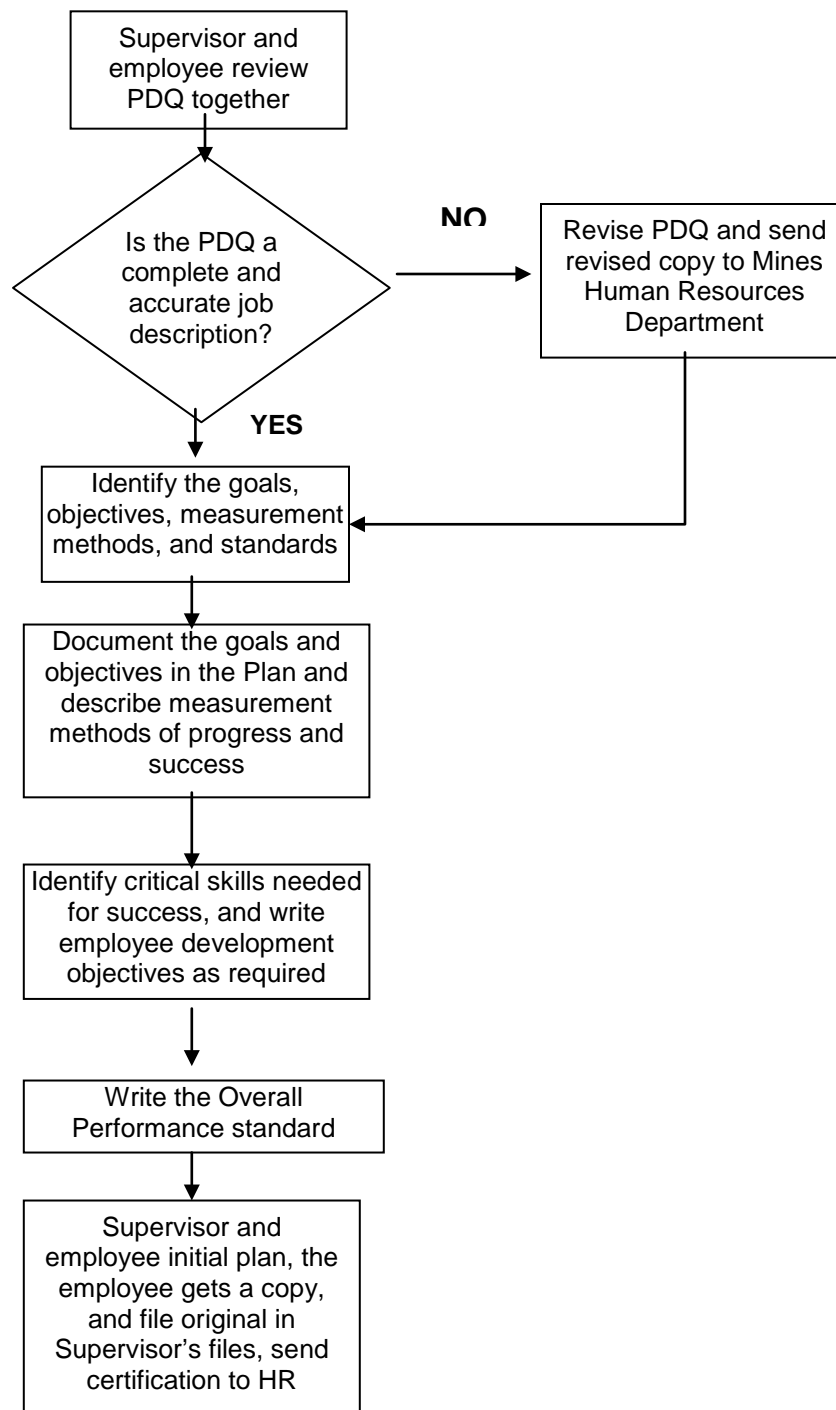
For supervisors who are exempt from the state classified system including faculty who supervise classified employees, Colorado Revised Statute 24-50-104 (c.5)(II) will be followed which states:

A supervisor, including a supervisory state employee not within the state personnel system, who does not evaluate subordinate employees in the state personnel system as required by this paragraph (c.5) on at least an annual basis shall be suspended from work without pay for a period of not less than one workday. The provisions of this subparagraph (II) shall only apply to supervisors who are state employees.

As required by Colorado Revised Statute 24-50-104 (c.5)(III), the President "...shall determine annually on May 1 whether each supervisor in the [School] has completed the mandatory performance evaluation required for each [Classified] employee ... during the preceding twelve months. If any evaluations have still not been completed by July 1, the supervisor may be subject to demotion. If a supervisor has not timely completed annual performance evaluations for two consecutive years, the supervisor shall be demoted to a nonsupervisory position."

II. PLANNING PROCESS

Performance Planning Steps **(to be completed in April):**



PERFORMANCE PLANNING PROCESS

Planning should consider elements such as the alignment of the position's work results with departmental and strategic goals, the need for working as part of a team or multi-stage process, the relative importance of each responsibility or task within the position's array of duties, the methods of completing the work, the knowledge and skill development required, and so forth.

An important source of job responsibilities and tasks upon which much of the planning can be based is the official job description, a Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ). There should be one on file in the department where the position resides and in the Office of Human Resources.

The PDQ serves the following purposes:

- 1) It designates the essential functions of the position,
- 2) Describes the duties and responsibilities,
- 3) Is the primary document for determining job classification, and
- 4) Is a basis for developing an employee's performance plan.

Before any performance planning can be done, the employee and supervisor should carefully review the PDQ to ensure that it accurately describes the duties and responsibilities of the position. They need to understand the work assignment.

STATEWIDE CORE COMPETENCIES

In addition to the PDQ, the employee and supervisor should review the *Statewide Core Competencies*. These competencies are Accountability, Communication, Interpersonal Relations, Job Knowledge, and Customer Service. The competencies overlap to some degree. They are measurable patterns of skills, knowledge, behaviors and other characteristics that employees need to successfully perform in their work roles at Mines. Their general descriptions are below. ***HOWEVER, THESE DESCRIPTIONS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AND MODIFIED IN THE PLANNING PHASE TO FIT THE ACTUAL JOB BEING PERFORMED:***

- **Accountability** -- *The degree to which the employee's work behaviors demonstrate responsible personal and professional conduct, contributing to the overall goals and objectives of Mines.* The employee knows and adheres to attendance, leave and other relevant policies, procedures, rules and regulations; displays a positive attitude, conveys a positive image of Mines, and encourages others to do well; takes the initiative to improve professional growth; is motivated, flexible, and committed to performing high quality work; demonstrates high standards of ethical conduct; etc.
- **Interpersonal Relations** -- *The degree to which the employee interacts effectively with others to establish and maintain smooth working relations.* The employee develops and maintains effective, professional relationships; gains

confidence and trust; considers and responds tactfully to the needs of others; takes personal responsibility for own words and actions, respects the opinions of others, etc.

- **Job Knowledge:** *The degree to which the employee is skilled in job-specific knowledge that is necessary to provide the appropriate quantity and quality of work in a timely and efficient manner.* Because of his or her knowledge of the job, meets work standards, schedules, and deadlines; demonstrates efficiency in completing duties; sets priorities, is motivated; makes sound, well-informed, objective decisions; resolves problems; makes continuous improvements and takes on additional duties as needed.
- **Customer Service:** *The extent to which the employee works effectively with internal and external customers and/or clients to satisfy their service/product expectations.* The employee demonstrates a knowledge of products and services; gets the customer's input; assesses their needs; focuses on finding solutions and/or offers alternatives; responds to requests for information, products, or services promptly, courteously, and effectively; etc.
- **Communication:** *The degree to which the employee effectively communicates by actively listening and sharing relevant information with co-workers, supervisor(s) and clients so as to anticipate problems and ensure the effectiveness of Mines.* The employee keeps co-workers, supervisors, and customers informed; actively listens; provides clear instructions and expectations; and communicates effectively orally and in writing in a manner that is well organized, appropriate, and courteous; etc.

Classified employees who are supervisors also will be evaluated on the Supervision/People Management core competency as well as on those above.

New employees will receive a copy of the *Statewide Core Competencies* during New Employee Orientation, but the supervisor and employee should discuss their content, revising as appropriate to the job, and the associated standards when establishing the performance plan.

Important components of the planning process are the planning meeting and completing the *Performance Plan Certification Form*. The performance planning process may be broken down as follows:

1. Prepare for the meeting by gathering the necessary materials—a copy of the Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ), the *User Guide*, *Statewide Core Competencies*, and the *Mines Performance Management Form*.
2. Prior to the meeting, both supervisor and employee review the PDQ for accuracy and adequacy, review the *User Guide*, *Statewide Core Competencies*, and the

form, consider the past performance period, and think about goals and objectives for the future.

3. During the meeting, supervisor and employee discuss the duties and responsibilities, future goals and objectives, methods of measure, and what distinguishes exceptional, exceeds expectations, and competent levels of performance. It is also important that the supervisor and employee identify what might cause performance to be less than competent so that those behaviors can be avoided.
4. All employees should have at least two specific Individual Performance Measures incorporated into their plans. These are duties, responsibilities, and/or behaviors that are specific to the employee and/or position. During this time the supervisor and employee should discuss any training and development activities that might occur during the appraisal period.
5. Following the meeting, the supervisor is responsible for refining the discussion and preparing the performance plan. A summary of the performance plan should be entered in the planning section of the *Performance Management Plan and Evaluation Form*.
6. The performance plan is finished with a meeting between the supervisor and the employee when the performance plan is completed, signed, and dated. Later changes can be written on the plan, if needed, and initialed by both the employee and supervisor. The supervisor files the original signed plan in appropriate departmental files and the employee is given a copy.
7. The *Performance Plan Certification Form* should be completed, signed and sent to the Human Resources Office.

WRITING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mines Performance Management revolves around identifying job relevant outcomes, results, behaviors, knowledges, and skills. This is accomplished by writing goals and objectives. Performance goals are targeted levels of activity (job duty and/or competency) expressed as tangible, measurable objectives. They should be specific and defined in terms of results that can be measured against the actual achievement. When written effectively, they are **challenging, attainable, observable, and measurable**. Individual, department, and school goals should be linked to each other. However, they should also be flexible and changed as conditions warrant.

When writing goals and objectives, keep in mind the following model:

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS ARE:
S pecific – they clearly define the work involved
M easurable – quantitative, qualitative, and timely
A greed – both supervisor and employee are committed
R ealistic – an acceptable but stretching challenge
T imed – specify completion and review dates

Goals and objectives are written to achieve five basic outcomes: to achieve day-to-day assignments; to resolve identified problems; to support innovation; to encourage professional development; and to accomplish specific projects and activities in support of institutional and departmental goals.

After performance objectives have been identified, the next part of the planning discussion should be devoted to identifying how achieving the objectives is to be measured. This discussion likely will focus on *both objective and subjective assessments*. Both supervisors and employees need to understand the importance of these two types of assessments and how they are used in performance management.

Objective Assessments rely on counting, measuring, or using some form of non-disputable observation. These assessments often involve quantity of work (productivity), timeliness (meeting deadlines), accuracy, completeness, or any combination of any of these. Examples of clear, understandable, objective assessments include:

- 1) Requiring an employee to enter 50 transactions per day.
- 2) Returning phone calls within a 24-hour period.
- 3) Mopping 500 square feet in a 5-minute time period.

But remember, whenever objective measures are used, they must be measured and consideration must be given to how the measurements will be made, how often the measurements will be made (sampled vs. all), and how well the measure relates to the purpose of the work. For example, measuring keyboarding speed can be achieved, but for most positions that use computers, this element is not among the more important or pertinent components of good performance.

In the best of all worlds, it would be desirable if all aspects of performance evaluation could be based on objective measures that are easily observed and relevant to good performance. Certainly, there may be objective methods for evaluating performance for many assignments. The reality is that few positions exist that can be totally evaluated using objective measures. *There is also a danger, however, in striving to find objectively measurable performance indicators -- many things can be measured, but such indicators must not fail to be relevant to truly successful performance of the job.*

Subjective Assessments rely on the interpretation of an observer or are based on the description of desired behaviors or competencies. These judgments focus on ‘how well’ work is done. The *Statewide Core Competencies* are behaviors that are critical to success for all Mines employees. For example an employee's professional demeanor, communication style, or interpersonal interactions may result in a negative reaction by an observer or customer.

Supervisors provide observations, feedback and evaluations based on these observed behaviors. An outcome of these observations may be that the employee needs to improve communications, customer service, or interpersonal relations abilities and interactions. An employee may believe that s/he did nothing wrong and has the opinion that everything was done or said appropriately or properly. Yet, the effect on the observer or customer was real *to that person*. This is a subjective evaluation. The supervisor is responsible for making subjective decisions about a subordinate employee's performance; *it is required and a necessary part of evaluating job performance*. To augment the direct observation, the supervisor may use other sources for information, such as customer feedback and co-worker input. While prior notice to the employee whose performance will be surveyed is not required, it is good practice to make the data collection methods part of the planning discussions.

Examples: Below are examples of performance statements for an Administrative Assistant and a Maintenance Mechanic. Below each statement is an example of the how a performance standard might be constructed to measure success.

Administrative Assistant

The following is a task or responsibility statement for an Administrative Assistant (from the PDQ):

Uses word processing and spreadsheet software to compose correspondence, teaching materials, grants, schedules, letters, reports, budget summaries, etc. Edits and reviews documents as appropriate.

A Performance Statement for this task might be:

Demonstrates knowledge of MS Word and Excel as it relates to creating documents and financial reports. This knowledge includes the use of tables; applying colors, borders, graphics; formula calculations; and other techniques.

An example of the performance measure (Objective) might be:

A “Meets Expectations” rating will be achieved by creating documents and financial reports that are properly formatted and grammatically correct, demonstrating knowledge of outlines, tables, text boxes, and mail merge. (A QUALITY indicator) The work will be timely in most cases and final documents

will only include an occasional error. These skills should be demonstrated within three (3) months of the performance plan date. (A TIMEFRAME indicator)

An “Exceptional Performer” rating will be given if, in addition to the above, it is demonstrated how these and other MS software products are linked and can be utilized together. The monthly financial reports are updated in advance of the deadline for ease of data entry and summary total calculations. Documents will be prepared in advance of the deadlines and final copies will be error free except in rare instances and where the error is not material.

Another task or responsibility statement for an Administrative Assistant might be:

Greets incoming visitors, answers and directs incoming phone calls, and answers questions from students, faculty, and staff about departmental programs.

A Performance Statement for this responsibility might be:

Demonstrates knowledge of departmental programs and operations including application processes and entrance information. Greets visitors and provides them with the necessary information.

An example of the performance measure (Subjective):

A “Meets Expectations” rating will be achieved by satisfying visitor requests providing what they requested, providing help soon after their arrival, and not making unnecessary referrals to someone else. Greetings will be professional and interactions will occur in a business-like manner. This is documented through supervisor observation and customer survey.

An “Exceptional Performer” rating will be given if, in addition to the above, it is demonstrated that when appropriate the customer received more than they asked for and were offered viable alternatives for satisfying their requests. Additionally, visitors were greeted in a warm, friendly and courteous manner as soon as possible after their arrival. Exceptional performance implies that conflicts do not arise from the actions of the employee, that the employee often approaches visitors who are upset or concerned in a manner to diffuse virtually all situations, and that the employee provides consistent, timely and correct follow-up as needed. Multiple positive compliments are received by the supervisor during the evaluation period; however, complaints are very rare.

Structural Trades

The following could be a duty statement for a Maintenance Mechanic:

Performs repairs, renovations, and remodels building structures and rooms at Mines.

A Performance Statement for this duty might be:

Demonstrates knowledge of carpentry and general maintenance when installing and/or repairing floor covering and counter tops. This includes ordering supplies, scheduling jobs, and seeing job through to completion.

An example of the performance measure (objective not subjective) might be:

A “Meets Expectations” rating will be achieved by arriving at the project site on time, follows safety procedures, completes 90% of the projects on time, and ensures the area is clean when finished. No code violations are present in the finished work. (A log is kept or a report is generated from completed work orders to verify completion)

An “Exceptional Performer” rating will be given if, in addition to the above, it is demonstrated that all projects are completed within deadlines outlined in the work orders. All projects are completed within the materials scope budgeted. Compliments on craftsmanship are common for each project and often received by the supervisor; presents alternatives when unforeseen circumstances arise and is still able to meet the completion deadlines.

Another Performance Statement might be:

Provides two (2) ideas of significance per year that are implemented to improve the department’s service or how to reduce occasional down time.

An example of the performance measure might be (Subjective and Objective):

A “Meets Expectations” rating would occur by meeting the performance goal.

A “Exceptional Performer” rating would given when the idea has a significant effect on the department or a substantial dollar savings to the department and the mechanic leads the implementation of the idea, or multiple useable ideas are presented and implemented achieving substantial dollar savings or significant effect altogether.

Both of these examples include all of the components of the S.M.A.R.T. model. They are **specific**; they include methods of **measurement**; they establish **achievable** goals, yet they clearly expect the employees to have to put forth quality effort towards

achieving the objectives for the different types of positions; they are **realistic**; and they include **time** constraints.

The Office of Human Resources has access to a number of resources to aid in setting performance objectives and standards. Managers and employees who want assistance in linking duties and competencies as well as develop goals and establish measurements are encouraged to contact Human Resources.

Planning Section

The end product of developing performance objectives and standards should be the annual performance plan. A brief summary of this plan should be entered on the *Performance Management Plan and Evaluation Form*, recorded in Section III., Planning Section. Once the annual plan is complete, the *Performance Plan Certification Form* needs to be completed and sent to Human Resources. The planning phase is not complete until this annual performance plan is complete and the certification form sent to Human Resources.

Training plans can also be included into the planning section of the *Performance Management Plan and Evaluation Form*. Some employees will be learning and applying knowledge and skills necessary for success on the job. Careful consideration should be given to any new assignments for the position that require orientation or training, any areas of weakness in the preceding evaluation, or any areas that would be appropriate for developmental training. When using a training plan, the supervisor is agreeing that time or opportunity will be made available for the employee to attend the program, and the employee is agreeing to learn and apply the skills or knowledge. The training plans can be incorporated into a goal or objective.

III. COACHING AND FEEDBACK

Coaching and feedback are vital components of performance management. These activities bridge the time between the performance plan and the evaluation. They are achieved through regular communication regarding performance and identification of developmental needs. When used properly, good coaching and feedback help to assure good performance and will prevent surprises at evaluation time.

While the manager/supervisor is responsible for providing performance feedback and coaching, the individual employee is responsible for actively requesting feedback and using the data to improve performance, eliminate potential problems, and identify training needs.

Tips for Supervisors

Below are some coaching and feedback tips that can be used by both employees and supervisors.

- While supervisors and employees may interact frequently as a natural part of performing their responsibilities, supervisors should periodically set aside time to review with their employees how they are progressing with respect to their performance objectives. Do not limit performance-oriented interactions to the annual planning and evaluation meetings.
- Establish a check-list to review on a monthly basis.
- ***Acknowledge good performance immediately.***
- ***Address problems timely and do not postpone addressing them until the annual evaluation meeting.***
- Observe and record specific examples of performance whenever they occur. Provide specific feedback, not vague, general observations. Document both good performance as well as poor performance.
- Keep communication open and frequent. Supervisors should ask employees about their perceptions regarding their performance and respond to their input.

Feedback can be positive or corrective; acknowledge both. Key elements of effective feedback are:

- Timely -- It is as immediate as possible.
- Specific -- It is detailed and descriptive.
- Behaviorally based -- It addresses behavior, not character, motivation, or personality.
- Balanced -- It acknowledges positive behavior as well as opportunities for improvement.

- Actionable -- It is something upon which the receiver actually has the ability to effect change.

Some feedback tips:

- Present constructive feedback as a portion of the larger context rather than alone.
- Avoid the use of global statements such as “always/never” and “everyone/no one”.
- Use “and” rather than “but.” “But” tends to negate what came before.
- Replace “should” and “have to” with reasons why.
- Own your feelings. Describe emotions with “I feel” rather than “You make me feel.”
- Be very careful about projecting feelings onto others. “You make John angry...”
- Stick to what happened and the results of what happened with a clear focus on future performance. “This is what happened, this was the result, what can we do to improve on it?”
- Direct the feedback toward behavior that the employee can control. Frustration is increased when an employee is faced with an issue over which s/he has no control.
- When dealing with defensiveness, re-focus on the commitment. Don’t get caught in the accusations, blame, and defense loop.
- Asking clear and concise questions and using active listening skills are often good ways to move past strong emotions.
- Give concrete examples of what the employee has done -- positive and negative. Provide evidence that you are paying attention and committed to recognizing their positive as well as negative results.
- Review your approach before you speak to the employee. First, how would you feel or respond if you heard this news.

PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REVIEW MEETINGS

Performance progress review meetings consist of four steps:

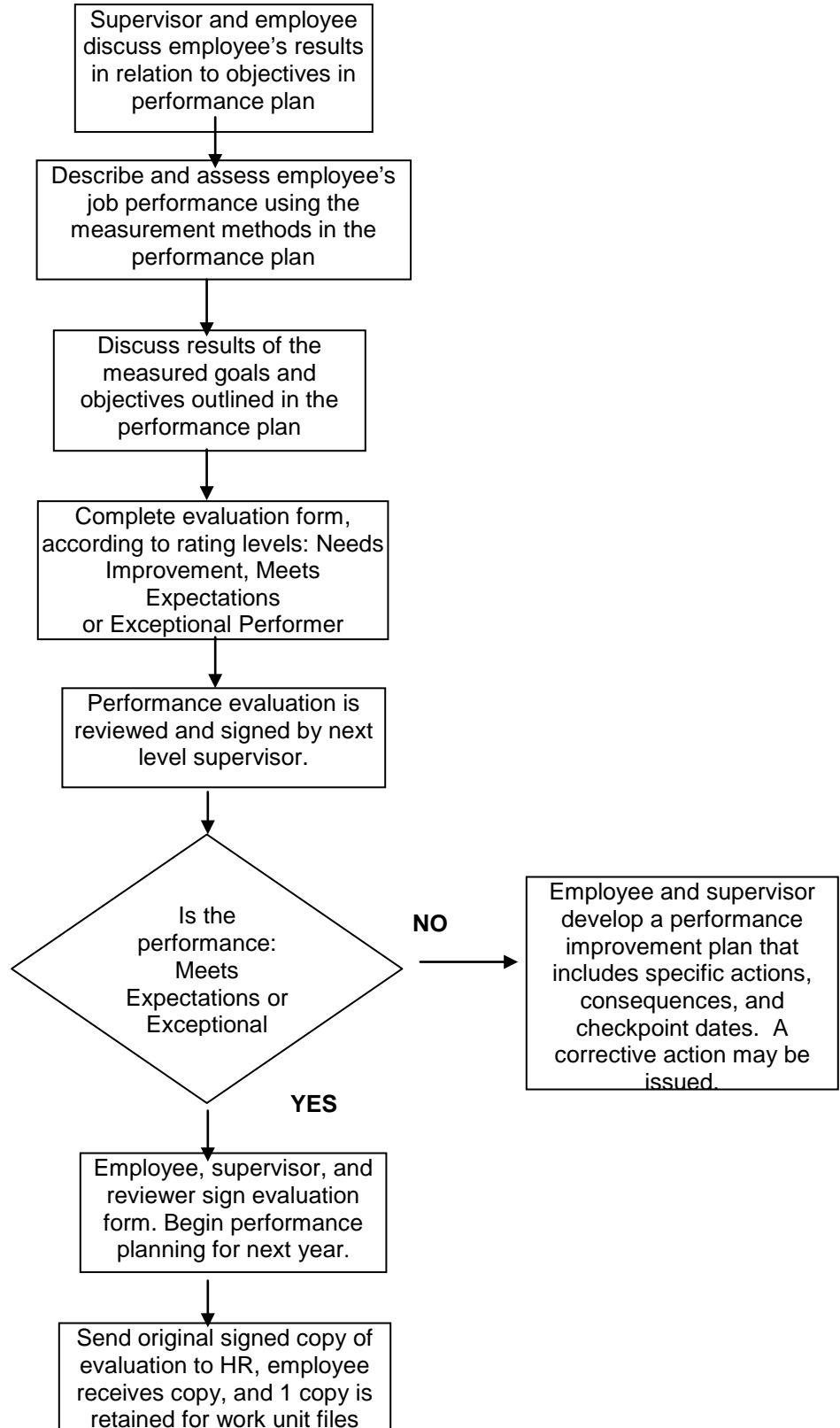
1. Prepare for the Meeting. Gather the performance plan, personal notes and records, letters and memos from others, and examples of work. Schedule the meeting with the employee at an available time and in an appropriate meeting room that is private and uninterrupted.
2. Review the Plan. The supervisor and employee must meet not later than the month of October to review the employee’s mid-year performance. (Meetings may be held more frequently depending on the desires or needs of the supervisor and/or

employee.) During this meeting the performance plan is reviewed and performance objectives are discussed to determine where the expectations have been met, exceeded, or need improvement.

3. Adjust the Plan. Adjustments can be made to the performance plan, if necessary, and the supervisor and employee can clarify the expectations.
4. Document the Discussion. Enter written documentation of the progress review meeting in Section IV of the *Performance Management Plan and Evaluation Form* along with narrative observations of performance or other relevant comments as appropriate. The supervisor maintains the original form and a copy is given to the employee.

IV. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESS

Performance Evaluation Process – **after obtaining prior approval of the draft evaluation.**



Performance evaluation is the process of assessing and summarizing the work performance of an employee. Every classified employee must receive an annual written performance evaluation (March).

The evaluation session is the culmination of a well thought-out, documented, and understood performance plan. When done correctly, the evaluation provides a detailed and accurate picture of the employee's performance during the evaluation period.

Supervisors are responsible for obtaining training in Performance Management and for using the Performance Management System with their employees. All employees need to understand their roles and responsibilities in the process.

SOME PURPOSES OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

- Assess and Document Employee Performance
- Provide a Basis for Salary Adjustments
- Provide a Basis for Future Coaching
- Provide Feedback and Input
- Provide Basis for Employee Training and Development

EVALUATION PREPARATION

This section advises supervisors how to effectively prepare for the employee evaluation process: preparing to write the evaluation, writing the evaluation, and notifying the employee of the upcoming evaluation session.

Review PDQ and Work Record

Before meeting with the employee, review the PDQ and work record for the evaluation cycle. Obtain performance feedback from people with whom the employee has worked, including direct reports, if appropriate. Where customer service is a key part of the job, feedback from customers may be solicited. Gathering information from these other sources should be discussed with the employee as part of the planning process. Review prior performance evaluations, along with the interim progress reviews that were conducted. Construct a draft evaluation and obtain prior authorization to proceed from the Reviewer.

Meeting Schedule and Expectations

Schedule the performance review meeting with the employee in advance and communicate what you expect the employee to bring to the meeting (written self-assessment, examples of work, notes, etc.). It is acceptable and a good idea to ask

the employee to complete a copy of the *Performance Evaluation* form and the *Classified Employee Performance Evaluation Supplement* form as a means of self-evaluation; obtain feedback from key co-workers and/or customers; identify specific examples of when they've been successful; to identify methods to utilize skills, strengths and talents; and to consider how to improve skills and weaknesses.

If the employee reported to more than one supervisor or manager during the evaluation period, consult with the other supervisor or manager for input on the evaluation. Before including any information in an evaluation that indicated there was a performance problem, ask the previous supervisor or manager if the information about the problem has been shared with the employee and obtain any documentation about the issue.

Two general principles to keep in mind when assessing an employee's performance are:

- Supervisors should exercise due diligence and reasonable judgment in collecting information from other sources to assist in assessing an employee's performance. This allows supervisors to base the evaluation on more than just their perceptions of the employee's performance. More sources of information may create credibility in ratings.
- Supervisors must determine what level of influence to give each piece of information. Some sources are more credible, valid, and consistent than others, and it is up to the supervisor to determine the credibility and reliability of each source of information.

Some Evaluation Concepts to Consider:

- **Impressions vs. Data** – Ask yourself: “Do I have specific information on behaviors or instances to justify my ratings?”
- **Compatibility vs. Non-compatibility** – Ask yourself: “Am I giving a more positive evaluation because this employee is more like me, agrees with me, doesn't “make waves”, etc?”
- **Halo vs. Horn** – Ask yourself: “Am I inflating or deflating all the ratings because this person has performed well or poorly in one particular area?”
- **Clarity vs. Fogginess** – Ask yourself: “Can the written comments stand on their own and be understood as I intend them? Will the person being evaluated understand them?”
- **Recency** – Ask yourself: “Am I rating performance based on the entire rating period rather than something that happened recently?”

- **Central Tendency vs. Distribution** – Ask yourself: “Am I rating performance based on the employee’s areas of strength and areas for improvement as they match the performance plan or am I taking a “middle of the road” approach?”

FORM COMPLETION AND EVALUATION NARRATIVES

Rating Levels:

- **Exceptional Performer:** This is the highest overall rating. This rating should be **unique** and **difficult to achieve** because it represents consistently exceptional documented performance or consistently superior achievement beyond the regular assignment. Employees make exceptional contribution(s) that have a significant and positive impact on the performance of the unit or the organization and may materially advance the mission of the organization. The employee provides a model for excellence and helps others to do their jobs better. Peers, immediate supervision, higher-level management and others can readily recognize such a level of performance.
- **Meets Expectations:** This rating is given to an employee who **meets all aspects** of the expectations, standards, requirements, and objectives of the position. This rating level encompasses a range of expected performance. It includes those employees who exhibit competency in the work behaviors, skills, and assignments for the job as well as those employees who are successfully developing in the job. These employees are meeting all the expectations, standards, requirements, and objectives on their performance plan and, on many occasions, may exceed them. This is the employee who reliably performs the job assigned.
- **Needs Improvement:** The lowest overall rating. This rating is given to an employee who **exhibits a pattern of failing** to meet the expectations of the job. This rating level encompasses those employees whose performance does not consistently and independently meet expectations set forth in the performance plan as well as those employees whose performance is clearly unsatisfactory and consistently fails to meet requirements and expectations.

Marginal performance requires substantial monitoring to achieve consistent completion of work, and requires more constant, close supervision. Though these employees do not meet expectations, they may be progressing satisfactorily toward a Meets Expectations rating and need to demonstrate improvement in order to satisfy the core expectations of the position.

If an employee receives an Overall Needs Improvement rating, a performance improvement plan or corrective action must accompany the evaluation form. The supervisor must meet with a Human Resources representative prior to proceeding with this action.

The written portion of the performance evaluation process includes completing the *Performance Evaluation Form* and completing the *Classified Employee Performance Evaluation Supplement* form for narrative that provides context to the evaluation ratings. When completing the performance evaluation for each goal, objective, or behavior consider these questions:

1. How does the level of performance compare with performance standards/measures for this performance goal, competency or objective?
2. How was the level of performance confirmed? What did you see the employee doing or not doing? What do analytical reports or work products show? What information or feedback did you get from co-workers, customers, or other sources?
3. Has the employee been evaluated using both objective and subjective measures?
4. What were the consequences, results, or impact of the performance?
5. Is there a gap between your evaluation and the employee's? What significance is placed on the employee's self-evaluation? How do you account for the difference, if any?

The feedback, data and observations collected during the course of the review period should substantiate the performance rating for each performance factor.

The narrative comments are critically important to the evaluation form. Narratives describe the basis for the evaluation decisions, provide feedback to the employee, and provide a basis for performance planning for the next evaluation cycle.

PRIOR REVIEW

No performance evaluation should be given to an employee before the supervisor has consulted, at a minimum, with the Reviewer. Additionally, the Vice President with overall responsibility for the area may issue additional directives to managers and supervisors. The primary purpose of review prior to giving performance evaluations to employees is to help assure consistency across the organization in performance ratings and to assure that any “needs improvement” or “exceptional performer” ratings are properly justified and documented.

THE EVALUATION SESSION

Below are some guidelines for supervisors to consider before conducting the formal performance evaluation meeting:

- ◆ **Plan what you will say.** Determine the best way to present your thoughts. The emphasis should be on problem solving and future actions.
- ◆ **Select a meeting place that is comfortable, free from interruptions, and quiet.** Allow adequate time.
- ◆ **Create a positive, communicative atmosphere.** Be sensitive to the employee's feelings, concerns, and questions. Try to put the employee at ease.
- ◆ **After a few minutes of general talk, begin the meeting by letting the employee know how the meeting will progress.** At this point, it is a good idea to briefly discuss how the employee's work supports department, division and school goals and plans.
- ◆ **Review both your draft and the employee's draft of the *Performance Management Plan and Evaluation Form* with the employee.** Either may go first, but it is a good idea to gain agreement on each section prior to moving forward. If possible, begin by providing positive feedback. Point out specific accomplishments, noting how they have contributed to the group or department's efforts.
- ◆ **Discuss areas that need improvement.** Ask the employee for suggestions about how to improve performance. Introduce your ideas, as well. Emphasize problem solving and concentrate on future actions for any areas that need improvement.
- ◆ **Avoid discussing motivation or personal issues.** Concentrate on the employee's behavior (including the consequences of that behavior to the individual and the department) and work product.
- ◆ **Always allow the employee the opportunity to discuss feelings and reactions to your input and feedback.** Listen to the employee. Encourage suggestions – allow the employee to say what needs to be said.
- ◆ **If the employee disagrees with you, allow him or her to state feelings honestly.** Listen without arguing or defending your perspective. Be prepared to adjust your viewpoints, if appropriate.
- ◆ **If the employee's OVERALL performance is rated as "Meets Expectations" or "Exceptional Performer,"** begin to discuss and set goals and objectives for the next review session.

- ◆ **If the employee’s OVERALL performance is rated as “Needs improvement,”** at a minimum, work together to create a performance improvement plan. (A corrective action can be issued if appropriate. If the supervisor wishes to use this tool, Mines policy requires that the supervisor consult with the Associate Vice President for Human Resources PRIOR to issuing the corrective action.) The performance improvement plan should include the following:
 1. Very specific actions and behaviors that the employee is expected to demonstrate.
 2. Consequences for failing to meet these expectations.
 3. Specific checkpoint dates.

- ◆ **After any necessary changes have been made to the *Performance Evaluation Form*, ask the employee to check the “agree” or “disagree” box, sign and date the form.** The employee’s signature indicates that he or she has read the evaluation and a discussion has taken place. *It does not signify that the employee agrees with the evaluation.*

- ◆ **If the employee refuses to sign the form,** the supervisor should note that the employee refused to sign the form, date it, and sign it.

- ◆ **If an employee disagrees with the performance plan or evaluation,** s/he is asked to attach written comments. These must be forwarded along with the form to the reviewer. ***An employee may disagree without appealing the evaluation.*** However, if the employee wishes to appeal the evaluation, the employee must complete a Dispute Resolution Form and follow the instructions for that process. Any appeal must be filed within three (3) business days of the evaluation.

- ◆ **The supervisor may attach work standards, supplemental performance information, work samples, and additional comments.** Inform the employee that comments can be added or attached to the *Performance Evaluation Form*.

- ◆ **After the evaluation is signed by the Reviewer, the original signed form must be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources to be included in the employee’s personnel file.** A copy is to be given to the employee, and a copy retained for the work unit’s files.

- ◆ **Note:** all employees must be made aware of how to dispute an evaluation rating and where to obtain the Dispute Resolution Form.

V. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Employees and managers may have differences of opinions related to the application of performance standards and evaluation ratings. Employees may question certain matters regarding performance plans and ratings through the dispute resolution process. The purpose of the dispute resolution system is to create an open, impartial, and non-confrontational opportunity that allows the parties to have issues heard. Retaliation against any person involved in the dispute resolution process is prohibited and will be dealt with according to Mines policy.

Employees may only dispute the following issues:

- **Their own performance plan (or lack of a plan);**
- **Their own final performance evaluation or the lack of a final evaluation;**
- **Application of Mines Performance Pay Program, policies, or processes to the individual employee's performance plan or final evaluation; or**
- **Full payment of a performance salary adjustment.**

The following issues are NOT disputable*:

- **The content of Mines Performance Pay Program;**
- **Matters related to the funds appropriated;**
- **The performance evaluation and salary adjustments of other employees; and**
- **The amount of a performance salary adjustment unless the issue involves the application of Mines Performance Pay Program.**

**Although these issues are not disputable, supervisors and managers are encouraged to make sincere efforts in responding to, and/or addressing any concerns raised by their employees.*

There are two stages within the Dispute Resolution Process – the Internal Stage and the External Stage. Only the issue(s) as originally presented in writing shall be considered throughout the dispute resolution process. Mines believes in resolving concerns as quickly as possible and at the lowest level possible. Therefore, Mines will attempt to solve all issues related to performance management at the Internal Stage.

The Internal Stage will address issues concerning the individual's performance plan (or lack of a plan) and the individual's performance evaluation or lack thereof. These issues will be addressed at the institution level, and employees will have no further recourse for resolution of these matters.

The External Stage addresses disputes concerning the application of the Mines Performance Pay Program, policies or processes to the individual employee's performance plan or final evaluation, or full payment of a performance salary adjustment. Discussions about these disputes should begin at the Internal Stage. If

there is no resolution at the Internal Stage, the issue may proceed to the State Personnel Director.

Performance evaluation disputes that allege discrimination must be referred to:
Attention:

Appeals Processing
1313 Sherman Street, First Floor
Denver, CO 80203

The *Colorado School of Mines Performance Dispute Resolution Form* and instructions for the process will be given to Mines employees annually. An employee wishing to initiate the Dispute Resolution Process, regarding the appropriate issues identified above, will advise his/her supervisor within **three working days** of the event. The employee must complete the *Performance Dispute Resolution Form* and provide a copy of the form to the immediate supervisor, Division and/or Department Head of the employee's work unit, and to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources.

The supervisor will have **five working days** upon receipt of the *Dispute Resolution Form* to schedule a meeting with the employee, the supervisor, and the next level supervisor (or reviewer) to discuss the issues. Extension of this time frame is allowed only if both parties agree, or in the event that the reviewer is away from campus (in such a case, the meeting must be scheduled within five working days of the reviewer's return to campus).

Three working days following the meeting, the supervisor will provide the employee with a written response to the employee's concerns. The written response shall include the issues discussed, possible resolutions, and the collective decision of the supervisor and the reviewer. A copy of this response must be provided to those who took part in the meeting and to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources.

If the employee is not satisfied with the initial decision, he/she can request a second review, submitted in writing, to their appropriate Vice President. This request for a second review must occur within **three working days** of receipt of the initial decision. The Vice President will have **five working days** to meet with the employee and the two supervisory employees.

The Vice President will review the facts surrounding the current action but shall not substitute his or her judgment for that of the rater and/or reviewer. The Vice President will issue his/her decision within **three working days** of the meeting. This decision shall be binding on all issues except those that allege that the Mines Performance Management Program was not followed or that complete payment of the approved performance salary adjustment was not made. For those that allege that the plan was not followed or payment of an approved performance salary adjustment was not received, the employee may proceed to the External Stage.

No party has an absolute right to legal representation, but an advisor may accompany the employee at any step within this process. The role of the advisor is to assist the employee in the process but the employee is expected to present his/her issues in these meetings. The Director of the State Department of Personnel and Administration administers the External Stage. Only original issues involving the application of the performance management program or full payment of an award may advance to this stage.

Within **five working days** from the date of the Mines' final decision, an employee may file a written request for review with the Director addressed to:

Colorado State Personnel Board
Attn: Appeals Processing
633 17th Street, Suite 1320
Denver, CO 80202

The request shall include a copy of the **original** issue(s) submitted in writing and the written decision at the final internal review stage. All requests for review are subject to an initial screening to determine if the review is warranted. Such screening is based on specific criteria published by the Director. If a determination is made that further review is not warranted, it is final and binding and the employee will be notified accordingly. If further review is warranted, the Director or designee may select a qualified neutral third party to review the issue(s). The Director has 30 days to issue a written decision, which is final and binding.

Throughout the dispute resolution process, the scope of authority of those responsible for making final decisions is limited to reviewing the facts surrounding the current issues, within the limits of Mines' programs. For an issue being reviewed at the external stage, individuals responsible for making decisions shall not substitute their judgment for that of the rater, reviewer, or Mines' dispute resolution decision maker at the internal dispute stage.

External decision makers have the authority to instruct the rater to:

- follow Mines' program;
- correct an error; or
- reconsider an individual performance plan or final overall evaluation.

Additionally, other processes, such as mediation, may be suggested.

VI. TRANSFERS

There are three types of transfers available to classified employees: (1) transfer to another supervisor in the same department, (2) transfer to another campus department, and (3) transfer to another state agency or university campus. Each type of transfer involves performance management and performance pay issues.

1. Transfer to another supervisor in the same department. The previous supervisor should close out the performance plan that had been previously established, and a new plan should be created with the new supervisor. At the end of the evaluation period, the two supervisors should jointly determine a recommendation for a performance award, if any.
2. Transfer to another campus department. The supervisor from the previous department should close out the performance plan and complete an interim performance evaluation before the transfer date. The new supervisor must create a new plan within 30 days of the effective transfer date. No performance pay obligation is transferred to the receiving department.
3. Transfer to another state agency or university campus. The supervisor of the previous agency closes out the performance plan before the transfer date. No performance pay obligation is transferred to the receiving agency or campus.

Glossary of Terms

Advisor: An individual who assists a party during the dispute resolution process in explaining the process, helping identify issues, preparing documents, and attending meetings.

Base-building award: A sum of money earned by an employee that increases base pay.

Base pay: Salary, excluding any premiums, paid on a fixed, non-variable basis.

Benchmark: A standard or a point of reference used in measuring and/or judging quality or value.

Bonus: A sum of money, or other compensation, given to an employee in addition to the employee's base pay. It is a form of extra payment over the job rate and must be re-earned annually.

Classified employee: An employee of Colorado state government required by the Constitution of the State of Colorado to be covered by the Rules and Procedures of the State Personnel System.

Dispute Resolution Process: Under Mines' Peak Performance, the process used to resolve issues with (1) an employee's performance plan or rating, (2) the application of the agency's performance management and evaluation plan, policies, or processes to the individual's plan or evaluation, or (3) the full payment of an award.

Downward movement: For compensation purposes, changing a position, class, or employee from a class or grade to another with a lower job rate (e.g., job evaluation, system maintenance study including class placement, total compensation survey adjustments, and non-disciplinary or disciplinary demotions).

Goal: A target level of an activity expressed as a tangible measurable objective, against which actual achievement can be compared.

Incentive: A monetary or non-monetary reward that is given to employees based on performance. The purpose of incentives is to promote high productivity and quality.

Lateral movement: For compensation purposes, changing a position, class, or employee from a class or grade to another that is the same or has the same job rate (e.g., job evaluation, system maintenance study including class placement, total compensation survey adjustments, and transfer).

Mission: An enduring statement of purpose; the organization's reason for existence. The mission describes what an organization does, who it does it for, and how it does it.

Non-base building award: A monetary or non-monetary award earned by an employee that must be re-earned annually.

Non-base pay: An amount of pay that is not added to an employee's base pay and that must be re-earned.

Non-monetary award: A non-cash reward that is given based on performance.

Occupational groups: Ten groupings that contain all of the job classes within the State Personnel system: (1) enforcement and protective services, (2) financial services, (3)

health care services, (4) labor/trades/crafts, (5) medical, (6) management, (7) administrative support services, (8) professional services, (9) physical sciences and engineering, and (10) teachers. The ten groups are developed based on job evaluation and compensation processes.

Open range: A salary range with minimum and maximum salaries and no intermediate steps.

Pay plans: The listing of all pay grades and salary ranges for a specified group of classes in the State Personnel system. Each occupational group has a unique pay plan.

Pay range: The spread of salaries between minimum and maximum rates for a specific class. A pay range is established based on the annual Total Compensation Survey. The width of pay ranges varies by occupational groups.

Performance-based pay: Pay that is tied directly to an employee's performance evaluation. Agencies may exercise discretion in administering the amount of performance-pay awards under the general guidelines.

Performance management: A collaborative process between the manager and employee that is created and implemented to ensure that employee performance is identified, selected, developed, and rewarded. The structure of this process is based on three elements: (1) mission and guiding principles of the Colorado School of Mines, (2) goals and strategies of the work unit, and (3) performance required for success of the employee and the Colorado School of Mines.

Performance Measure: A quantitative or qualitative characterization of performance.

Prevailing wage: As defined by statute, employees in the State Personnel system are to be compensated according to comparable salaries and fringe benefits prevailing in other places of public and private employment.

Professional exempt employee: State employees legally exempt from the State Personnel system.

Rating levels: Three performance rating levels exist in Mines Performance Management System (1) Needs improvement, (2) Meets Expectations, and (3) Exceptional Performer.

Salary survey: See Total Compensation Survey.

Saved pay rate: Temporary means of maintaining current base pay during certain situations in which employees are reduced in grade. Such saved pay rates are any amount of base pay above the traditional maximum amount of the grade for the class, up to the statutory lid.

Strategic Goal: A long-range target that guides an organization's efforts in moving toward a desired future state.

Strategic Planning: A continuous and systematic process whereby guiding members of an organization make decisions about its future, develop necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future, and determine how success is to be measured.

Total Compensation Survey: Also known as salary survey. An annual process required by law to establish prevailing wages for employees in the State Personnel System. Third-party survey publications are collected and matched with state classes in order to compare the pay and benefit rates between the labor market and the state.

Upward movement: For compensation purposes, changing a position, class, or employee from a class or grade to another with a higher job rate (e.g., job evaluation, system maintenance study including class placement, total compensation survey adjustments, and promotion).

Variable pay: A compensation component that varies with an employee's performance and is not part of base pay.

Vision: An idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future state where or what an organization would like to be in the future.