

Performance Management in Primary Schools

Handbook for Headteachers and Supervisors

DEVELOPED BY
QUALITY EDUCATORS' PROJECT-
UGANDA



JULY 2011



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the Quality Educators' Initiative Team and Steering Committee (FAWEU, LABE and UNATU), I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the many colleagues, too numerous to mention, who have helped to shape this Performance Management Handbook for Headteachers and Supervisors for Enhancing Performance in Primary Schools.

Special mention goes to Oxfam Novib and Education International for their technical and financial support towards the development of this material.

We are also indebted to all the authors of published materials whose works we have cited here. The information in their works has greatly enriched the content of this material.

Finally, heartfelt appreciation goes to my fellow Quality Educators' Initiative Team members: Martha Muhwezi - National Coordinator, FAWEU and Stellan K. Tumwebaze - Executive Director LABE; for facilitating the process of developing this Handbook. To all Quality Educators' Steering Committee members, thank you very much for your valuable support.



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1.0 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.1 *The Concept of Performance Management*

The concept of performance management has shifted from control, focusing on past performance, using a “carrot and stick” approach - managers being the judges and evaluators; using a top-down approach; being passive and reactive - to: gaining commitment from the employee; focusing on future performance; encouraging self-learning and development; managers becoming coaches, mentors and guides; being a shared responsibility; with an outcome and accountability focus; and, supporting employees to manage their own performance. This shift is enormous considering the past closed appraisal systems that were common in the civil service. It is this shift in the concept that has brought about change to the performance management system and process.

Performance management (PM) is a system used by institutions to set and measure desired outcomes and activities of its individual employees who contribute to the achievement of the goals of the institutions.

The PM system ensures that individuals, teams, and ultimately the institutions, know what they should be doing, how they should be doing it, and take responsibility for what they must achieve. PM embraces monitoring of performance, rewarding excellent performance and mentoring underperformance for improvement. The PM concept, therefore, emphasises managing, supporting and developing staff at all levels within the institution.

1.2 Performance Planning

Performance Planning means setting goals and determining what needs to be done to reach those goals. It also refers to setting performance expectations and goals for groups and individuals to channel their efforts towards achieving organizational objectives. It is one of the basic and very important steps in the Performance Management process. It is an activity that focuses people on what has to be done, how it is done and what is to be achieved. The ultimate end of this activity is a Performance and Development Plan aimed at developing people (supervisees) and providing them with the support they need to perform well at their jobs, both at the current time and in the future. The end product of this activity is a performance and development plan aimed at developing people and providing them with the support they need to perform well at their jobs at all times.

It also leads to the establishment of action plans and guidelines for setting expectations, reviewing and evaluating performance over a given period

Performance Planning is the starting point of the Performance Management cycle. It involves a joint discussion between headteachers and their respective supervisors, whereby roles, objectives and performance standards are agreed on. A Performance Agreement is then drawn and signed by the two parties. It details how supervisors will provide the support and guidance to the supervisees. It defines clearly the performance expectations in terms of results, skill, knowledge and expertise required to attain the results. It also emphasises the need for support and guidance among peers. The performance planning process involves reviewing key performance objectives, setting

targets, setting key performance indicators and agreeing on them as a measure of evaluating performance.

1.3 Performance Agreement

This is a set of performance expectations that are agreed upon between the supervisees and their supervisor to be performed in a given time period and the standards to be observed. It describes what individuals are expected to do. It also indicates what support they will receive from their supervisor.

1.4 Performance Monitoring

This is the process of tracking performance to ensure that the individual is able to perform as per agreed standards and targets. During this process, the supervisor is expected to identify areas where the supervisee is on track and those where he or she is not performing well and offer the necessary support accordingly.

- Supervisees are also expected to monitor their own performance and provide peer support.
- The supervisor may also benefit from the support and mentorship of supervisees.

1.5 Objectives

An objective is a descriptive statement which defines a measurable activity. It can also be defined as an end that can be reasonably achieved within an expected time frame with available resources.

- An objective therefore describes something that has to be accomplished, a point to be aimed at.

1.6 Performance Indicator

A performance indicator is a numerical measure of the degree to which the objective is being achieved. Performance indicators are usually seen as numerical measures of achievement that are easy to collect and use.

Examples –

- If one of your objectives is to improve student behaviour through counselling, then the performance indicator could be the proportion of students who reform at the end of the counselling programme.

Performance measures are sometimes referred to as Key Performance Indicators or outputs. They are a means of verifying that what was set out to be done has actually been done. Performance measures embrace the quantity, quality and time where applicable.

1.7 Critical Output/Outcome

A critical output is the verifiable evidence that shows accomplishment of a given performance objective. It is the immediate result of a given activity.

An outcome is the impact of the output.

1.8 Performance Feedback

This is when the supervisor and the supervisee cause a review of targets and lay progress strategies. It involves the review of progress made in the given period, an analysis of performance

outputs, critical incidents as well as the harmonization of objectives with pre-set action plans.

1.9 Critical Incidents

This refers to actions that show a definite existence of or lack of competence. Such incidents reinforce performance rating and provide the basis for development, redeployment, sanctions, rewards and recognition. The critical incident has a definite impact on the performance or image of the school.

Example:

- Another actual example happened when students in one school in Kumi, apprehended a drunken Headteacher, took him to the DEO's office and demanded that he be disciplined and a new Headteacher be availed to the school.

1.10 Performance Development Plan

The performance development plan is a tool designed to assist both the supervisee and the supervisor during the performance period. Its purpose is to help both parties outline job needs (e.g. training, exposure) and success expectations.

1.11 Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

The PIP is designed to facilitate constructive discussion between a staff member and his or her supervisor, and to clarify the work performance to be improved. Supervisees failing to reach expectation will be given a written warning and be put on a PIP. The PIP focuses on those key result areas where an individual

needs to improve and defines what needs to be done to facilitate the improvement process. This may include:

- Skills coaching;
- Skills sharpening and training;
- Guidance and counseling;
- Mentoring;
- Personal competence development;
- Re-deployment;
- On-job training.

2.0 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CYCLE

The schools' appraisal cycle will be an annual appraisal system, but with three termly feedback sessions at the end of each term in the year. Annually, there would be a full review of performance which would then constitute the final appraisal recommendation at the end of the appraisal period, i.e. at the end of the year.

The proposed phase of the new appraisal system will be instituted starting January of every year. The first cycle will be a learning experience for all teachers and their headteachers. The results of the cycle in one year can be used as a basis for rewarding performance accordingly in the subsequent year.

3.0 PERFORMANCE LEVELS

3.1 *Performance Rating/Evaluation*

Five levels of performance were agreed as below:

- Outstanding performance - always meets and exceeds performance expectations;
- Above average performance - often exceeds performance expectations;
- Average performance - meets performance expectations;
- Below Average Performance - sometimes meets performance expectations;
- Poor performance - fails to meet performance expectations.

These levels were defined, and the definitions used to develop/ distinguish between the different levels of performance.

3.2 *Descriptors of performance levels*

Descriptors of performance as relevant to the teaching profession were agreed upon as follows:

- Work Targets;
- Student Performance;
- Accuracy and Completeness of work;
- Professionalism;
- Resource Optimization;
- Innovativeness;
- Self-directed/driven.

These descriptors formed the basis for the key performance

indicators that were developed in the appraisal instruments – namely, the competence profiles.

3.3 *Defining Performance Evaluation*

Satisfactory performance was defined as meeting all set expectations - in other words, delivering 100% results as defined. This kind of performance is actually good performance and is what earns supervisees their salaries and benefits. However, above average exceeds average performance in that one often delivers more than the set expectations; and outstanding performance involves staff delivering above the set expectations all the time as reflected in the example below:

| Key Result Area | Performance level | Score |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
| To Set, mark and evaluate student performance | A | 90 -100%> |
| | B | 70 - 89%> |
| | C | 50 - 69% |
| | D | 35 - 49% |
| | E | 0 - 34% |
| Average performance | | |

3.4 *Appraisal Rating*

The appraisal rating /scoring was discussed and assessment ranges agreed as below:

- 0 -3.4 - Poor performer;
- 3.5– 4.9 - Below average performer;
- 5 – 6.9 - Average performer;
- 7 – 8.9 - Above average performer;
- 9-10.0 - Outstanding performer.

These can also be presented in terms of percentages.

The recommended actions to be taken into account when making appraisal recommendations would include promotion, salary increment, training, re-deployment, counseling, bonus, demotion and termination. Awards per performance level were agreed as below:

- Fails to meet expectations/Poor Performer: These should be handled when drawing academic year and put on a performance improvement plan for a year.
- Sometimes meets expectations/Below Average Performer: These should be encouraged and mentored. They could be handled when drawing PIP and put on a performance improvement plan for specific key result areas. Clear training needs should be identified and performance gaps addressed.
- Meets expectations/Average Performer: These should be encouraged and acknowledged. They can be put on a performance improvement plan for specific key result areas for a year, given on-the-job training to improve performance, and job rotation to improve placement issues.
- Often exceeds expectations/Above Average: Give recognition, redeployment and any other awards as may be available.
- Always meets and exceeds expectations/Outstanding: Promotion if a vacancy exists/Accelerated promotion, Additional responsibilities, secondment to a preferred school, Time off awards, Bonus, Minister's handshake with a memento, Training, Job Rotation, and Time off,
- Note: Outstanding performance should be communicated district-wide.

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 *Responsibility Centres*

- Individual supervisees;
- Immediate supervisors/headteachers
- District Education Officer;
- District Internal Security Officer;
- District Service Commission;
- Human Resources Division.

4.2 *Individual supervisees*

The role and responsibilities of the individual supervisee are to:

- Define/ review the competence profile;
- Outline:
 - Key result areas (KRAs)
 - Critical outputs
 - Performance standards and agree with the supervisor;
- Write out the performance agreement detailing:
 - Expected performance
 - Proposed work plan which should be agreed upon with the supervisor;
- Constantly appraise own and peer performance against the performance agreement;
- Record any critical incidents occurring during performance of duty. Notify the supervisor if he/she has not noticed;
- Appraise the individual during a specified time using

- the appraisal forms;
- Identify weaknesses in the PM system and make proposals on how they can be rectified.

4.3 Supervisor/Headteacher/Heads of Subject etc

A supervisor is a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher in any given school who has the responsibility to supervise and manage performance a supervisee(s). These include:

- Headteachers and their deputies;
- Heads of subject;
- Bursar/School administrators;
- Officers at the different levels;
- Secretaries (who supervise office attendants, etc).

4.4 The roles and responsibilities of supervisors include:

- Defining the school vision, mission, goals and objectives to their supervisees;
- Relating their roles to those of the institutions;
- Discussing competence profiles with staff under their jurisdiction and approving changes, if any;
- Facilitating the supervisees to understand their roles;
- Agreeing on expectations for the next appraisal period (performance agreements). These must be in line with school objectives and the supervisees' job description;
- Conducting regular feedback sessions and communicating progress to supervisees; Recording all critical incidents during the appraisal period and notifying supervisees;

- Supporting supervisees to identify causes of poor performance;
- Identifying performance improvement strategies and making recommendations;
- Making recommendations to the School Appraisal Committee on the performance assessment of all supervisees under their jurisdiction;
- Training, coaching, mentoring, guiding and counselling of all supervisees under their jurisdiction;
- Building teams and assessing team performance;
- Preparing and presenting departmental performance status reports;
- Identify weaknesses in the system and how they can be improved.

4.5 Chief Administrative Officers/District Education Officers (CAOs/ DEOs)

The DEO:

- Distributes appraisal forms to all supervisees in the specified period/ time (Headteachers & DIS);
- Provides technical guidance on the performance management process where necessary and ensures that the staff have been appraised;
- Collects and registers all forms received from supervisors;
- Provides technical support in competence profiling;
- Makes lists of recommended actions for all departments/ sections and schools in relation to:

- o Promotion;
 - o Confirmation;
 - o Re-training;
 - o Any other recommendations;
- Compiles final appraisal recommendations for District Human Resources Committee (DHRC) chaired by the CAO;
 - Communicates DHRC-approved actions to headteachers of the schools;
 - The CAO implements approved actions from the DHRC.

4.6 District Service Commission

The commission handles all issues of recruitment and discipline of employees in the teaching profession.

5.0 THE APPRAISAL CYCLE

The Appraisal Cycle has been set as an annual process with three termly informal feedback sessions whose results are documented.

- *January*
The appraisal cycle starts in January.
Performance agreements and individual operating plans for the appraisal period are drawn during this month.
- *February–April/June, July, August/Sept, October, November, December*
These periods will mark the end of each term and are for implementation of the agreements/plans; reviewing progress per term; noting critical incidents and holding formal feedback review meetings - that is, one per term.
- *December*
This is the last month of the appraisal period. During December appraisal instruments shall be filled and competence profiles reviewed (if necessary).
- *December/ January*
CAO's Committee will consider:
 - Ratings of outstanding performers (if any);
 - Ratings of poor performers and justifications;
 - Will compile the actionable issues;
 - The CAO will consider the recommendations and implement.

NB: Appraisal is done every six months for probationary staff, while it is annual for confirmed staff.

6.0 COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

6.1 *What are the four “steps” in the new competence-based performance management system for teachers?*

- 1) Performance planning;
- 2) Review of school work plan, targets and areas of focus;
- 3) Agreeing on key performance indicators;
- 4) Signing of performance agreements for customized performance targets.

6.2 *What does Performance Management mean?*

Performance Management is the continuous and flexible process that involves managers and those whom they manage acting as partners within a framework that sets out how they can best work together to achieve the required results. It focuses on:

1. Future performance and improvement and not retrogressive performance;
2. Regular and frequent dialogue between managers and supervisees about performance and development needs;
3. Improvement of individual and team performance

6.3 *What is a Competence?*

A competence is the technical skill and ability to perform to the required standard after a period of time. It entails capability to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills and abilities required

to successfully perform “critical work functions” or tasks in a defined work setting.

6.4 What is the difference between a Competence and a Skill Standard?

A competence is the capacity to draw upon and apply a set of related knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully perform a work role, function or task. Competencies often serve as the basis for skill standards that specify the level of knowledge, skills and abilities required for success in the workplace. Skill standards in turn form the basis for measurement criteria to assess competence attainment.

A competence is the capability to apply and a skill is the know-how.

6.5 What are Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?

- KPIs are evidence of performance. They form a basis for agreement on how performance will be measured and assessed. They constitute a central feature of performance planning and are a basis for giving feedback to staff on their performance.
- KPIs are tied to given Key Result Areas (KRAs) and performance objectives; and they change with time. They are defined at the beginning of each appraisal cycle. KPIs are based on critical outputs of each KRA. Different KRAs have different KPIs. KPIs are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.

6.6 What is a Competence-Based Performance Management System?

Competencies and talents are the foundation for people to achieve superior performance in any job.

A system for effective performance management does the following:

- Identifies Core Positions within the Organization;
- Identifies Key Soft Skills and Competencies for the Positions;
- Assesses Current Skill/Competency Levels of Incumbents and Candidates with Feedback Mechanisms;
- Provides Training and Development in the necessary Competencies;
- Conducts Behavioural Interviewing – the Best Predictors of Future Performance;
- Reflects the Competencies Required in the Performance Appraisal;
- Establishes Competence Performance Expectations for Incumbents;
- Provides ongoing feedback, coaching, mentoring, evaluation and recognition.

6.7 What Does a Competence-Based Performance Management System Provide?

Highly motivated workers and achievers

A system such as the competence-based performance management system, that is implemented and followed effectively, will help to ensure the recruitment and retention of the “right person for the right job”.

Every institution or employer wants top performers. No one deliberately hires or promotes people who, he or she believes, will not succeed. However, most hiring and promotion processes do not include a consistent approach in order to place the most qualified personnel. “Gut feel” (in-depth feeling) is common among interviewers. An employer’s ability to compare a person’s experiences, behaviours and knowledge of a position will enable him or her to carry out higher quality hiring and placement of people in critical jobs.

6.8 What is the Performance Appraisal Process and Infrastructure?

This is a measure that provides timely feedback on the critical skills required of a position; and the performance results required against what is being generated. There must be consistency in evaluations across all persons in that position.

6.9 How do you “inspect what you expect” and “expect what you inspect”?

The final component of the Competence-Based Performance Management System examines:

- (1) Establishing performance expectations for incumbents based on the competencies identified for that position; and
- (2) Providing ongoing feedback, coaching, mentoring, evaluation and recognition. To this point, we have established the solid foundation for building a competence-based performance management system. By determining the competencies required for superior performance in key positions we are, as a school, able to:

- Provide consistent feedback;
- Develop and train critical skills;
- Hire and promote the right people to the right jobs; and
- Establish the performance appraisal system that reflects the success factors for superior performance.

These final components of the system enable us to communicate the expectations to current jobholders and to reinforce the critical competencies by providing feedback, coaching, evaluation and recognition.

6.10 How do you establish Competence-Performance Expectations for Incumbents?

“What gets measured gets done”

Every step in the competence-based performance management system is without value unless there is a process in place to communicate actual performance. Every person wants and needs feedback on their performance. It is the role of management to provide quality feedback to people on the areas of their performance that are meeting, exceeding or under-achieving the agreed upon performance standards. Feedback should be given on a regular basis and should be the lead-in to constructive coaching.

As the foundation for a competence-based performance management system is completed, it is important that everyone understands the competencies that apply to their position(s). At all levels of the organization, the people in critical positions must understand the hard and soft skills required of them to achieve superior performance. It is the role of management to

hold a face-to-face meeting with each person to discuss the skills and competencies required. Every organization has goals and objectives that the senior management team has established. These goals and objectives must be cascaded throughout the institution in order for all energies to be focused on the accomplishment of those objectives. All supervisees should have objectives and performance expectations that relate to the institutional goals.

To perform well, people must be able to see the value and the “fit” they and their performance add to the success of the organization. Without that, people see their jobs as just “work” rather than a contribution of value. The development of competencies is part of the “expectation setting” discussion.

6.11 What is Coaching and Mentoring?

These are critical enablers for achieving superior performance. Coaching is the tool that management uses to assist people in their development by providing on-the-job resources, training, education and guidance. Coaching is a critical skill and all effective managers consider coaching to be an important part of their role.

Mentoring is the systematic and cautious process of developing someone with a view of preparing him or her to improve or handle wider responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

6.12 What is the purpose of Evaluation and Recognition?

These go hand-in-hand in emphasizing the importance of all phases of the competence-based performance management system. A formal evaluation is only the summation of the feedback and coaching on performance of an individual at a point in time.

Evaluation reinforces the need for superior performance of critical competencies - both the hard and soft skills.

Recognition is a conscious behaviour used to appreciate and reward the behaviours of individuals that support the goals and objectives of both the institution and the individual's job. For example: if the institution defines "high level of integrity" as an expectation of a manager, then only people that demonstrate and are perceived as possessing and demonstrating a "high level of integrity" would be promoted or recognized. The key lies in recognizing the behaviours you wish to reinforce.

6.13 What are Performance Agreements (PAs)?

Performance Agreements were introduced by the Ministry of Public Service with an objective of providing full accountability and demonstration of commitment to the achievement of the country's strategic goals as spelt out in the National Development Plan (NDP). Performance Agreements were introduced as a means of cultivating a culture of performance, transparency and accountability across government institutions in general. For the education sector in particular, it can be customised to reflect a set of key performance areas that need to be focused on by all headteachers and their deputies; specific performance outputs and outcomes expected from them; and, the key performance indicators to be used in the measurement of the performance of head teachers and their deputies.

7.0 SUMMARY

Every organization wants and should expect high performance from each supervisee. The elements of the Competence-Based Performance Management System will, if implemented well, enable high performance, which will define organizational and personal success. By identifying the critical positions, determining the most important competencies for those positions, providing the education, coaching and feedback to people, and by holding each person accountable for their results, an organization can better meet the competitive challenges of today's dynamic education sector.

APPENDIX 1

Proposed Appraisal Cycle



