

Date: February 28, 2013

To: DGS Executive Team
DGS Management Team
DGS Managers and Supervisors

From: **Fred Klass, Director**
Department of General Services

Subject: **INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

At the Department of General Services we value, among other things, teamwork, excellence and accountability. As managers and supervisors, it is our responsibility to guide our employees in achieving excellence in all they do, while at the same time, establishing a culture of teamwork among our employees. In order to get there, it is our job to hold ourselves accountable in providing the feedback that most employees require to improve and grow in their assignment – feedback that many in fact are requesting.

Since becoming your Director, employees have raised concerns that they are not receiving annual Individual Development Plans (IDP) or regular feedback and appraisals from their supervisors. If this is the case, it should not be happening. Last year, I shared with you my [Expectations of Supervisors](#). In it, we describe the importance of feedback – the surest way to help a person understand what others see.

It is my expectation that IDPs are performed for employees as required by DGS policy at least once every 12 calendar months. The IDPs provide a way for you to identify an employee's current strengths and weaknesses, point out areas where development is needed and establish short and long-term goals and action plans for achieving those goals. I understand that this can sometimes be a significant time commitment for both you and the employee, but the benefits to both far outweigh the impacts of failing to appraise employees about their performance or provide them the opportunity to define career goals and objectives.

DGS managers and supervisors are notified when an IDP is due through an ABMS email alert. The email includes the employee's name, due date for the IDP, and a link to the IDP form.

The IDP/Performance Appraisal Summary is completed on a Standard Form 637. The IDP portion of the form is for *Future Job Performance of Permanent Employees*; it identifies performance objectives and a plan for achieving those objectives. The Performance Appraisal Summary addresses *Past Job Performance of Permanent Employees*; the form has categories for rating the employee's performance related to several factors: (I=Improvement Needed; M=Meets Expectations; E=Exceeds Expectations). Below are some helpful tips from the DGS Office of Human Resources on the IDP process.

SUPERVISOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TECHNIQUES:

1. **Be systematic in your completion of the IDP.** Throughout the year, prior to the IDP due date, keep notes on the employees performance, e.g., compliments/complaints on the employees work performance, interactions with other employees and or customers, any projects or special assignments the employee has worked on independently or on a team, the role they were in on the team, the result, etc.
2. **Go into the IDP evaluation with a clear idea of what you will discuss with the employee.** Be honest, clear and specific. Be prepared to offer suggestions on ways for improvement if needed.
3. **Make the employee feel comfortable.** You want the employee to be an active participant in the performance review. Ask the employee questions, e.g., Are you having trouble with respect to any of your work processes? Do you like the work you are doing? Do you see ways for improvement? What are your goals in the next 5 years?, etc.
4. **Don't rush.** Both the preparation of an IDP and the IDP review are time-consuming, but done correctly can be rewarding for both the supervisor and the employee. Give the IDP review in a secluded office away from distractions; this will help the employee feel that he/she has your undivided attention during this review.
5. **Be supportive.** Listen. Take constructive notes. Give the employee honest feedback if suggestions are made. Be prepared to explain why work processes are done certain ways if questioned, i.e., the larger picture of the work process that the employee may not be aware of.
6. **Be positive.** Everyone responds better when in a positive environment.

7. **Aim for a realistic level of growth.** The goals set during the IDP review should be adapted to the individual. Reach an honest understanding of their capabilities and goals and encourage them to set their own objectives.

Thank you for your support in the ongoing professional development of our employees. I believe that in doing so we truly establish DGS as a destination employer. Additionally, by participating in the IDP process, we all support the DGS Vision "*Excellence in the Business of Government*" by increasing employee competency, productivity, and personal satisfaction.



Fred Klass
Director