COURSE SYLLABUS

Federal Performance Management Course

Develop the skills to evaluate, track, and improve employee performance in alignment with federal performance management systems.

> Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://sdfm.graduateschool.edu/courses/federal-performance-management



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Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction and Overview

- Review the federal performance management landscape, history, and merit system principles.
- Explain the OPM performance management model and 2025 updates that align plans to mission and policy priorities.
- Define the basis for all performance decisions and the “performance management process” (plan–monitor–develop–rate–reward).
- Contrast traditional Title 5 and alternative systems (e.g., pay banding, pay-for-performance) and their implications.

Module 2: Planning and Measuring Performance

- Link organizational mission/strategic goals to unit and individual expectations.
- Identify performance elements (critical/noncritical) and write measurable standards.
- Select appropriate measures—quality, quantity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, manner of performance.
- Tailor generic standards and document expectations clearly in written plans.
- Communicate expectations effectively and verify employee understanding.

Module 3: Monitoring Performance

- Track progress against elements and standards through ongoing check-ins and milestones.
- Provide timely feedback and course corrections using skillful listening and clear documentation.
- Diagnose root causes of gaps (resources, skills, clarity) and adjust plans when warranted.
- Maintain records that support fair mid-year discussions and end-of-cycle decisions.

Module 4: Developing Employees

- Identify development needs tied to mission goals and performance elements.
- Use coaching, training, stretch assignments, and job aids to build capability.
- Create and update development plans that target measurable outcomes.
- Reinforce engagement and accountability through collaborative goal setting.

Module 5: Rating Performance

- Summarize performance against standards and apply rating levels consistently.

- Write clear narratives that tie evidence to elements, avoiding common rating errors.
- Ensure ratings reflect meaningful distinctions and contributions to agency goals.
- Communicate results constructively and outline next-cycle expectations.

Module 6: Performance Consequences

- Connect ratings to rewards and recognition in alignment with agency policy.
- Address unacceptable performance via swift, standards-based actions where required.
- Leverage performance information for workforce decisions (development, reassignment).
- Promote a performance culture that values fairness, equity, and mission results.