Purpose of a Performance Improvement Plan

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is a plan aimed at helping a staff member improve their job performance and/or behavior. The PIP has several objectives:

- Advise a staff member that performance/behavior is inadequate.
- Ascertain the reasons why performance/behavior is inadequate.
- Specify precisely what is unacceptable in the staff member’s performance.
- Specify precisely what the staff member is expected to do in the future.
- Provide clear warning that a failure to correct performance/behavior will result in adverse consequences.

Use a PIP to identify a performance problem(s) and look for ways to improve the performance of a staff member. The PIP plays an integral role in correcting performance discrepancies but it is not discipline. It is a tool to monitor and measure the deficient work products, processes and/or behaviors of a particular staff member in an effort to improve performance or modify behavior.

Human Resources is available to help with any performance/behavior concerns. Prior to creating a PIP, the supervisor should have already (1) met with the staff member to discuss the performance issue; (2) described expectation (3) listened to staff member’s explanation. In most cases improved performance will result after 1 or 2 discussions with your staff member. When attempts to improve performance are not successful through discussion alone, the use of a written PIP should be considered. But a written PIP should never be the first time performance concerns are brought to the attention of a staff member. However, a well drafted and thought-out PIP along with communication and follow-up should result in improvement over a reasonable period of time. Contact Human Resources prior to creating a PIP.

This form documents a plan for required performance improvement when a staff member’s overall performance does not meet requirements of their position in their Performance Development Assessment.

If you do not feel it is appropriate to place your employee on a PIP, please contact the Director of Staff Relations to discuss.

The following are examples of what a supervisor might identify in a PIP (not exhaustive):

- Job knowledge
- Productivity
- Dependability
- Attendance
- Communication (oral & written)
- Relationship with others
- Leadership and supervision
- Organization and Planning
- Problem solving and decision making
- Initiative
- Following instructions
- Organization
- Quality of Work
- Intercultural Understanding
Checklist for Drafting the Performance Improvement Plan

1. **Identify the problem.** Determine if the problem is a performance (mastering skills/tasks/job responsibility) or a behavior (disrupting the workplace) problem. If there is more than one, list them separately. Clearly, but briefly, state why the staff member’s performance or behavior is a concern and how it negatively impacts the work environment. When meeting with staff, include facts and events that demonstrate the problem(s).

2. **For each identified problem explain what must change and identify the standards upon which the identified performance or behavior will be measured.** Identify specific and measurable steps to improve performance. Define expectations in detail and be sure the staff member understands. Make sure expectations are reasonable and attainable in the allotted time period. When meeting with your staff member, engage them in a discussion on how they can improve.

3. **Identify how long the PIP will last and establish periodic review dates.** Identify a reasonable timetable for accomplishing the needed change in performance/behavior for each area identified in the PIP. The time period may be anywhere from 1-6 months depending on progress. In extreme cases a PIP may be extended. In the PIP, on a monthly basis, document continued areas of weakness or improvement being made toward the expected outcome(s). Meet with the staff member to review. Make sure staff member is aware of what will be reviewed. Supervisors should maintain active contact with the staff member through regularly scheduled meetings other than the formal PIP review meetings.

4. **Describe what resources are available to assist the staff member.** Consider the available GVSU resources: Excellence Series seminars, Work Life Consultant, Career Services Coach, COT Development Committee workshops or online Leadership IQ. Go to: [http://www.gvsu.edu/hro/](http://www.gvsu.edu/hro/) for more information. In addition, perhaps mentoring or job shadowing with other staff who exhibits the skills or behaviors in question could be arranged. There may be helpful off campus classes and seminars. When meeting with your staff member request that they identify what resources they believe might be helpful. Depending on the area of needed improvement there may not be any available resources but contact Human Resources for suggestions.

5. **Describe the consequences if performance is not improved.** The staff member should clearly understand the consequences if the standards described are not met. Long term consequences may include extending the PIP for another specified period or moving to a formal step in the disciplinary process.

6. **The supervisor must establish a confidential location for the PIP document.** The file needs to contain documentation which identifies both improvement and/or continued deficiencies (PIP document attached). Provide an updated copy to the staff member prior to each formal review meeting.
Implementing a Performance Improvement Plan

After the PIP is drafted, the supervisor should conduct a face to face meeting with the staff member. It is extremely important that staff understand why the PIP is necessary.

- **Before the meeting.** Be sure to thoroughly draft a PIP, investigate the issues, gather information, review and discuss the matter with supervisors and Human Resources. Develop the PIP to meet the goal of improving the staff member’s performance. (See above checklist) Review the final PIP with Human Resources prior to the meeting with your staff member.

- **During the meeting.** When reviewing PIP with the staff member, focus on the job and not on the person. Involve them as active participants during this meeting. If there are areas of great performance, include them in your discussion. Seek staff member’s input on how they see their performance. Discuss all parts of the PIP with your staff member. Be sure the staff member understands what you want and why. Provide constructive feedback to help the staff member understand how he/she is doing and what is expected. Address the poor behavior/performance and how it impacts the workplace and department. Allow the staff member an opportunity for discussion and feedback to be sure they understand the plan of action.

- **After the meeting.** Remember that positive outcomes of the PIP will take time. It is important to treat the staff member fairly and consistently. Allow the PIP to be flexible and amended as needed. Schedule regular formal review meetings with the staff member and update the PIP by documenting performance under each identified performance area prior to each meeting. Keep progress notes in the PIP by indicating the date and brief explanation of examples of progress and/or area for improvement. Keep Human Resources updated on the status of the performance or behavior. At the end of the PIP period, the supervisor, in consultation with Human Resources must then determine if the progress was satisfactorily completed or what other steps will be implemented.
PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

This form documents a plan for required performance improvement when a staff member's overall performance does not meet requirements of their position in their Performance Development Assessment. This form should be completed by the supervisor, reviewed with the staff member and submitted to Human Resources for inclusion in the ePDP. Supervisors may also elect to utilize this form throughout the year to document areas of required improvement.

Name: John Smith

Unit: Academic Office

Supervisor: Sally Super

Last Evaluation Date: 01/03/2020

Duration of PIP: 3 months – 04/30/20

Job Responsibilities/Priorities

List the staff member's one or more job responsibilities that require attention and describe the specific improvement that is needed to meet minimum expectations. Attach a separate sheet, if needed, to list additional responsibilities that warrant improvement.

Job Responsibility(ies) or behavior:

1. Responsible for creating, maintaining and updating filing information, record keeping systems, paper and/or computer.

Recently the Dean requested XXXX document and you were unable to locate it on your computer yet you and I worked on the document last week. Over the past two months we discussed this issue when you could not find other documents on your computer. Unfortunately you and others in the office had to spend additional time recompiling the information and creating another document. This is a waste of office resources.

Specific Improvement Required (include date for follow-up assessment):

Organize the documents on your computer so that convenient retrieval is possible. Attend XXXX Excellence Series seminar.

Follow-up assessment: 2-12-20

2-12-20 Follow-up: Noted improvement. But concerns remain with other electronic cabinets for office documents.

Continue to work on this and will review 3-12-20.

2. Possess strong verbal and written communication skills.

You have been heard using rude behavior to customers who call the office. Particularly when you are busy with other work. Sometime you let the call go to voice mail during office hours.

Specific Improvement Required (include date for follow-up assessment):

You must use a pleasant, calm voice when answering the phone at all time. Do not let phone go to voicemail during office hours. Follow-up assessment: 2-12-20.