



U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Performance Improvement Plan – A Supervisor’s Quick Guide

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is a formal process used in Federal agencies to help employees improve performance that falls below the "Fully Successful" level. It is both a corrective and developmental tool, governed by Federal regulations (e.g., 5 CFR Part 432 or 5 CFR Part 752).

Identify Performance Deficiencies

- Supervisor documents specific performance issues relative to critical job elements.
- Issues must be based on the employee’s performance plan and clearly show failure to meet expectations.

Develop and Issue the PIP

The PIP is a written document that includes:

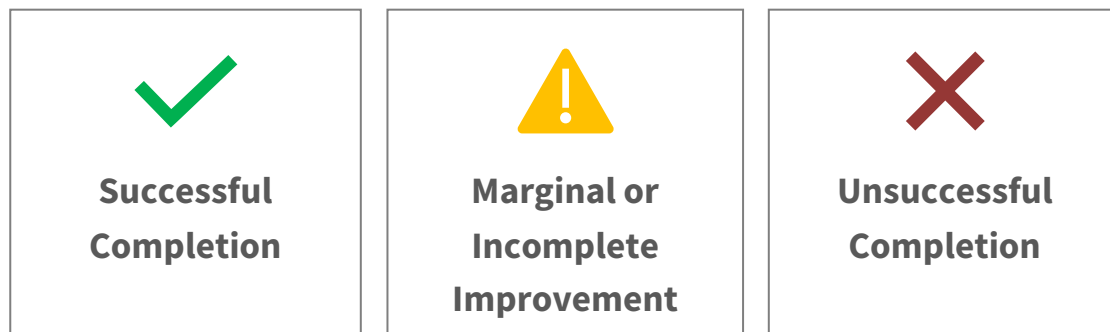
- A description of the unacceptable performance.
- Critical elements involved.
- Specific examples of deficiencies.
- Duration of the PIP (typically 30 business days).
- Performance expectations and success criteria.
- Support and assistance to be provided (training, feedback, etc.).
- Description of consequences for not improving performance.

Monitor Performance During the PIP

- Supervisor closely monitors performance and provides:
 - Regular feedback and coaching.
 - Other appropriate forms of assistance to improve performance.
- All communication and support provided should be documented.

Evaluate the Outcome

At the end of the PIP period, the supervisor must decide:



Successful Completion

- Employee meets expectations.
- PIP is closed, and the employee returns to regular performance review.

Marginal or Incomplete Improvement

- Supervisor may extend the PIP period at their discretion, though this is not required.

Unsuccessful Completion

If performance remains unacceptable:

- The agency may reassign the employee or propose demotion or removal under either:
 - [5 CFR Part 432](#) (performance-based action procedures)
 - [5 CFR Part 752](#) (adverse action procedures)
- Agencies may also consider proposing a suspension under adverse action procedures.

Documentation

- All steps must be thoroughly documented.
- Ensure due process is followed.
- Consult with human resources and legal advisors before, during and, after the PIP process.

Tips

- Be objective, specific, and consistent.
- Set clear expectations and provide meaningful support.
- Use the PIP as an opportunity for improving an employee's performance, not solely as a tool to discipline.
- Where an employee successfully completes the PIP but later demonstrates unacceptable performance in the same critical element(s), an agency may utilize performance-based action procedures to demote or remove an employee within one year from the start of the PIP without issuing a new PIP.