

City of Virginia Beach Police Department

Action Plans for Improved Performance



A Guide for Department Personnel

- Guidelines for addressing personnel performance issues.

*This Field Guide is Prepared and Updated by the Virginia Beach
Human Resources/Police Services and
The Professional Standards Office,
Under the Approval of the Chief of Police*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Russo", is written over a horizontal line.

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Purpose

The purpose of this field guide is to provide information and guidance for supervisors in effectively defining performance expectations and communicating those expectations to employees. This guide also provides a template for addressing performance issues through the format of an Action Plan for Improved Performance. This field guide is written to support the requirements of General Order 2.10 (Performance Feedback) and 2.07 (Discipline).

Written Communications with Employees

Written communication with employees, particularly as a follow-up to interactive, one-on-one discussion, is a very effective tool in reinforcing and documenting discussions on performance expectations. Here are some examples of written communications outside of what is required by the General Orders on Performance Feedback and Discipline that may be effective coaching tools.

- Optional interim performance feedback report to recognize an employee's accomplishments or to remind the employee of ongoing performance concerns
- A notation in the supervisor's electronic file for the employee (often referred to as a "p-note") recording outstanding performance or summarizing discussions regarding performance expectations
- Memorandum of expectations when an employee has transferred to a new unit or job responsibilities have changed (see attachment 1 for sample)
- Memorandum documenting goals jointly established (see attachment 2 for sample)

Supervisors are cautioned to avoid the trap of relying upon written communication as a substitute for interactive discussion. Email correspondence, particularly, has become an overused convenience for some supervisors. Written communication is most effective when it is used in conjunction with personal interaction with the employee. Supervisors are also encouraged to take a facilitative approach, encouraging employees to provide input on goals and expectations. Employees have less opportunity to provide input when their performance has fallen to the substandard level and they have not responded to corrective action.

Action Plan for Improved Performance

An Action Plan for Improved Performance is a formal document notifying an employee that consequences will occur if performance is not only improved, but also that improvement sustained for a reasonable period of time. Often, this document is used when one or more of the following scenarios are in place:

- The employee has not fully responded to earlier interventions (corrective action in any form) regarding performance.
- Employee seems to lack interest in meeting performance expectations or does not seem to fully comprehend performance expectations.
- The employee's performance does not support a merit increase.

- The employee has engaged in a pattern of behavior or sudden decline in performance that causes concern.

The Action Plan for Improved Performance should include the following components:

1. Descriptive summary of performance problems and concerns, including action taken to date and employee's response
2. Description of performance expectations
3. Specific goals to reach appropriate level of performance
4. Specific timeframe for further review/discussion of progress
5. Repercussions for employee if improvement is not demonstrated AND SUSTAINED for a designated period of time

The Action Plan is a form of a performance contract and requires a commitment from both the employee who must work to meet the outlined performance expectations and from the supervisor who must abide by the agreement to provide feedback regarding the employee's performance. The Action Plan will be ineffective if the supervisor is not diligent in monitoring the employee's progress and in providing feedback. Supervisors are encouraged to "reality test" the practicality of the terms of the Action Plan. Regular communication with the employee is critical and notification should be made in a timely manner when the employee has demonstrated that the terms of the Action Plan have been met or when the terms are not met.

Supervisors are required to coordinate development/review of the Action Plan for Improved Performance with Human Resources/Police Services prior to finalizing the Plan. Recognizing the expertise of the members of Human Resources/Police Services, supervisors are further required to give considerable weight to the input provided by HR/Police Services when finalizing the Plan. In some cases, HR/Police Services will coordinate the review of the document with members of the Human Resources and/or City Attorney's Office. Such review is especially critical when the Plan is designed to address more serious instances of inadequate performance, which may lead to severe disciplinary action, including dismissal. This coordinated review ensures a quality product, completed staff work, and stakeholder support for any future action, which might occur such as grievance hearings, unemployment compensation hearings, etc. Every effort will be made to coordinate this review within a timely response period.

Several sample Action Plan for Improved Performance are included as illustrations, including:

- Attachment 3 - Form PD-326B, Police Training Officer Program Remediation Plan (probationary officer)
- Attachment 4a - Action Plan for Improved Performance (tenured officer)
- Attachment 4b - Action Plan for Improved Performance (tenured officer)
- Attachment 4c - Action Plan for Improved Performance (tenured officer)
- Attachment 5 - Action Plan for Improved Performance (probationary office assistant)
- Attachment 6 - Template for Action Plan for Improved Performance

Understanding Performance Standards and Expectations

The information provided in Attachment 7 is a summary from Marin Consulting Associates' work entitled *Redefining Accountability: The Accountability Workbook*. This information is provided with Dave Hudson's permission. Readers are encouraged to visit www.MarinConsultingAssoc.com for additional information. This discussion is helpful to supervisors in identifying and defining appropriate performance standards in any interactions with employees, counseling on performance, conducting a performance feedback interview, writing a performance evaluation or preparing an Action Plan for Improved Performance.

Attachment 1: Memorandum of Expectations for Marine Patrol Aide

SUBJECT: Performance Expectations for Summer 2---

The purpose of this memorandum is to address our concerns from the initial interview conducted earlier this month and to clarify performance expectations for the upcoming summer season.

Secondary Employment

As you know, the marine patrol aide position is a 40-hour/week assignment for the summer months. In your initial interview, you indicated that you are currently committed to working 36 hours/week for [Employer Name] and that you plan to continue this arrangement. We appreciate your candor in sharing this information with us, but are concerned that the two employment arrangements may conflict with one another. It is the policy of the City of Virginia Beach that its members devote their primary attention to the requirements of their City employment. If we find that your ability to perform the marine patrol aide position is impaired because of fatigue or that your attendance becomes irregular, we will address these concerns through disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Interactions with Members of the Department

Members of the department must strive to approach every situation in a manner that reflects pride and professionalism in achieving our mission. If you have concerns regarding directives or instructions provided by sergeants or other personnel such as officers serving in the capacity of boat captain, then you are expected to work through those concerns appropriately in a respectful manner as required by department policy, using your chain of command. Insubordinate behavior shall not be tolerated. Professionalism includes treating others with respect, maintaining separation of your personal and professional life and focusing attention on the work we are tasked with performing during duty hours.

Assignment

Your primary assignment will be the Intercoastal Waterway. Your assignment with members of the Marine Unit may vary according to the unit's operational needs, events or other circumstances that require flexibility. To provide members a varied work experience, supervisors will rotate assigned personnel within the unit. Members are subject to assignment in all the City's patrolled waterways. Your specific shift schedule will be communicated separately.

We are hopeful that this memorandum is helpful in clarifying our expectations of you and in facilitating a positive beginning of a new summer season. Your signature below will acknowledge receipt of this memorandum.

Employee signature: _____

Date: _____

Attachment 2: Goal Setting Document for MPO Assigned to Marine Patrol

	Initials	Action
1.		I will complete daily patrols of the waterways of Virginia Beach focusing on but not limited to my assigned area of coverage. It is understood that severe weather, training, court and other assignments may reduce available patrol time. Patrols will include all navigable water in the City of Virginia Beach and the entire length of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Last year I spent 368 hours underway. My personal goal is to achieve a minimum of 350 hours underway in 2007.
2.		I will actively seek out violations of marine law, especially those that affect boater safety. Where appropriate, I will issue summonses or make arrests. I will give warnings as needed, and educate boaters regarding marine law and boater safety. Last year I issued 78 summonses for boating violations. My personal goal is to increase my self-initiated work so that my productivity is comparable to that of my coworkers.
3.		I will fully document my duty time. I will utilize all the appropriate codes daily, ensuring a timely record of all my activities. I will take special care to document all my calls for service and using appropriate sign out codes for self-initiated activity. This will be reflected in the Computer Aided Dispatch reports (CADS).
4.		I will assist precinct officers' daily, taking accident, IBR, and FI reports as required.
5.		During the next six months I will organize and complete at least two successful planned patrols on the water. Planned Patrols will be submitted to the unit supervisor at least two weeks prior to the proposed date of action. Patrols should be targeted at DUI enforcement, drug interdiction, fishing enforcement, boater safety enforcement, or other mission related actions. Planned patrols are expected to generate measurable results in order to be considered successful.
6.		I will keep assigned vessels clean, waxed and in good operating condition, and be responsible for the maintenance of vessel #.
7.		I will properly log out/in vessels, which I operate and properly lock down any vessel I use prior to securing for the day.
8.		I will wear my PFD and attach my safety lanyard while operating police vessels on plane. I will ensure that any patrol aide under my supervision also wears a PFD while the vessel is on plane.

Sergeant's Signature/Date: _____

Officer's Signature/Date: _____

**Attachment 3: Form PD-326B, Police Training Officer Program
(probationary officer)**



Trainee Name: xxxxxxxx Date: xx/xx/xx

PTO's Name: xxxxxxxx

This is documentation to clarify a performance area or areas that are recognized as unsatisfactory and requires remedial training.

Summary of Performance Concerns/Issues:

The primary area(s) of concern which have been discussed between the PTO and PPO are:

Not listening to and comprehending radio traffic

You continue to have difficulty listening to and communicating on the radio. When you get the microphone in your hand, you freeze for a number of seconds before putting anything out.

- On one recent incident you followed behind a vehicle with the microphone in your hand for nearly 1.5 miles before making the traffic stop.
- Repeatedly Dispatch will call you 3-4 times before you answer. This occurs multiple times during the shift.
- When asked, you have not been able to explain the details of a priority two call that has just been put out over the air.
- On x/x/xx and x/x/xx, you went the entire shift without the use of the KDT to help improve your radio skills. While you did better in recognizing and hearing your unit number when it was called, you continued to miss most of the other radio traffic.

Decision making in a timely manner

You continue to have difficulty making decisions in a timely manner. You appear to lack the confidence to make decisions in a reasonable amount of time. Some decisions require immediate action and you don't do anything for fear that you will make a mistake.

- In one instance, you pulled up behind a suspicious vehicle that was parked at Mt. Trashmore. Instead of calling in the vehicle information and your location to the dispatcher and getting out of the vehicle to approach the driver, you sat in the car unsure of what to do. When you were instructed on what to do, you continued to sit until PTO xxxx got out of the car first.

You continue to freeze when a decision has to be made.

- While investigating a minor accident, one of the parties complained of an injury and wanted to go to the hospital. After several minutes, you were unsure what to do and still had not called for rescue.

- On another call, you found an open door to a large warehouse. You were asked what should be done next. You didn't respond to the question. You were advised about the use of K9. You did not feel the use of K9 was necessary for this call because you didn't know what to do then. After several minutes of standing outside the open door, PTO xxxx had to call for K9.
- On x/x/xx you conducted a traffic stop. It took you over five minutes to make a decision to give the driver a warning.
- On another occasion you took almost 30 minutes to conduct the stop and issue two summons.

PTO xxxx and PTO xxxx have discussed with you your inability to make a decision and do so in a timely manner. PTO xxx advised you to take some action and even if the decision was wrong, at least to demonstrate your ability to make decisions. While you are in training, you will always have the council of a PTO to properly guide your decisions.

Difficulty Multi-tasking

You continue to have difficulty with multi-tasking. You are unable to operate a police vehicle, listen to the radio, look for violations, and know your location. When this was discussed with PTO xxxx, you listed multi-tasking as one of your weaknesses. When given a single task, you are able to complete the task with few problems. When required to engage in and complete multiple tasks, you slow down, vacillate, and ultimately bring your work effort to a standstill.

As a Police Officer, you will need to master the ability to multi-task to function on your own. In several areas we need to perform several tasks at once such as: traffic stops, vehicle operations, and just routine patrol. You have even noted and commented that you need to improve your ability to multi-task in your journal and conversations that we have had on several occasions.

Additional details regarding these concerns may be found in the PPOs journal entries, Coaching and Training Reports (CTRs), Problem Based Learning Exercises (PBLEs), Mid-Term Evaluation, and/or Final Evaluation.

Plan of Action: The training proposed to reach the desired outcome(s) is/are as follows:

Not listening to and comprehending radio traffic

To help you address the issues in relation to your inability to listen, discern, comprehend, and respond to radio traffic:

- You will be required to recite back to PTO xxxx the details of every radio transmission from the dispatcher that begins with the tones being sent for priority two and three calls.
- You will be required to recite every traffic stop that is called out by other units to include the unit number and location of their stop. PTO xxxx will randomly pick out radio transmissions and you should be able to recall the details of the transmission back to him/her.

Decision making in a timely manner

To help you address the issues in relation to making decisions in a timely manner:

- You will need to make correct decisions and act in an appropriate and timely manner when circumstances require you to do so. PTO xxxx will not direct you on how long you should take to make a decision or act. Instead, you will be directed to find the information on the proper course of action in your Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual and Field Guides to assist you in the course of action to take. The answers to what is required can be found in your procedures. If a situation requires immediate police action, guidance or direction, and you do not respond to act, PTO xxxx will be there to ensure the correct action is taken. He/she will document when decisions or actions are made and if they are done in a reasonable or unreasonable amount of time. He/she will evaluate and document your decision making process for timeliness, appropriateness, and correctness.

Multi-Tasking

To help you address the issues in relation to multi-tasking:

- While riding with PTO xxxx, he/she will evaluate and document your ability to collect information from victims, witnesses and suspects, maintain crime scenes, and direct the appropriate responses to your cases. You will need to process that information in relation to Department Policies and Procedures and City and State Law, and make decisions based on the seriousness of the incident as well as being able to prioritize the actions you decide to take.
- To assist you in being able to complete the necessary multiple steps, refer to your Police Policy and Procedure Manual and Field Guides for guidance.
- PTO xxxx will conduct post-incident reviews where he/she will review and document your actions with regard to your successes or failures to multi-task.
- You will need to improve in your ability to operate a police vehicle and review of traffic infractions along with being able to refer to the appropriate code violation when making vehicle stops. Refer to State and City Codes for specific violations. PTO xxxx will question you daily on traffic codes and direct your activities in your zone for traffic enforcement.

Specific Timetable for Further Review of Progress:

I remind you that additional details regarding these concerns may be found in the Coaching and Training reports completed by you and your Police Training Officers. I would also encourage you to review your daily journal entries made over the past several weeks. Your observations about your deficiencies have been candid and should offer you some excellent insight into areas and methods of improvement.

You will continue to receive daily feedback on your progress from PTO xxxx during this extended training period. Sergeant xxxx will also meet with you weekly to discuss your progress and any concerns that arise during the training period.

Please be advised that if you do not demonstrate progress in meeting these expectations by the conclusion of the remedial training period of {date} through {date}, then we will have to make a decision regarding your continued employment. I strongly encourage you to put all efforts towards completing the process and becoming a full member of the department. If you have questions about this correspondence, please feel free to contact either PTO xxxx or Sergeant xxxx.

I have read and understand the contents of this remediation plan:

_____	_____	_____
Probationary Officer (print)	(signature)	Date
_____	_____	_____
Patrol Training Officer (print)	(signature)	Date
_____	_____	_____
Patrol Training Sergeant (print)	(signature)	Date

Evaluation of the Remediation:

Attachment 4a: Action Plan for Tenured Officer**INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM****DATE:****TO:** Officer X. X. XXXXXXXX**FROM:** Sergeant X. X. XXXXXXXX**SUBJECT:** Action Plan for Improved Performance

Effective {date}, you are returning to the command after a six-month temporary assignment in the Crime Reporting Unit. In reviewing your record since {date}, you have accumulated a number of disciplinary actions including the following:

- reprimand for unsatisfactory performance (date)
- reprimand for a preventable vehicle accident (date)
- four hour suspension for a preventable accident (date)
- forty hours suspension due to mishandling of evidence (date)
- ten hours suspension for disobedience of orders (date)

(The date provided in parentheses represents the date you signed the Notice of Disciplinary Action.) Additional disciplinary action was administered in {year} for unsatisfactory performance and inadequate preparation of departmental reports. In addition to the documented incidents listed above, there have been other occasions where you have failed to follow directives given to you by various supervisors. Examples of this include: that you were instructed not to use a radar gun or radar car because you did not possess radar certification, yet you drove an unmarked car equipped with radar anyway; you were directed to stay out of the PDO's office when not conducting official business, however, you appeared there during your off duty time two months ago. Overall, your disciplinary record over your three and a half years tenure with the department is excessive and cause for concern.

Because you have demonstrated satisfactory performance in the past, we believe that you possess the desire to be a successful member of the department and we support your efforts. The purpose of this action plan is to ensure that you correct past deficiencies and continue to learn and apply the guidance provided to you. The following are areas of concern which require your attention:

Accountability for Time

While this department does not mandate a quota system for arrests/summonses, we do have a responsibility to account for how our time is spent. You are expected to be proactive in patrolling and to generate self-initiated patrol activity.

You may achieve this goal by:

- Limiting interactions with on-duty civilian personnel to those required by official precinct business. (Reference memorandum from Sgt. Xxxx, signed by you on {date}.)

- Accepting case assignment, rather than passing on cases to a detective or peer officer.
- Performing self-initiated investigations relating to known drug activity or in response to planned patrols.
- Taking an active role in cases, even when called upon as the assisting officer.
- When practical, partnering with COP and oceanfront community policing officers.

As your supervisors, we will assist you in achieving this goal by:

- Asking you to change your zone in response to service demands.
- Providing review and feedback regarding your overall productivity.

Driver's Training

Recently, you were disciplined for your third preventable vehicle accident in a thirteen month time frame. We will be coordinating remedial driver's training for you through PD&T. Additional information will follow when available.

Follow-up Regarding Required Documents/Court Requirements

Accurate, complete and timely reports are critical for your success as a police officer as they provide a basis for subsequent actions and/or third-party review, such as in court proceedings. You are reminded of the performance expectations defined in the departmental general orders: 7.01 Field Reporting.

As you have been directed in the past, you are to complete all of your reports immediately upon case completion. If that is not possible due to call volume, then you are to request to return to the precinct at least thirty minutes prior to the end of the shift to ensure timely completion of this paperwork.

All paperwork will be routed through either myself or Sgt. Xxxx for review. In addition, one week prior to your scheduled traffic and criminal court dates you will obtain a copy of your court docket so that you and I may go over it to make sure your paperwork is an order for prosecution of your cases.

Leave Approval Procedures

At present, you have no hours of sick leave available to you and a limited balance of annual and compensatory leave. For your own benefit, you are encouraged to work toward the long term goal of accumulating a minimum balance of 90 hours sick leave to ensure income continuance should some unforeseen medical need arise. In evaluating your sick leave pattern over the past year, it does appear that sick leave is utilized soon after earned. Please be advised that in the future you may be required to provide medical documentation to support any sick leave requests in order to ensure its appropriateness. You are also reminded that for leave approval you are to contact the on-duty midnight supervisor. As a reminder, the midnight shift supervisors report for duty no later than 2030 hours. You will not call any other shift supervisor other than a midnight sergeant or the sergeant responsible for the shift. Should you be unable to contact a duty supervisor, an on-duty Lieutenant would be an acceptable option.

Stress Management

Personal stress levels certainly have the potential to impact errors in judgment or overall performance. You are encouraged to follow through with the counseling services offered through our EAP (1-800-EAP-3257 or 398-2374) and/or other mental health care providers, including Occupational Health Services (385-4851). The City's Wellness and Prevention Program also offers additional stress management and other helpful programs. We all experience personal problems and stresses from time to time, however, it is your

responsibility to address your personal concerns and to maintain separation of your personal and professional life. Our focus at work must be to perform the services required of us.

Performance Feedback Review

We will be meeting on a weekly basis to review this plan and to discuss your progress in meeting these expectations. The intervals of our meetings will be adjusted based on our assessment of your progress. When we agree that your performance has not only improved but the improvement has been sustained for a significant period of time (six months), the terms of this action plan for improved performance will have been met and we will return to an annual schedule of performance feedback. If you are unable to meet and maintain these performance expectations, you may be subject to progressive disciplinary action and/or denial of your annual merit increase {date}.

To facilitate our ability to effectively oversee your participation in this plan, your days off will be changed to Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday effective {date}. You will be permitted to participate in the regular shift bid process when you have demonstrated sustained improvement in meeting the provisions of this plan.

We will continue to act as your mentor and coach while this action plan is in place. Any assistance, advice, or guidance will be at your disposal, any time of the day. We believe this interaction will be helpful in ensuring your success, both now and in the future. It is the command’s sincere hope that you will meet the expectations outlined here.

I have read and understand the contents of this memorandum.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Attachment 4b – Action Plan for Tenured Officer**INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM****DATE:****TO:** Officer X. X. XXXXXXXX**FROM:** Sergeant X. X. XXXXXXXX**SUBJECT:** Action Plan for Improved Performance

Over the past several months, you and I have discussed your work performance, including your performance review in {month/year}. On {date}, Sgt. XXXX cautioned you about your shortcomings with regard to citizen contacts, use-of-force, traffic stop procedures, and searches of vehicles. In addition, you were placed under an action plan for improved performance in the spring of {previous year} because of concerns regarding your citizen interactions. While you met the terms of the {previous year's} action plan, performance concerns arising from a citizen complaint of {date} indicate that improvement is required in this area.

Your performance is not commensurate with your four and a half years tenure as a police officer with the Virginia Beach Police Department. Because past counseling and disciplinary actions have not corrected the problem, we are placing you under a new action plan for improved performance. In the past, you have demonstrated your ability to fully meet our performance expectations while your performance was closely evaluated. Our goal in implementing this action plan is to assist you in confidently and consistently meeting the performance expectations of a non-probationary police officer.

Description of Performance Expectations:

It is expected that your performance comply with the departmental core values of PRIDE and support the departmental mission. You are expected to:

- Understand and apply the general orders as they are currently written
- Treat each citizen with respect without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, etc.
- Utilize the experience of more senior officers by soliciting input and fostering teamwork

Specific Action Plan Steps:

You will meet these expectations by successfully completing the following specific actions.

APPLICATION OF GENERAL ORDERS

General Order Review: You are required to review the General Orders issued on the following topics and the related field guides. We will begin discussing this information in our monthly performance review sessions, beginning with the {month/year} session.

- 1.01 Agency Role and Authority
- 1.05 Department Rules
- 2.05 Conditions of Work
- 2.06 Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment
- 5.01 Use of Force
- 5.02 Weapons Policy
- 6.01 Constitutional Issues
- 6.04 Biased Based Policing
- 10.03 In-Car Cameras
- 12.01 Traffic Law Enforcement
- 12.02 Traffic Stops

Vehicle Searches: You will not search a citizen's vehicle without at least reasonable suspicion of a crime occurring or about to occur. In addition, per policy, you will only search a citizen's vehicle when another officer is present.

Radio usage: You are required to call in all of your traffic stops to the dispatcher prior to stopping the vehicle or at the time of stop.

Complex/Difficult Calls: When presented with a difficult case, you are required to seek input directly from me or another supervisor, in my absence.

CITIZEN INTERACTIONS

Camera Car: You are instructed to continue to utilize the police camera car on a daily basis, leaving the camera on for all traffic stops and to record as many citizen encounters as possible. You may only turn your camera off during cases involving extended accident scenes. Randomly selected tapes will be reviewed and discussed in our monthly performance review sessions. You are also encouraged to identify complex citizen interactions for discussion in these sessions.

Traffic Safety Unit: You are required to ride with members of the Department's Traffic Safety Unit three (3) times in the next six months, in order to view their method of positive citizen contacts while on traffic stops. Your first session will be completed before {date}.

Training:

You are directed to attend and successfully complete the following training programs:

Cultural Diversity. Contact Sgt. Xxxx to schedule a time to complete the "Perspectives in Profiling" course with him.

Powerful Listening. Submit Form PD188 B (attached) to the departmental training representative Karen Patterson, Professional Development and Training, 385-6987, to make arrangements to register for either the {date} or {date} class (both offered from 8:30 a.m. to noon in Municipal Center Building #19).

Effective Communication provided by our EAP. Contact 398-2374 to schedule.

In addition, you are directed to view the Job Skills video course entitled “Closing the Communication Gap” which may be borrowed from the Department of Human Resources, Learning and Development, Municipal Center Building #19, 385-8807.

If you are able to identify other training programs which fit the goals of this plan, please bring them to my attention for consideration. Likewise, as other courses are announced, I will share this information with you. We will be discussing what you have learned from these programs in our monthly performance review sessions.

TEAMWORK

Policing is a team-oriented profession and you are encouraged to develop more interactions with your peers. When time allows, you are encouraged to share a meal with other officers. Participate in muster discussions and share information about specific cases, as appropriate. Actively participating in cases with other officers so that others are not burdened with unnecessary work is obviously the most effective way to promote teamwork. We cannot accomplish the department’s mission as solo operators. We can only accomplish the mission through teamwork and our collective efforts.

Specific Timeframe for Further Review/Discussion of Progress:

Effective today we will develop a schedule of meetings on a monthly basis to review this plan and to discuss your progress in meeting these expectations. The intervals of our meetings may be adjusted based on my assessment of your progress. This plan will remain in effect through the end of your performance year, {date}. If you are unable to meet and maintain these performance expectations, you will be subject to disciplinary action and/or denial of your {year} annual merit increase.

It is my hope that through the execution of this Improvement Plan you will be exposed to different alternatives for resolving situations positively and that you will be able to add these suggestions to the professional “tool box” that you already have at your disposal. I remain available to assist you in accomplishing the goals outlined in the action plan.

I have read and understand the contents of this memorandum:

Employee Name	Date
Supervisor Name	Date

Attachment 4c: Action Plan for Tenured Officer**INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM****DATE:****TO:** Officer X. X. XXXXXX**FROM:** Sergeant X. X. XXXXXX**SUBJECT:** Action Plan for Improved Performance

Lt. Xxxx and Sgt. Xxxx met with you {date} to review your PSO file #0000-000. At that meeting you were advised that an improvement plan would be implemented to provide you guidance for performance in terms of citizen contacts and the inappropriate comments made during citizen contacts, which escalate rather than deescalate these sensitive meetings. These negative contacts have resulted in complaints being lodged against you, with the two most recent complaints both deemed founded for a violation of rule 9, courtesy (#0000-000 and #0000-000). Further, these complaints have triggered an Early Intervention Alert in the Professional Standards' record management system. Based on the information available at this time, your activity levels (tickets, arrests, etc) are commensurate with our expectations; however, your customer service and communications skills require improvement. It is the command's belief you have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the requirements of your position in order to support the department's mission and goals. The following is a description of the expectations of this command:

Citizen Contacts

You will strive to approach every situation in a manner that reflects pride and professionalism in achieving our mission. Unprofessional behavior, including sarcastic and/or demeaning comments, shall not be tolerated. You have been assigned a video camera equipped patrol vehicle since {date} (reference attached memo from Sgt. XXXXXXXX). I will be reviewing your videotapes regularly and will be referring to them in our performance review meetings.

Traffic Stops

You will strive to approach every situation in a manner that reflects pride and professionalism in achieving our mission. You may consider formulating a standard approach that you will use for making contact on all traffic stops. This approach shall be in compliance with General Order #12.02 Traffic Operations.

Training

You have been registered to participate in the Communications Excellence training program scheduled for {date} at LETA. In addition, you are required to read the book by the same title prior to this training experience.

Performance Feedback Review

We will be meeting with you weekly for one month to discuss your progress towards acquiring and sustaining appropriate and respectful conduct towards citizens. We will also use this weekly meeting to review your overall performance, in terms of activity level. If sufficient progress is demonstrated during the first month of this plan, we may agree upon subsequent meetings at monthly intervals. When we agree that improvement has been sustained for a significant period of time (i.e. 4-6 months), the terms of this action

Attachment 5: Action Plan for Probationary Office Assistant

As you complete your third month as an Office Assistant II with this department, I must formally advise you of several continuous job performance concerns. Specific concerns are as follows:

1. PD3 reports continue to have numerous spelling, grammar and formatting errors. You are reminded to use the sample documents provided to you as well as the computer tools available, such as spell check and grammar check. You are expected to proofread your work carefully. For example, on *[date]*, I spent two and a half hours with you reviewing your work on one PD3 report. When this report was resubmitted, there continued to be numerous errors and I had to ask another employee to make corrections in order to meet the report deadline.
2. Difficulty preparing the daily roll call sheets.
On at least one occasion, you released the daily roll call sheet with errors without my review. You are reminded to follow the sample format provided to you and to route your work through me for approval until directed otherwise.
3. Reluctance to ask questions to ensure your understanding of office procedures.
On one occasion you planned to shred lab analysis reports belonging to a detective who had been transferred from the unit without inquiring as to the appropriate procedure for retaining those documents. Errors of this nature can compromise the successful prosecution of cases. You must follow the prescribed guidelines for all office procedures and ask questions when unsure of those guidelines. You will not place any materials in the shred bin, but will use the shred box next to your desk for that purpose.
4. Unresponsive when spoken to, whether it is a simple greeting from a detective or an instruction provided by me.
This behavior is unprofessional and inconsistent with our organizational values of quality customer service and teamwork. You must work to apply common courtesy principles in our work environment. We will enroll you in the next available customer service training, but it is your responsibility to demonstrate these principles in your work.
5. Responsibility for learning and applying the information provided to you through both formal and on-the-job training.
You are encouraged to ask questions to clarify your understanding, to take notes and to organize any written materials in a reference file or binder.

As a new employee, you are constantly being evaluated by both me as your immediate supervisor and by other members of this command who rely upon your work. In addition, you are serving a twelve month probationary period for the purpose of determining your suitability for the position of Office Assistant II. This unit relies upon a full commitment from each team member to accomplish our mission. It is unreasonable for us to continue to provide close monitoring and oversight of your work. You are expected to master the basic job requirements of your position and to perform your work independently with minimal errors.

The combination of these concerns as you complete your third month of employment is greatly disturbing to me. I would like to be able to give you the benefit of the doubt as you complete your probationary period. But, based on your performance to date, I must warn you that if significant and sustained improvement in the areas described above is not demonstrated by [date], I will have no choice but to terminate your employment. Again, if you are not sure of the mechanics for performing any of your tasks, please let me know and we will review that information together. I will continue to assist you in any way I can and welcome suggestions from you in this regard. We have invested considerable time training you and wish to see you succeed within this unit.

We will meet daily to discuss your progress towards raising your performance to an acceptable level. When we agree that your performance has not only improved, but the improvement has been sustained for a significant period of time, the terms of this improvement plan will have been met. If you are unable to meet and maintain the requirements of your position, I will not be able to recommend you for permanent status. I remain available to assist you in accomplishing the goals outlined in this plan.

I have read and understand the contents of this memorandum:

Employee Name

Date

Supervisor Name

Date

Attachment 6 – Template for Action Plan for Improved Performance**INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM****DATE:****TO:** Officer X. X. XXXXXX**FROM:** Sergeant X. X. XXXXXX**SUBJECT:** Action Plan for Improved Performance

Summary of performance concerns/issues:

- What has transpired that has created the need for an action plan?
- What previous corrective action was taken and what was the result?
- How did the employee respond?
- Why is the problem continuing?

Description of performance expectations

- Job descriptions and other written guidance, such as departmental general orders, provide guidelines for performance expectations. Keep in mind that job descriptions are not intended to be an exhaustive listing of job tasks, but rather a broad definition of the parameters of job responsibilities, authority level, nature of the work, etc.

Specific goals to reach appropriate level of performance

- The supervisor may choose to combine the discussion of performance expectations and specific goals in one paragraph or section. The discussion may include identification of the problem behavior, an articulation of the performance expectation and then conclude with a description of the steps that must be taken to correct the problem. In some cases, the steps taken to correct the problem may address multiple performance concerns. For example, the assignment of a mentor officer to coach performance may address problems applying departmental procedure and also inappropriate interactions with citizens. **Goals must be specifically tailored to the employee's performance issues and needs.**

Specific timeframe for further review/discussion of progress

- One of the purposes of this document is to put the employee on notice that there is an ongoing problem that must be corrected. Supervisors must be reasonable in allowing the employee an opportunity to respond to this notice. Supervisors must also commit to the required follow up to further evaluate performance. The Action Plan is worthless if the supervisor does not uphold his/her commitment of providing further review and communicating to the employee when the terms of the agreement have or have not been met.

Repercussions for employee if improvement is not demonstrated and sustained for a designated period of time

Examples may include:

- Formal referral to EAP
- Disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal
- Denial of merit increase

Concluding statement of encouragement and reminder of the supervisor's and the command's commitment to assist the employee in meeting the terms of the plan

Signature Block:

I have read and understand the contents of this memorandum:

Employee Name Date

Supervisor Name Date

Attachment 7: Redefining Accountability from Marin Consulting Associates**What is Performance?**

Performance is what employees produce or achieve; or the observable actions (behavior) they demonstrate.

When writing a performance evaluation, action plan, or similar document; it is important to remember to focus on articulating the employee's performance – not his/her attitude or demeanor. In reality an employee who has a terrible attitude can perform all job duties in a manner consistent with the requirements, while an employee who is well liked and has a good attitude can be inept, lazy, and unproductive. While the following terms may be acceptable as filler phrases, these terms should not serve as the core of the evaluation because they do not illustrate actual performance (unless accompanied by an example of behavior).

The employee. . .

- Possesses a good attitude
- Is productive
- Is a team player
- Is loyal
- Is dependable
- Is professional
- Has good judgment
- Has knowledge
- Has initiative
- Is mature
- Is enthusiastic

Personality traits are important factors that may ultimately relate to performance, but they are themselves abstract terms that do not adequately relate the behavioral outcome. Such traits are factors that may lead to good/bad performance outcomes, but it is more appropriate and useful to actually document the performance outcome itself.

Performance should be considered as observable accomplishments by using language that describes results and/or behaviors. Results relate to outcomes, output, products, impacts made. Example may include:

- Reports in by end of watch
- Completes vehicle checks per inspection checklist. Deficiencies are corrected or reported.
- No avoidable accidents this period.
- Developed two informants this period that provided real assistance in resolving a series of auto thefts.
- Behaviors (normally relates to procedural issues, actions, things said, things not said)
- Follows felony car stop procedures
- Follows department radio procedures
- Identifies and appropriately resolves problems within his/her beat.

- Written reports are usable on first submittal at least 90% of the time.
- Amount of self-initiated work (traffic enforcement/arrests) is comparable to peers in like assignments or conditions.
- Responds to calls for service in a timely manner and routinely completes all necessary work.

What is a Performance Standard?

If performance is defined as results or observable behaviors/activities, then a performance standard is a statement that quantifies or qualifies the desired result or behavior expectation. A performance standard describes a level of performance in terms of results or behaviors expected of the employee by the supervisor. A performance standard is made up of a description of a specific result or a behavior, which is quantified or qualified. The benefits of using performance standards include:

- To make expectations clear to others.
- The employee knows what it takes to succeed.
- Good leaders maintain focus on getting the work done.
- To help in discussing the work with employees without getting into personality traits.
- To give you a basis for fair, objective appraisals of employee performance.
- To give the employee a basis for self-evaluation and self-correction and help him/her to know where he/she stands.

When standards are discussed with the employee they help to identify and deal with differences of viewpoint as to quantity, quality, and priority. This is most useful at the beginning of rating periods rather than at the end when it is too late. With a set of clear standards we can describe the performance problem to the employee as a difference between expectations and actual delivery.

You can state your standard:

“I want reports submitted by the end of the shift.”

You can state the facts of the employee’s performance delivery:

“Today two reports were turned in late. This is happening too often. Let’s get this resolved.”

This approach helps to keep focus on the work to be done and away from perceived “personality flaws.” It puts the supervisor on firm ground to approach the unsatisfactory employee on the basis of tangibles being requested in return for salary dollars paid.

It gives the supervisor a legal and ethical basis for disciplinary actions.

Writing Measurable (Specific) Standards

Performance standards should be adapted for the job the employee is performing. The Virginia Beach Police Department maintains job descriptions for individual position classifications. These are not only specific to unique jobs (patrol officer, homicide detective, SWAT sergeant, etc), but provide broad outlines of duties, and required KSA’s. Supervisors are responsible for developing job-related performance criteria or standards for the specific group being supervised. Examples of measurable standards are:

- Number of jobs completed within time estimates
- Patterns of errors committed, accuracy rate
- Comments or feedback from citizens
- Number of rejected reports

- Procedures followed or not
- Safety guidelines followed or not
- Average amount of time to handle a call – comparison to peers
- Activity levels comparable to peers in like conditions
- Patterns of disruptive behavior or events
- Does fair share of work
- Appropriate adherence to use of force policy

Written standards of performance should:

- Be specific.
- Contain a measure of behavior.
- Not address personality traits.
- Be attainable under most circumstances.
- Be mission or job related.
- Specify the line between satisfactory work and less than satisfactory work.
- Be non-discriminatory.
- Be practical to monitor.
- Be consistent with the parameters defined by the job description and by city and departmental policy guidance.

Once standards are established it is suggested you share them for review with your supervisor and your employees. It is important to gain support from your supervisor and if at all possible, buy-in from your employees.

What if the employee disagrees?

- Be willing to negotiate the negotiable (the “nice to have” stuff)
- Stick to your non-negotiable (the “must have” stuff)
- Disagreements determined early in the process are beneficial.
- You do not know everything.
- You may find it is a minor issue that can be easily taken care of.
- You may find that legitimate obstacles make one of your standards unattainable, causing you to either remove the obstacle or change the standard.

The Definition of a Problem Performer

A person who successfully resists all efforts to adhere to the supervisor’s expectations...

AND

Reasonable efforts to correct behavior and to achieve satisfactory results have failed.

As you consider your “problem employee,” reflect on what actions you have taken. Have you:

- Given thought to the importance of the things your are asking the employee to do? Is it a worthwhile goal?
- Told the employee about the performance you want? Have you provided clear performance standards?

- Discussed with the employee what your concerns are? What deficiencies you have noted?
- Have you tried to solve the deficiencies with the employee? Have you listened to their explanation of why standards are not being met?
- Explained why it is important to do the work to the standards you expect?
- Provided adequate training so that the employee knows how to do the job?
- Provided the tools, equipment, time and opportunity to enable the employee to do the job?
- Assured yourself there are no real obstacles outside of the employee's control that are interfering with the employee's ability to perform?
- Treated the employee with respect and attempted to enlist their support for the attainment of the stated goals?