



**Fact sheet**

# Performance essentials

The Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (PWSS) has developed this fact sheet to support a positive performance culture. It provides guidance for supervisors, which includes parliamentarians and *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act) employees, on establishing clear performance expectations and supporting positive workplace performance.

For advice or assistance in relation to performance essentials, please contact PWSS HR Advice on 1800 747 977 (option 1) or [hr@pwss.gov.au](mailto:hr@pwss.gov.au).

## Benefits of performance essentials

An employee is more likely to perform well when they understand what is expected of them, receive regular feedback, have meaningful goals and development is supported. See Diagram 1 for the benefits of positive performance and Diagram 2 for information about the SMART goals framework.

**Diagram 1: Benefits of positive performance**

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                      |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| A more harmonious, high performing workplace                                        | Maximum employee performance                                                        | A culture of continuous skill development and improvement                           | Higher levels of employee engagement                                                 | Avoidance of workplace conflict and disputes, such as bullying complaints             |

**Diagram 2: SMART Goals**

| <b>Specific</b>                                                            | <b>Measurable</b>                                                                   | <b>Achievable</b>                                                                                           | <b>Relevant</b>                                                             | <b>Timebound</b>                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Goals are clear, concise and well defined identifying the relevant actions | Identify how the goal will be measured considering quality, quantity and timeliness | Confirm the required knowledge, skills, and capabilities. Consider available resources and any limitations. | Identify the desired outcome, and how your goal contributes to achieving it | Consider the timeframe and any relevant milestones, and what checkpoints will support success |

## SMART Goal Example: Responding to constituent enquires

Respond to routine constituent enquiries within 2 business days from receipt, providing the Office Manager with a professionally written and accurate draft that is contextually relevant for clearance. Formatting should be consistent with correct grammar and spelling. For urgent or sensitive enquiries, the query should be escalated to the Office Manager to determine the appropriate timeframe for a response consistent with the standard operating procedure (SOP).

## Performance essentials checklist

Achieving positive performance is a shared responsibility between employees and their direct supervisors. This checklist may be used when an employee commences employment, at the start of a new performance period, or where priorities change.

|                                 | Supervisor role                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Employee role                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Performance expectations</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss the employee's roles and responsibilities, and key deliverables per their position description.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Explain expectations and what success looks like in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• performance and behaviors</li> <li>• managing changing priorities including what work (if any) should be deferred to accommodate a new priority</li> <li>• the employee's level of authority and when matters should be escalated</li> <li>• the unique nature of the environment including how to manage parliamentary nuances</li> <li>• any other expectations including how to apply for leave, working arrangements etc.</li> </ul> | <input type="checkbox"/> Understand expectations and clarify if any aspect of the role, responsibilities, expectations or measures of success are unclear.                                                             |
| <b>Performance goals</b>        | <input type="checkbox"/> Work with the employee to set performance goals that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear and measurable</li> <li>• challenging but achievable, and</li> <li>• realistic in the MOP(S) environment.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to goal setting.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Take responsibility for achieving goals.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Raise with the supervisor early if a goal is unlikely to be met. |
| <b>Performance agreement</b>    | <input type="checkbox"/> Formalise agreed key deliverables, responsibilities, expectations and goals in a performance agreement.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Determine an appropriate review date.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Engage positively in the performance agreement process and identify opportunities for growth and development.                                                                                 |
| <b>Review &amp; adjust</b>      | <input type="checkbox"/> Where priorities or performance expectations change, discuss with the employee and reiterate in writing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss any changes to priorities or responsibilities with supervisor proactively.                                                                                                            |

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Feedback</b>             | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide the employee with regular, timely, positive and constructive feedback.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Establish regular <a href="#">one-on-one meetings</a> with the employee.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Actively seek and engage with feedback.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Take ownership of performance, particularly in areas of development. |
|                             | For more information see the giving, seeking and receiving feedback fact sheet.                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Development</b>          | <input type="checkbox"/> Identify development opportunities including through the <a href="#">PWSS Academy</a> .<br><input type="checkbox"/> Support access to development, balancing operational priorities and individual growth. | <input type="checkbox"/> Actively seek out and participate in development opportunities.                                                                          |
| <b>Performance concerns</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> HR Advice is available to provide guidance and support as needed.                                                                                                                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Raise barriers and challenges early and seek support or guidance from HR Advice where needed.                                            |