# Unit 8: Performance Appraisal

## AIM

The aim of this unit is to enable inspectors to undertake and contribute to teacher development and improved learning through appropriate and effective performance appraisal activities.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, inspectors will be able to:

* define the term 'performance appraisal'
* state the job descriptions of teachers, school managers and inspectors
* set performance targets
* monitor performance
* conduct appraisal interviews
* write appropriate appraisal reports with recommendations
* decide on appropriate follow-up activities.

## CONTENT SUMMARY

8.1    Definition of Performance Appraisal
8.2    Job Descriptions
8.3    Setting Performance Targets
8.4    Monitoring of Performance
8.5    Appraisal Interviews
8.6    Appraisal Reports
8.7    Follow-up Activities

## 8.1    DEFINITION OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

*Key Information*

The definition of 'performance appraisal' should include elements such as:

* a set of agreed achievable goals
* monitoring and evaluation of performance
* giving feedback on the level of goal achievement.

Performance appraisal ultimately aims at improving the quality of learning in schools and colleges through:

* professional assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of teachers and school managers
* ensuring effective implementation of the agreed national school curriculum
* ensuring that an enabling environment for learning is established in schools and colleges
* creating opportunities for consultation among teachers, school managers and school inspectors
* assisting in developing a cadre of motivated education practitioners.

The appraisal cycle may go through the following stages:

* job description
* setting performance targets
* monitoring
* conducting interviews
* writing appropriate reports with recommendations
* follow-up

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**Activity 8a**

In pairs, write out the definition of performance appraisal capturing the main elements cited above.

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**Activity 8b**

In the key information section, five purposes of performance appraisal are given.

In groups, discuss and re-arrange the purposes according to the order of importance.

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*Trainer's Note*

It is not expected that participants will arrive at one correct answer. Accordingly, allow for maximum discussion to show how each purpose contributes to improved learning.

## 8.2 JOB DESCRIPTIONS

As stated above, performance appraisal demands that performance targets are set which are then evaluated and feedback given on achievement level. These performance targets will emanate from the job description of the officer being appraised.

A typical job description should contain the following sections:

* Bio-data section:

This section gives information on the institution, location, post, level of post and to whom the officer is accountable.

*Example:*

Institution: Ministry of Education
Post: Inspector
Location: Circuit One/Eastern Region
Level: Regional/District
Reporting to: Chief Inspector of Schools

**Note**

The components of the bio-data section will vary from county to country.

* Competencies/responsibilities section

This section lists a range of competencies and responsibilities to be performed by the officer occupying the particular post.

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**Activity 8c**

In groups, list down five competencies/responsibilities for each of the following posts bringing out similarities and differences: teacher, headteacher and inspector.

Write your group's ideas on a flip-chart and share them with the rest of the participants.

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*Trainer's Notes*

Below are some of the competencies for each of the three posts.

| Teacher | Headteacher | Inspector |
|---|---|---|
| • Scheming | • Establishing a learning environment | • Supervision |
| • Lesson planning | • Promoting good teaching standards | • Provision of professional support and guidance to school<br>• Showing good practice |
| • Lesson presentation | • Supervision of teachers and suppport staff | • Monitoring implementation of educational policies |
| • Classroom management | • Management of school school resources | • Management of resources and examinations |
| • Evaluation of own teaching | • Evaluation of school performance | • Conducting performance appraisal |
| • Assessment of learner's work | • Linking the school with the community | • Promoting good public relations between schools and communities |

## 8.3    SETTING PERFORMANCE TARGETS

*Key Information*

In any performance appraisal, it is important that targets are set in order to assist the appraisees to focus on key result areas emanating from their job descriptions, and to create benchmarks for assessing achievement levels. These targets must be set collaboratively by the appraiser and the appraisee. They must be set at the beginning of the appraisal cycle and should be SMART, that is, they should be:

• Specific
• Measurable
• Achievable
• Realistic
• Time-scaled

*Trainer's Note*

This activity aims to bring out the fact that target setting should be a collaborative act and should have SMART characteristics.

## 8.4 MONITORING OF PERFORMANCE

*Key Information*

Having agreed on performance targets with the appraisee, the appraisal cycle will have entered implementation stage. It is therefore necessary that the appraiser and appraisee agree on the monitoring process.

The monitoring process entails:

*   collecting data on the appraisee's experiences
*   reviewing set targets
*   receiving set targets
*   reviewing monitoring schedule
*   keeping track of the appraisee's progress.

*Trainer's Notes*

Possible sources of data include:

*   interviews with teacher, heads, parents and other inspectors
*   public documents
*   school documents
*   task/classroom observation

## 8.5 APPRAISAL INTERVIEWS

*Key Information*

Interviews play a very important role in performance appraisal and should therefore be a regular feature as a means of data collection and establishing rapport between the appraiser and the appraisee. Interviews should take the form of meetings which should be friendly and relaxed.

Interviews will mainly be used for agreeing on:

- job descriptions
- time-frame and scope of the appraisal
- arrangements for observation
- other forms of data collection

Appraisal interviews should be well structured with the following sections:

- opening section
- middle section
- closing section

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**Activity 8f**

In groups discuss and suggest what the appraiser should focus on in each of the three sections of the interview, that is, what the appraiser should do in each section.

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*Trainer's Notes*

Under each section the appraiser may focus on the following:

- **Opening:**

    - Making appraisee feel at ease
    - Agreeing on purpose of the interview
    - Reviewing agreed targets

- **Middle:**

    - Reviewing each target
    - Identifying problems
    - Agreeing on areas for improvement
    - Reviewing time-frame

- **Closing:**

    - Summarising main points
    - Drawing up an action plan for the next period
    - Closing on positive note

For the appraiser to effectively conduct the interview, it is important that appropriate techniques are used, such as:

- looking interested
- inquiring with questions
- staying on target
- testing understanding
- evaluating the process formatively
- being objective

## 8.6   APPRAISAL REPORTS

*Key Information*

Towards the end of the appraisal cycle, after interaction with the appraisee, the appraiser should provide feedback through a report.

This report should reflect the appraiser's findings, conclusions, and recommendations following agreed formats. The report will be fed with data collected during the monitoring process. These reports must be open and negotiated with the appraisee.

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**Activity 8g**

In groups, outline some of the key characteristics of good recommendations in a report.

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*Trainer's Notes*

The following are some of the qualities of good recommendations:

- relevance to identified key result areas
- clarity
- brevity

Above all, recommendations must be realistic and achievable.

## 8.7 FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

*Key Information*

At the end of the appraisal cycle, it is necessary for both the appraiser and the appraisee to review the appraisal process with a view to identifying problems experienced, effecting the necessary measures to redress the problems, rewarding good performance and preparing for the next appraisal cycle. This means that the two must collaboratively plan for follow-up activities.

The follow-up activities may include:

- staff development
- staff redeployment
- setting performance targets for the next appraisal cycle.

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**Activity 8h**

**Case Study**

The inspector has had an appraisal interview with a failing headteacher and the two have agreed on the following issues:

- the school is very dirty
- school buildings have been vandalised
- teaching requisites have been stolen
- examination results are poor

However, the school is fully staffed.

In groups, agree on the appropriate follow-up activities to redress the situation.

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## SUMMARY

At the end of this unit, the following inspectors' skills will have been developed:
* needs assessment
* planning
* interviewing
* problem solving
* monitoring
* goal setting


## REFLECTION

Reflect on how you have handled the performance appraisal process in the past and think of ways in which you would improve on your appraisal techniques.


## REFERENCES

Local Education Authority (1991) *Teacher Appraisal on the Isle of Wight, a Handbook for Teachers and Headteachers,* Isle of Wight

Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1997) *Performance Appraisal for Teachers, Volume 6,* Namibia

Ministry of Higher Education, *Performance Appraisal,* UNICEF, Zimbabwe