

**BY ORDER OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

AIR FORCE PAMPHLET 36-2627

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Personnel

**AIRMAN AND NCO PERFORMANCE
FEEDBACK SYSTEM (EES)**

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This pamphlet (AFPAM) explains the Airman and Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Performance Feedback System and implements Air Force Policy Directive 36-26, *Military Force Management*. It is a guide for raters to use when providing performance feedback. This pamphlet is written so raters, especially new ones, will have successful feedback sessions. It is not intended to make raters experts in formal appraisal systems or counseling, nor take the place of other supervisory training programs. Consult Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2403, *Enlisted Evaluation System (EES)*, for more information. System of Records Notice F035 AF MP A, *Effectiveness/Performance Reporting System*, applies. This pamphlet does not apply to the Air National Guard. Do not supplement this pamphlet.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

This is the first publication of AFPAM 36-2627 which substantially revises AFP 39-15, *USAF Guide to the Airman and NCO Performance Feedback System*, 1 May 1989. It mandates the requirement of the Senior NCOs to receive performance feedback on the AF Form 932, *Performance Feedback Worksheet (MSGT thru CMSgt)*.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction. In early 1988, the Air Force directed a review of the EES. The study group decided that using the Airman performance Report (APR) as a feedback device had serious drawbacks. Most appraisal system experts believe documenting performance and providing feedback are two separate actions. The study group also found most of the enlisted corps did not view the APR as sufficient feedback. The enlisted force said they were often unaware of any deficiencies in performance until after it was recorded in the official record. It was evident some raters did not provide any performance feedback or give feedback far enough in advance of the APR to give the person an opportunity to improve. Consequently, the study group recommended the Air Force adopt a formal feedback program that requires raters to regularly talk to their airmen and NCOs about specific performance requirements and other military-related factors that have historically been a part of evaluation systems. The Air Force approved the recommendation and implemented a formal feedback system.

1.2. What Is Feedback? Feedback is a form of communication. For our purpose, it is a formal communication between the rater and the ratee about military duties and responsibilities, written at regularly scheduled intervals. In general, feedback should explain duty performance requirements and responsibilities, establish expectations, and tell ratees if they are performing as expected. As with all other types of communication, to be effective, duty performance feedback must be clearly stated and received. Feedback forms (discussed in detail in chapters 2 and 3) help ensure private, face-to-face feedback sessions are beneficial to all enlisted personnel. However, scheduled feedback sessions do not take the place of day-to-day informal feedback (conversation), nor are they to be confused with formal counseling for problems that are more appropriately documented on records of counseling. Rather, the formal feedback session is to establish formal, private communication between ratees and their raters about expectations and actual performance.

1.3. Why Is Feedback Necessary? Quite simply, so people know what is expected of them and how they are performing. This information gives direction and also increases motivation. Airmen and NCOs generally perform better when raters explain what the requirements are, point out areas that need improvement, and keep them updated on their progress.

1.4. Who Provides Feedback? The rater provides performance feedback. The rater (usually the first-line supervisor) is, in most cases, responsible for the total job effort and is in the best position to observe duty performance on a day-to-day basis. Also, the rater normally has the knowledge and experience necessary to discuss the Air Force's expectations regarding general military characteristics and opportunities available within the Air Force Specialty (AFS).

1.5. Who Receives Feedback? Performance feedback sessions are mandatory for all enlisted personnel.

1.6. When Is Feedback Given? Initial feedback sessions are held within 60 days of a change of rating official or within 60 days of the closeout of an Enlisted Performance Report (EPR) that was not due to a rater change. The new rater uses this session to clearly define the expectations for the upcoming period. A continuing rater uses the session to discuss performance recorded on the EPR, along with providing direction and expectations for the new rating period. For enlisted personnel who receive EPRs, a "mid-course" feedback session is held midway between the date supervision began and the projected EPR closeout date to focus on how well the ratee meets expectations. If a change of rating official is expected

or the projected EPR closeout date limits the period of supervision to less than 150 days, a feedback session should take place approximately 60 days before the EPR closeout. For airmen who do not receive EPRs, a follow-up session is due approximately 180 days after the initial session. This cycle should continue until there is a change of rater or the airman begins to receive EPRs. Sessions are also held if the rater determines there is a need for one, or within 30 days of a request from a ratee, provided at least 60 days have passed since the last feedback session. For members of the Air Force Reserve, supervisors provide and document follow-up counseling to all newcomers 6 months after the initial interview (180 days from the date of assignment to the Military Personnel Flight or the date of the last EPR). For individual Reservists (Individual Mobilization Augmentees and Participating Individual Ready Reservists) not performing duty during the time frame of the follow-up session, the PFW should state that duty was not performed during the evaluation period, and the individual Reservist will receive feedback during his or her next duty day. Follow-up will then be accomplished annually, using the date of assignment to the Military Personnel Flight (for personnel assigned to Personnel Accounting Symbol 96XXXXXX, the date of supervision or date of last EPR) to establish the feedback due date.

1.7. Overview. The remainder of this pamphlet is designed to help you carry out the feedback requirements. Chapter 2 outlines the AF Form 931, *Performance Feedback Worksheet (AB thru TSgt)*, and discusses the topics covered in a session using the form. Chapter 3 does the same thing for AF Form 932, *Performance Feedback Worksheet (MSGT thru CMSGT)*. Chapter 4 provides helpful advice on preparing for and conducting a feedback session.

Chapter 2

PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK (AB THRU TSGT)

2.1. General Instructions:

2.1.1. For a sample of the AF Form 931, see figure 2.1.

2.1.2. The rater completes the AF Form 931 in longhand--not typed or stored in memory components of typewriters, word processors, or similar equipment. Give the completed AF Form 931 to the ratee at the conclusion of the feedback session. The rater must keep a copy for future reference. The intended purpose of the form is to encourage the rater to provide candid comments about the ratee's duty performance and provide the ratee with an uninflated assessment of performance factors. Someone other than the ratee cannot sit in on the feedback session. Do not use the form in any personnel action unless the airman first introduces it. Upon request, the rater's rater and commander are authorized access to completed performance feedback worksheets (PFW) for AB thru TSgt.

2.2. **Detailed Instructions.** Detailed instructions for completing the AF Form 931 are in figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. Sample AF Form 931, Performance Feedback Worksheet (AB thru TSgt).

PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK WORKSHEET (AB thru TSgt)		
I. PERSONAL INFORMATION		
NAME DOE, MARY B.	GRADE AMN	UNIT 28 TRANS
II. PRIMARY DUTIES ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT-Vehicle Operations Branch Maintains files, processes leave requests, serves as Supply Custodian, ensures outgoing correspondence is prepared IAW current guidelines and incoming correspondence is received by the appropriate OPR		IV. COMMENTS "INITIAL SESSION"
III. PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK		
	needs significant improvement	needs little or no improvement
1. PERFORMANCE OF ASSIGNED DUTIES		<p>1. Work Suspenses as they are received. During slow periods, review files, relook at processes, work CDCs, etc.</p> <p>2. Concentrate on learning the Job by established Procedures. Then work changes that will make it easier for all but ensure effectiveness does not diminish.</p> <p>3. Be respectful, maintain standards, and observe things you've been taught.</p> <p>4. Recommend involvement in Hobbies/Sports/SQ/Base functions. However, its okay to be friendly but be conscious of superiors know where to draw the line.</p> <p>5. Feel free to express any ideas you have for improvements. Don't be afraid to give feedback or to ask for assistance, especially from me.</p> <p>6. Your #1 priority is to complete your upgrade training successfully. I'll try to give extra study time however, its your responsibility to work + study at home. You will be assigned a "warSkill" once upgraded to 5-level.</p> <p>7. You will get a lot of practice speaking + writing write how you speak and always maintain professionalism</p> <p>8. Advance notice is best, but understand, there will be instances when this is not possible, this should not be abused.</p>
Quality of Work	←————→	
Quantity of Work	←————→	
Timeliness of Work	←————→	
2. KNOWLEDGE OF PRIMARY DUTIES		
Technical Expertise	←————→	
Knowledge of Related Areas	←————→	
Applies Knowledge to Duties	←————→	
3. COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS		
Dress and Appearance	←————→	
Weight	←————→	
Fitness	←————→	
Customs & Courtesies	←————→	
4. CONDUCT/BEHAVIOR ON/OFF DUTY		
Financial Responsibility	←————→	
Support for Organizational Activities	←————→	
Respect for Authority	←————→	
Maintenance of Government Quarters/Facilities	←————→	
5. SUPERVISION/LEADERSHIP		
Sets and Enforces Standards	←————→	
Initiative	←————→	
Self Confidence	←————→	
Provides Guidance/Feedback	←————→	
Fosters Teamwork	←————→	
6. INDIVIDUAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS		
Upgrade (OJT/CDC)	←————→	
Professional Military Education	←————→	
Proficiency/Qualification	←————→	
Contingency/Mobility/Other	←————→	
7. COMMUNICATION SKILLS		
Verbal	←————→	
Written	←————→	
8. ADDITIONAL FACTORS TO CONSIDER (i.e., Safety, Security, Human Relations)		
UNIT LEAVE POLICY	←————→	
_____	←————→	
_____	←————→	
_____	←————→	
_____	←————→	

STRENGTHS, SUGGESTED GOALS, AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Strengths: Customer Assistance - Very pleased with your attitude and professionalism

Goal: You may want to consider off-duty education after completion of your CDCs and you feel comfortable with your environment. It's a benefit you should take advantage of as it will definitely help you later on in your career.

RATER SIGNATURE

DATE

Figure 2.2. Instructions for Completing AF Form 931, Performance Feedback Worksheet (AB thru TSgt).

PART I: PERSONAL INFORMATION. Enter ratee's name, grade, and unit assigned.

PART II: PRIMARY DUTIES. List the major job-specific duties for which the ratee is responsible. The space provided is adequate in most instances. If additional space is needed, continue in Part IV, "Comments."

PART III: PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK. This section incorporates both primary factors and general military factors into one major category. Primary duty facts are AFS (job) related, and the rater's feedback is generally based on what occurs in the work environment. General military factors focus on characteristics that are considered essential to military order, image, and tradition. Performance feedback encompasses both of these factors to emphasize how ratees perform their particular job and how they uphold and support the long-established military traditions, customs, standards, and institutional values. Both are essential considerations in determining overall (total) duty performance. Also, the rater has space to add additional factors. Usually, these factors are unique to special duties and locations or may not have been adequately covered in the primary duty or general military factors. Each subheading lists some behaviors that must be evaluated and scored by placing an "X" on the scale in position that most accurately identifies the ratee's performance. Areas marked to the far left of the sliding scale indicate the ratee's needs to work extra hard in these areas. Areas marked to the far right indicate the member is performing quite well and needs to either maintain or slightly improve. Any area marked in between requires discussion to explain its exact meaning to the ratee. When the behavior listed does not apply, enter N/A. N/A might also be used frequently during an initial expectation-setting session. While placing an "X" on the scale is important, do not allow this to defeat the purpose of the form and feedback session. Remember, the form is just a tool to help guide the sessions and is between the rater and the ratee. The most important objective is for the ratee to clearly understand the rater's position regarding performance and directions to take. Space is also provided to explain ideas in writing and to give examples of behaviors noted.

1. Performance of Assigned Duties. This item focuses on the ratee's AFS.

1.1. Quality of Work. Quality of work means the degree of job excellence. Each job normally has minimum quality standards established. The rater must measure the airman's typical performance results against these standards. Some jobs obviously have more stringent quality standards than others and raters have less tolerance in what they can accept. Quality of work is very important. Everyone is encouraged to strive for excellence regardless of the job to which they are assigned.

1.2. Quantity of Work. The quantity of work refers to the amount of work done and is another aspect of productivity. Sometimes it impacts on quality.

1.3. Timeliness of Work. The final aspect of productivity is timeliness. The ratee's awareness of and responses to the time constraints associated with the job are the focus of this factor. Each job has its own demand on time. Some jobs are planned far in advance, while others require immediate attention. Quality and quantity may be acceptable, but if the job is not completed on time, the mission could suffer.

2. Knowledge of Primary Duties. Knowledge is familiarity, awareness, and understanding gained through experience, on-the-job training (OJT), self-study, or formal training:

2.1. Technical Expertise. Specialized knowledge and skills obtained through experience and training.

2.2. Knowledge of Related Areas. Extensive knowledge in job related areas will provide the ratee with a well rounded concept of job functions and how they interconnect with the primary mission. It provides the technical expertise required to ensure every job is completed with efficiency.

2.3. Applies Knowledge to Duties. Job knowledge is the key ingredient to ensuring a task is completed successfully. The ability to apply this knowledge correctly when required will improve productivity, foster team work, and aid in training others who have less knowledge.

3. Compliance with Standards. Standards apply to all members of the Air Force. Each person is expected to comply with the minimum standards to reflect the image the Air Force intends to project. Feedback should center on meeting these standards and on motivation to exceed them:

3.1. Dress and Appearance. A distinction of military service is the military dress and appearance requirements. It is your duty to ensure airmen reflect pride in self, unit, and the Air Force by abiding with and, hopefully, exceeding these requirements.

3.2. Weight. The Air Force has maximum weight standards based on a member's gender and height. The Air Force expects all personnel to maintain this standard as a vital part of the peacetime preparation for combat readiness.

3.3. Fitness. Being physically fit ensures mission readiness, improved quality of life, and also ensures each Air Force member presents a proper military image. Furthermore, it is an excellent method of increasing mental alertness and reducing anxiety or tension. Feedback should be factual and motivational.

3.4. Customs and Courtesies. Customs and courtesies create esprit-de-corps, morale, and discipline, plus an atmosphere where respectful behaviors signal readiness and willingness to serve. The rater should discuss trends and standards.

4. Conduct and Behavior On-Off Duty. Several of these relate to the adaptability of people to life in the military. Clearly, we should conduct ourselves in a manner that supports good order and discipline. This is not a substitute for official counseling related to significant misconduct, but it is a good opportunity to share general impressions and reinforce expectations. Since military members are on-duty 24 hours a day, every day, off-duty behavior simply refers to behavior occurring away from the normal work place. The conduct of an Air Force member should be displayed in a way that reflects a professional image. Again, this area affords a pleasant opportunity to reinforce expectations. It allows for comments on areas not specifically covered in other parts of the form.

4.1. Financial Responsibility. Simply stated, the ratee should not spend more money than he or she earns. If credit has been extended, timely payments are required and expected. Comments on sound financial planning are appropriate here.

4.2. Support for Organizational Activities. One of the many ways a military organization can build a close-knit and cohesive unit is through the members participating in a variety of activities, both inside and outside the unit. The tone of this area is intended to be motivational.

4.3. Respect for Authority. Within any military unit, discipline remains the core of coordinated action. Airmen must recognize and respect authority for this discipline to be effective. Raters should reinforce this concept and share general impressions.

4.4. Maintenance of Government Quarters and Facilities. Having respect for property that is paid for by the American taxpayers is part of the airman's service to country. We should always be alert to identify and eliminate waste and abuse. The rater should review positive and negative instances as well as expectations.

5. Supervision and Leadership. Supervision and leadership are two of a kind and go hand-in-hand in the process of managing people and resources. Supervisors must be responsible for their people's action and must evaluate them accordingly. On the other hand, a leader demonstrates leadership by example to include the display of integrity, honesty, fairness, and concern for the health and welfare of subordinates.

5.1. Sets and Enforces Standards. Problems occur every day in every unit. The manner and speed in which a supervisor solves problems becomes a measure of unit effectiveness. Being able to logically evaluate the pros and cons of each situation contributes to good problem solving. Specific examples, whether positive or negative, are valuable when explaining expectations versus actual performance.

5.2. Initiative. Initiative is the ability to energetically begin or follow through with plans or tasks. Knowing what needs to be done and doing it demonstrates initiative.

5.3. Self-confidence. Self-confidence is believing in one's self and in the ability to lead and perform.

5.4. Provides Guidance and Feedback. Providing guidance and feedback is an integral part of the communication process. It enables subordinates to comply with established standards and effectively meet mission requirements.

5.5. Fosters Teamwork. This is the ability to create a working environment that ensures trust, teamwork, and pride in accomplishing the mission. It is the art of stimulating the willingness of subordinates to share their expertise with each other to become a cohesive team in achieving goals and expectations that will have a positive impact on mission effectiveness.

6. Individual Training Requirements. Proper training takes a lot of time and effort and directly determines whether or not an individual is successful. As raters, we should provide the best training available. Training in the Air Force today falls primarily into three categories: upgrade training, proficiency and qualification training, and contingency and mobility training.

6.1. Upgrade (OJT/CDC). Upgrade training has two components: OJT and career development courses (CDC). CDCs are correspondence courses written to provide information about a particular AFS. OJT is hands-on application of the knowledge gained through the CDCs and special instructions by the trainer. If the airman is in upgrade training, feedback should focus on the airman's efforts to complete the CDCs and master the hands-on applications.

6.2. Professional Military Education. Know the various courses available. This responsibility includes enrollment in and the successful completion of any and all courses necessary for the overall improvement of the ratee.

6.3. Proficiency and Qualification. This type of training usually follows upgrade training and is typically continuous. It may be training given daily in the work environment, or formalized training, as in a classroom or academic environment. Whatever the method, the primary focus of this type of training and feedback is to keep airmen proficient and qualified in their primary specialty. Comments about the Community College of the Air Force might also be appropriate here.

6.4. Contingency, Mobility, and Other. Normally, training under these categories is not related to primary duties. Usually, it is identified as training away from the job. However, raters are still required to present these requirements to the ratee with the same enthusiasm demonstrated for daily duties. It is also important raters know how their people are doing, even when they are working under the direction of someone else.

7. Communication Skills. The airman's ability to listen, organize, and express ideas verbally and in writing.

7.1. Verbal. Preparation, practice, and being responsive to the audience are useful speaking habits. The ratee needs strong communication skills to supervise effectively.

7.2. Written. Expressing ideas in written form includes using good organization, grammar, and the right words to communicate the author's thoughts. Also, an NCO's proofreading skills can be useful in providing feedback to airmen.

PART IV: COMMENTS. See reverse side of form.

REVERSE: STRENGTHS, SUGGESTED GOALS, AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS. Parts IV and Reverse are intended for written comments. The comments should help explain your thoughts and use of the scales, and should serve as a vehicle for the airman to use in remembering those areas of strength and those needing improvement. Use the "Comments" column to explain and illustrate feedback on primary duty and general military factors. Use the "Strengths, Suggested Goals, and Additional Comments" section to continue comments on these duty and military factors, discuss other areas of interest, pinpoint strong characteristics, or outline the goals to work on until the next feedback session. Remember, the form is a tool. Your main goal is not to accomplish the form, but to develop the airman.

Chapter 3

SNCO PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK

3.1. General Instructions: There are several factors common to both PFWs. Similar explanations for those factors are included in this section to aid those who may provide feedback to senior NCOs (SNCO) only. Only commanders are authorized access to SNCO PFWs.

3.1.1. For a sample of AF Form 932, see figure 3.1.

3.1.2. The rater completes the AF Form 932. Do not type or store in memory components of typewriters, word processors, or similar equipment. Give the completed AF Form 932 to the SNCO at the conclusion of the feedback session. You must keep a copy for future reference. The intended purpose of the form is to encourage the rater to provide candid comments about the SNCO's duty performance and provide the SNCO with an uninflated assessment of applicable performance factors. No one other than the ratee can sit in on the feedback session. The form will not be used in any personnel action unless the SNCO first introduces it. Upon request, commanders are allowed access to the PFW.

3.2. Detailed Instructions. Detailed instructions for completing the AF Form 932 are in figure 3.2.

Figure 3.1. Sample AF Form 932, Performance Feedback Worksheet (MSGT thru CMSGT).

PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK WORKSHEET (MSGT thru CMSGT)		
I. PERSONAL INFORMATION		
NAME MILLER, ROBERT F.	GRADE MSGT	UNIT 86 CES
II. PRIMARY DUTIES Superintendent; Heavy Equipment Branch Supervises 16 military and 14 civilians, ensures equipment is maintained, Attends Staff Mtgs writes Evaluation reports, Repairs base pavements & sidewalks; schedule sweepers and utility lines Repairs		IV. COMMENTS Mid-Term Session
III. PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK		
	needs significant improvement	needs little or no improvement
1. DUTY PERFORMANCE	Quality of Work ←————→	<p>1. Delegate more, you have good Jr NCOs. Use them as supervisors & pass out your skills along by letting them experience the responsibilities of others</p> <p>2. No one knows this job as well as you do -- you have done an excellent job passing along knowledge</p> <p>3. Be tougher on appearance standards among your subordinates (i.e. haircuts/uniforms)</p> <p>4. The job is always done the troops are happy and able to stand alone.</p> <p>5. The DWI situation in the SQ was handled well -- you explained it to your folks & reiterated acceptable behavior to them.</p> <p>6. Glad you were there to help them thru</p> <p>7. EPRs, Decorations are well written and always on time.</p> <p>8. No safety incidents all year. You are a great example for others to follow -- you're concerned and dedicated to your troops & Mission</p>
	Quantity of Work ←————→	
	Timeliness of Work ←————→	
2. JOB KNOWLEDGE	Technical Expertise ←————→	
	Able to apply to job ←————→	
3. LEADERSHIP	Motivates peers and subordinates ←————→	
	Maintains discipline ←————→	
	Sets and enforces standards ←————→	
	Evaluates ←————→	
	Plans and organizes work ←————→	
	Fosters team work ←————→	
4. MANAGERIAL SKILLS	Time ←————→	
	Resources ←————→	
5. JUDGEMENT	Evaluates situations ←————→	
	Reaches logical conclusions ←————→	
6. PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES	Dedication and preservation of military values ←————→	
	Integrity ←————→	
	Loyalty ←————→	
7. COMMUNICATION SKILLS	Organizes ideas ←————→	
	Expresses ideas ←————→	
8. ADDITIONAL FACTORS (e.g. Safety, Security, Human Relations)	←————→	
	←————→	
	←————→	
	←————→	
	←————→	

STRENGTHS, SUGGESTED GOALS, AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Goals: Complete your degree - it will make your record stand apart from the average pack.

Once promoted the SNCOA will be a great opportunity for you.

Strengths: You have your priorities in line at all times. I never have any doubts about how your branch is functioning. Wish I had to more like you.

RATER SIGNATURE

DATE

Figure 3.2. Instructions for Completing AF Form 932, Performance Feedback Worksheet (MSGT thru CMSGT).

PART I: PERSONAL INFORMATION. Enter SNCO's name, grade, and unit assigned.

PART II: PRIMARY DUTIES. List the SNCO's major job-specific duties. The space provided is adequate in most instances. If additional space is needed, continue in Part IV, "Comments."

PART III: PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK. This section incorporates both primary duty factors and general military factors into one major category. Primary duty facts are AFS (job) related, and the rater's feedback is generally based on what occurs in the work environment. General military factors focus on characteristics that are considered essential to military order, image, and tradition. Performance feedback encompasses both of these factors to emphasize how SNCOs perform their particular job and how they uphold and support the long-established military traditions, customs, standards, and institutional values. Both are essential considerations in determining overall (total) duty performance. Also, the rater has space to add additional factors. Usually, these factors are unique to special duties and locations or may not have been adequately covered in the primary duty or general military factors. Each subheading lists some behaviors that must be evaluated and scored by placing an X on the scale in a position that most accurately identifies the SNCO's performance. Areas marked to the far left of the sliding scale indicate the SNCO needs to work extra hard in these areas. Areas marked to the far right indicate the SNCO is performing quite well and needs to either maintain or slightly improve. any area marked in between requires discussion to explain its exact meaning to the SNCO. When the behavior listed does not apply, enter N/A. N/A might also be used frequently during an initial expectation-setting session. While placing an X on the scale is important, do not allow this to defeat the purpose of the form and the feedback session. Remember, the form is just a tool to help guide the session and is between the rater and the SNCO. The most important objective is for the SNCO to clearly understand the rater's position regarding performance and directions to take. Space is also provided to explain ideas, in writing, and to give examples of behaviors noted.

1. Duty Performance. This item focuses on the ratee's Air Force specialty code (AFSC). Place an "X" on the scale in a position that most accurately identifies the ratee's performance. In many cases, raters are required to establish work standards (expectations) for the unit. Usually, these are based on what needs to be accomplished, how it needs to be done, and when it needs to be completed. To accomplish the objectives of the unit, SNCOs are assigned specific duties. How the SNCOs accomplish these tasks should form the basis of the evaluation. These factors are interrelated, and sometimes it is difficult to separate them. However, it is important that SNCOs understand what it takes to achieve total job effectiveness--how they actually perform and meet expectations. The rater's thoughts on these matters form the basis of the feedback sessions.

1.1. Quality of Work. Quality of work means the degree or grade of job excellence. Each job normally has minimum quality standards established. Measure the SNCO's typical performance results against this standard. Some jobs obviously have more stringent quality standards than others and raters have less tolerance in what they can accept. quality of work is very important. we encourage everyone to strive for excellence regardless of the job they are assigned.

1.2. **Quantity of Work.** The quantity of work refers to the amount of work done and is another aspect of productivity. Sometimes it impacts on quality.

1.3. **Timeliness of Work.** The final aspect of productivity is timeliness. The SNCO's awareness of and response to the time constraints associated with the job are the focus of this factor. Each job has its own demand on time. Some jobs are planned far in advance, while others require immediate attention. Quality and quantity may be acceptable, but if the job is not completed on time, the mission could suffer.

2. Job Knowledge. Knowledge is familiarity, awareness, and understanding gained through experience, OJT, self-study, or formal training.

2.1. **Technical Expertise.** This is specialized knowledge and skills obtained through experience and training.

2.2. **Ability to Apply to Job.** This is the ability to apply sound judgment with respect to scope, thoroughness, and care.

3. Leadership. Leadership is the art of influencing and directing people to accomplish the mission. It involves displaying a strong desire to achieve, persistence, task competence, good interpersonal skills, self-confidence, decisiveness, a tolerance for stress, and a high degree of flexibility.

3.1. **Motivates Peers and Subordinates.** Supervisors must become skillful at leading and motivating their subordinates to successfully perform the mission of their units. Stimulating and energizing airmen and other NCOs to reach goals that they might not attempt are required qualities.

3.2. **Maintains Discipline.** A well-run military organization requires subordinates to follow orders and respond to leadership direction. The SNCO's duty is to ensure that an airman's behavior is orderly and supports the unit's mission.

3.3. **Sets and Enforces Standards.** It is not enough to merely monitor subordinates. Quality and quantity standards for work are the responsibility of supervisors. Enforcing work standards means rewarding those who excel and holding others accountable for not meeting standards. The way a SNCO solves problems, and how quickly, becomes a measure of unit effectiveness.

3.4. **Evaluates.** Subordinates expect to be evaluated on their duty performance, but also believe they will be judged fairly and equally. Consistency in evaluation means that supervisors should always maintain the same standards among subordinates. Avoid favoritism for any airman or other NCO.

3.5. **Plans and Organizes Work.** Supervisors should create a flow of work that reflects proper planning and organization. Directing the whole unit to carry out planned activities by organizing the work force leads to higher efficiency and effectiveness.

3.6. **Fosters Teamwork.** Fostering teamwork is the ability to create a working environment that ensures trust, teamwork, and pride in accomplishing the mission. It includes stimulating the willingness of members to share their expertise with each other to become a cohesive team in achieving goals and expectations that have a positive impact on mission effectiveness.

4. Managerial Skills. Managerial skills consist of the ability to effectively direct and control the action of people and the use of resources. It involves decision making that directly impacts the mission effectiveness, esprit de corps, financial budgets, and so on.

4.1. Time. Proper timing can avoid a work stoppage, dissatisfied workers, loss of money, disciplinary action, and many other unfavorable actions. How well one manages time will reflect his or her ability to be an effective leader.

4.2. Resources. The most common resources that a SNCO will be involved with are people, equipment, and money. The ability to effectively manage these resources is critical to the success of any mission. Planning timelines, programming, and projecting these resources must be done as accurately as possible.

5. Judgment. Resolve problems in a professional manner while considering all factors.

5.1. Evaluate Situations. Evaluation consists of observing, evaluating ratee's performance, providing feedback, and recording appropriately.

5.2. Reach Logical Conclusions. This is the ability to decide on a course of action that is the overall best solution based on time, money, and resources.

6. Professional Qualities. These factors invoke different meanings in different people. Together, they demonstrate a SNCO's allegiance, commitment, and adherence to the organization's mission, standards, values, and officials.

6.1. Dedication and Preservation of Military Values.

6.2. Integrity. Integrity provides the foundation for trust and displays a commitment to honestly stand by your word. It is one of the key elements in gaining respect of subordinates and supervisors.

6.3. Loyalty. This is the quality that makes the ratee faithful to a cause, principle, or another person.

7. Communications Skill. SNCOs must exhibit high-quality communication skills in order to perform effectively. These skills include the ability to listen, write, and speak well.

7.1. Organizes Ideas. Organizing ideas is instrumental in successfully communicating with others. Ideas should be listed from the simplest to most complex and should convey purpose and logic to avoid difficulty in understanding.

7.2. Expresses Ideas. Expressing ideas includes using good organization, grammar, and the right words to communicate the author's thoughts. Also, a SNCO's proofreading skills are essential to effective written communications. Preparation, practice, and being responsive to the audience are useful speaking habits.

PART IV: COMMENTS. See reverse side of form.

Reverse: STRENGTHS, SUGGESTED GOALS, AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS. Parts IV and Reverse are intended for written comments. The comments should help explain your thoughts and

use of the scales, and should serve as a vehicle for the SNCO to use in remembering those areas of strength and those needing improvement. Use the "Comments" column to explain and illustrate feedback on primary duty and general military factors. Use the "Strengths, Suggested Goals, and Additional Comments" section to continue comments on these duty and military factors, discuss other areas of interest, pinpoint strong characteristics, or outline the goals to work on until the next feedback session. Remember, the form is a tool. Your main goal is not to accomplish the form, but to develop the SNCO.

Chapter 4

HELPFUL HINTS FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK SESSIONS

Section 4A—Preparation

4.1. Observing Performance and Keeping Notes. The primary purpose of feedback is to improve performance and professionally develop enlisted personnel to their highest potential. To enhance the effectiveness of these sessions, the following steps and tips should prove helpful. The most important factor in preparing for a feedback session is to routinely observe the performance of the ratee. You cannot expect to comment on strong and weak areas, trends, and any degree of improvement without routinely watching performance. The days of pulling out a file of old APRs or just asking for a list of accomplishments once a year are over. A rater must be actively involved in the process to make feedback work. One does not need to follow an "official" plan or create a "fancy" note-taking device. However, as a rater, you must routinely make notes about behavior and the impact of that behavior, collect examples of work or letters of appreciation, talk to others who are knowledgeable about duty performance, and actively interact with ratees. Information should be collected over time and in a variety of circumstances to foster a solid evaluation. Whether or not the rater chooses to use a notebook or a daily calendar, reviewing performance without bias and keeping good notes allows for meaningful insight and helps in preparing for the feedback session.

4.2. Scheduling the Time and Place. Schedule the feedback session far enough in advance so the rater and ratee have sufficient time to prepare for it. Set aside time for the session so everything on the agenda is covered without the appearance of being rushed. For both parties to be relaxed and able to talk comfortably, select a room that allows for privacy, face-to-face discussions, has proper lighting and ventilation, and prevents any outside distractions or interruptions.

4.3. Setting the Agenda. The agenda should consist of a basic outline of topics (as discussed in chapters 2 and 3) and the sequence for discussion. Be sure to include the ratee's duty description and responsibilities, expectations and targets to hit in order to meet those expectations, a brief synopsis of the mission, and status of the unit. These essential items should lay the groundwork for an effective, productive working relationship between the rater and the ratee by motivating him or her to achieve the highest possible level of [future] performance. another important step in establishing an agenda for follow-on sessions is to review all notes of observed actions and results, file of work samples, etc. Ask four basic questions:

- 4.3.1. What has happened in response to the discussion during the last feedback session?
- 4.3.2. What has been done well?
- 4.3.3. What could be done better?
- 4.3.4. What new areas need to be discussed?

4.4. Choosing the Best Approach. You can use numerous approaches to give feedback. We have adapted several from common sources of Air Force instruction on counseling (table 4.1). Regardless of the approach chosen, it must not be an artificial technique applied mechanically. One of the fundamental rules of feedback is to be yourself.

- 4.4.1. Directive. With the directive approach, analyze the situation, develop a solution or a plan for improvement, and tell the airman or NCO what to do. Several common types of this approach include advice giving, forbidding and threatening, explanation, and reassurance.

4.4.2. Nondirective. With the nondirective approach, encourage the ratee to talk about trends by asking questions, drawing the airman or NCO into the process of developing a solution. This approach is extremely useful with individuals who usually have a positive attitude. However, it does require the rater to have excellent listening and questioning skills.

4.4.3. Combined. A third approach draws on both the directive and nondirective techniques. It relies on both the rater and ratee to develop solutions and offers the greatest flexibility.

Table 4.1. Advantages and Disadvantages of Feedback Approaches.

L I N E	A	B	C
	Directive	Nondirective	Combined
Advantages			
1	Quickest method		Moderately quick.
2	Good for immature or insecure ratee	Encourages maturity	Encourages maturity.
3		Encourages open communication	Encourages open communication.
4	Allows raters to actively use their experience	Develops personal responsibility	Allows raters to actively use their experience.
Disadvantages			
5		Slowest method	May take too much time for some situations.
6	Does not encourage maturity		
7	Tends to discourage ratee from talking freely		
8	Tends to treat symptoms, not problems	Requires greatest supervisory skills	

4.5. Avoiding Pitfalls:

4.5.1. The problems that can arise in the course of the feedback process are as varied as the people who are involved in the process. Such problems vary in degree, but can happen at any time. Pitfalls include personal bias, stereotyping, loss of emotional control, inflexible methods, reluctance to provide feedback and inadequate planning. Some other examples include focusing on the person versus the behavior. **EXAMPLE:** Drawing or jumping to conclusions based on limited observations or poor recall, rating performance as outstanding when it is not, telling the individual he or she is the "best" when the individual is not, and giving favorable ratings to an individual who is well-liked or unfavorable ratings to an individual who is not. Certainly, you can think of many other examples. However, the key is that pitfalls always lead to a discussion of general impressions versus specific aspects of performance.

4.5.2. Avoiding pitfalls is not easy. While we will not address each one specifically, two general guidelines help. First, raters should exhibit the proper role attitude. The role during feedback is not as a critic or a superior with no faults. Rather, the role is that of a coach or helper. Feedback should

be a positive process. The goal is to develop the individual. This should be beneficial for all. The rater's job should be easier in the long run, the unit more productive, and the Air Force mission enhanced. When the feedback session is approached with a positive attitude, backed up by good observation skills, the potential pitfalls will be avoided. Secondly, raters can avoid many pitfalls by practicing good observation skills:

- 4.5.2.1. Gathering supporting notes over a period of time.
- 4.5.2.2. Discriminating between relevant and irrelevant information.
- 4.5.2.3. Focusing on specific behaviors and outcomes.
- 4.5.2.4. Deciding what aspects of the job are really measurable and important.
- 4.5.2.5. Doing selective work sampling when direct observation is infrequent.
- 4.5.2.6. Communicating with ratees.

4.6. Preparing the Feedback Form. The performance feedback worksheet is prepared before the session takes place. Remember, the worksheet is private and should be handwritten, not typed or stored in a computer or memory typewriter. It serves to direct the discussion and as a ready reference for reinforcement until the next feedback session. Generally, comments should contain conclusions about each area with specific examples noted during the observation period. The conclusions show the ratee where he or she stands. The examples serve to illustrate the decision process and to clarify the rater's likes and dislikes. In addition, the form provides space for goal-setting and other comments the rater cares to make. The rater must sign and date the form the day of the session. On completion of the session, the original of the form is given to the ratee. The rater also keeps a copy for future reference, but may not show it to anyone who is not authorized to view it.

Section 4B—During the Feedback Session

4.7. Opening the Feedback Session. Creating a relaxed atmosphere is conducive to having an open, relaxed discussion. It is extremely important to place the ratee at ease. Seating arrangements should foster communication, i.e., across the corner of a desk or table, or a chair-facing-chair arrangement works well. During this stage, focus on a neutral topic or event, recap the last feedback session, or thank the person for his or her efforts during the observation period. Any opening conversation should be brief. Being friendly and sincere is essential.

4.8. Identifying the Purpose and Discussing Topics:

4.8.1. The rater must take time to fully explain the purpose of the feedback session. It is at this initial stage that you should seek input from the individual. The ratee's ideas or opinions on what has been done so far and what can be done better are important aspects of developing goals and objectives for improvement. Remember to focus on the airman's or NCO's strengths and accomplishments as well as the recommended improvement areas. Be specific about the actual behavior that caused the accomplishment or deficiencies and describe the effects of the behavior on others.

4.8.2. Raters must be sure to give their full attention, mentally and physically. They must be sincerely interested in their personnel; otherwise, the airmen or NCOs will recognize insincerity and not tell the personal information that is needed in order to help. An important aspect of giving an individual full attention is listening to what meaning is being communicated, not just the words and symbols that are used. For example, an individual's eye contact, posture, head nods, facial expressions, verbal behavior, etc., are all important indications of his or her inner emotions and attitudes. At the same

time raters are concerned about their own behavior, they must be sensitive to the same cues from the ratee and adjust accordingly.

4.9. Developing and Implementing a Course of Action. Using one of the feedback approaches, the rater and ratee should develop a plan to achieve success. This plan should include objectives and priorities that specify the quantity, quality, timeliness, and manner of actions desired. In order for the plan to be used to its fullest extent, ensure all key points are written on the performance feedback worksheet and given to the ratee. This acts not only as a summary for the airman or NCO, but also as a "memory jogger" of the discussion for later utilization.

4.10. Referring to Other Agencies. Although we have made the distinction between routine performance feedback and counseling on serious problems (one raised by the rater or brought to the rater by the ratee), there is still the possibility that a feedback session might create an environment where problems surface. Remember your limitations when confronted with a situation that requires outside "expert" assistance. Some of the outside agencies that can assist are:

- 4.10.1. Chaplains (religious, marital, academic, personal).
- 4.10.2. Medical personnel (physical, mental).
- 4.10.3. Family Support Center.
- 4.10.4. Military Personnel Flight (AF Aid Society, Family Services).
- 4.10.5. Legal or Social Actions (drug or alcohol abuse, Equal Opportunity Treatment).
- 4.10.6. The American Red Cross.

4.11. Tips for Better Feedback:

- 4.11.1. Ratees must first accept the rater before they can willingly accept feedback. the successful rater does not rely on grade or position. to be successful, raters must develop ratee confidence in their competence, sincerity, and fairness before the feedback session.
- 4.11.2. Perceptions and opinions should be presented as such, and not as facts.
- 4.11.3. Feedback should be in terms of specific relevant behavior and not on generalities, the rater's attitudes, or personal feelings toward the individual.
- 4.11.4. Feedback should be concerned with those areas over which a person can exercise some control.
- 4.11.5. When feedback is mainly evaluative versus purely descriptive, feedback should be in terms of established criteria, probable outcomes, and means of improvement. While feedback is intended to disclose expectations, it should be based on accepted standards and needs of the Air Force versus mainly personal opinions, likes, dislikes, and biases.
- 4.11.6. Feedback is pointless unless a ratee benefits from it. Praise for the sake of praise has no value. It should motivate, build self-confidence, or reinforce top performance. Negative feedback that does not aid in improved performance or a higher level of performance should be omitted.
- 4.11.7. Listen carefully. Paraphrase what is heard to check perceptions. Ask questions for clarification.
- 4.11.8. Give feedback in a manner that communicates acceptance of the ratee as a worthwhile person.

4.11.9. Feedback should avoid "loaded" terms that produce emotional reactions and heightened defenses.

4.11.10. Remember that feedback stops when communication stops.

Section 4C—Closing the Session

4.12. Summarizing. Before the session ends, take a few minutes to review and summarize the key items discussed and reinforce the goals for the next observation period. A good method of summarizing is to ask the ratee for comments on the discussion to make sure they understand the results of the session. It is especially important that this summarization helps end the session on a positive, encouraging, and forward-looking note. Be sure to sign and date the PFW, make a copy for your file, and give the original to the ratee.

4.13. Follow-up and Monitoring the Subordinate's Performance:

4.13.1. The rater should plan for the next observation period as soon as the session is completed. The use of existing notes will help monitor the individual's performance progress and give the rater a starting point for the next feedback session. Again, do not consider feedback as only the formal sessions. You should never wait to give feedback. Informal feedback on a regular basis helps keep the ratee on the road to improvement, increase motivation, and prevent new problems from developing.

4.13.2. The goal of the feedback process is to improve individual duty performance. Through the rater's efforts, the individual benefits professionally, the rater benefits from a more productive worker, and the Air Force benefits from increased mission accomplishment. You are the "key player" in the process.

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