

FUEL

City of Newport News

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



FOLLOW UP · ENGAGEMENT · LEADERSHIP

SUPERVISOR TOOL KIT

“fueling employees to drive results”

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Don't forget to set the next Check-In with your employees!

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What are Check-Ins?

Employees want to know how to succeed, when they are succeeding, and that they are valued. Supervisors want to help employees succeed, achieve established goals, and share in both individual and team successes. These two separate but related desires can only be achieved when there are frequent and effective communications between the supervisor and employee.

**LOOK FORWARD, NOT BACKWARDS.
NO ONE CHANGES THE WORLD FROM THE REARVIEW MIRROR**

In short, the main purpose of employee check-ins is to **keep the lines of communication open** between managers and employees in order to effectively engage and manage performance. The more employees and managers are able to communicate, the better they will be able to work together to accomplish goals, develop skills, and give/receive feedback. Check-ins should appear relatively casual to employees and managers should follow a loose structure in order to make sure this time spent remains valuable and drives action.

A check-in should replace an already scheduled, or intended, regular one-on-one meeting between the supervisor and employee. To keep the conversation relevant and meaningful, an effective check-in should last at least fifteen minutes, but no more than thirty minutes. Both accomplishments and improvement needs should be addressed in a regular Check-in meeting, but the quarterly meeting is not intended to be the tool to address significant performance issues. Significant performance deficiencies should be addressed through the City's Standards of Conduct and with guidance from Human Resources. See the sections in this Toolkit for "Performance Indicators" and "Performance Improvement Plans" for more information.

The bonus of frequent check-ins with employees is that managers don't need to open a fire hose in each and every meeting. They can **select specific goals, projects, or coaching points to focus on in each meeting**. Employees might also start the conversation and guide the focus (even better).

LET THE EMPLOYEE DRIVE THE DISCUSSION

Generally, managers and employees should prioritize discussion points based on due dates and progress. What is discussed will actually change meeting-by-meeting.

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Conducting FUEL Check-Ins

Every employee should receive a quarterly check-in with their immediate supervisor. Departments may elect to conduct more frequent check-ins with employees, but a minimum of four (4) quarterly check-ins is required unless there are extenuating circumstances such as extended leaves of absence, certain position changes, or similar events that have occurred. It is the department's responsibility to ensure that employees in like positions within a division or throughout the department, as applicable, receive the same frequency of check-ins.

The City's performance evaluation year begins May 1st and closes April 30th. While there is no requirement to conduct check-ins on specific dates, the following schedule is proposed as a guide and these dates can be used to add Outlook calendar reminders.

- First quarterly check-in Conducted before August 30
- Second quarterly check-in Conducted before November 30
- Third quarterly check-in Conducted before February 28
- Fourth quarterly check-in Conducted before May 31

Supervisors should initiate the check-in by scheduling a date, time and location with each employee in advance. The check-ins should not be an impromptu discussion with the employee and ideally, the invitation will allow an employee enough time to prepare for the discussion. A great way to schedule the next check-in is to agree on a date, time and location during a current check-in meeting. Otherwise, an invitation can be sent to the employee (calendar appointment, email, verbal request), preferably with at least two (2) days' advance notice.



Supervisors, prepare before the meeting! Nothing is worse than going into a meeting with a manager that looks lost or like they aren't invested. **Take 5 minutes to prepare before the meeting.** Review the employee's job description and the FUEL Program Application for goal tracking, previous comments you may have written and that the employee added, and other journal or meeting notes from recent accomplishments or noteworthy incidents. Specifically:

- Review notes from the last meeting to **get up to speed on any planned deliverables.**
- Review the employee's list of goals and projects to see if there are any due or running off course.
- Make a note of important department or company changes that need to be discussed with the employee.
- Review any feedback sent or received to identify any discussion points.
- Unplug from other activities so the employee knows they have your complete focus.

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Conducting FUEL Check-Ins - Get the Motor Running!

Practical Tips for Supervisors

- Don't do all of the talking.
- Listen and ask questions for clarity
- Use conversation starters to engage the employee in conversation
- Use open-ended questions to keep them talking
- Let the employee steer the conversation but make sure you discuss any important items

Suggested Questions – engage employees and let them know you care:

How are things with you and your family?

How are you feeling at work?

Are there any issues affecting the team or you individually?

Tell me about your week/month – what's it been like?

Tell me about what you've been working on.

Additional conversation prompts to keep employees talking:

“Go on.....”

“Tell me more...”

“Why do you say that..”

“How do you mean...”

“Can you give me an example...”

“What else...”



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Conducting FUEL Check-Ins – System Checks/Inspections!

Practical Tips for Supervisors

Goal/Project Updates

- Discuss the status of short-term goals and long-term projects
- Adjust/update existing goals with the employee
- Discuss any challenges or lessons learned
- Offer coaching and/or assistance for any roadblocks
- Discuss if any other priorities might affect the goal progress
- Ensure all goals is still on track
- Acknowledge any milestones or accomplishments
- Discuss/confirm any new goals for the employee

When you give feedback, be specific:

- Tell them what you observed them doing
- Talk about the outcome
- Explain how this impacted the organization
- Explain how and why their work matters

Suggested Questions:

Are you on track to meet the deadline?

What areas are ahead of schedule?

What questions do you have about this area of responsibility, or project?

How are you going to approach this?

What have you learned about this area of responsibility, or project?

Where do you think I can be most helpful? How can I better support you?

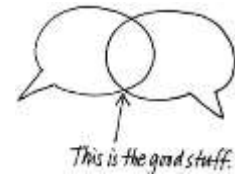
What didn't go as you had hoped? Why?

What can you/we do differently next time?

What's your number one priority at this time?

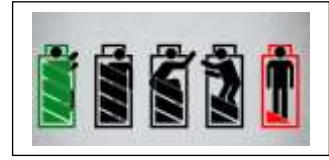
How's your workload?

Is there anything keeping you from reaching your goals this week? In the next quarter?



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Conducting FUEL Check-Ins – Recharging the batteries!



Practical Tips for Supervisors

- Discuss Recent Accomplishments
Acknowledge recent accomplishments and provide feedback
Ask the employee for any recent accomplishments
- Touch Base on Status of Training/Learning
Discuss any training items due/in progress
Ask the employee if they have identified any training requests
Ask if the employee feels they are getting enough feedback
Ask if the employee is learning from peers/mentors or if they would like to
Recommend training items to improve skills
Discuss how training is/should be executed
- Share Company or Team Updates/News
Discuss any important company and team updates or news
Confirm any action-items needed
- Solicit Employee Ideas and Requests for change
Ask the employee for any ideas or input
Discuss any areas in need of change (company, team, project etc.)
Ask the employee if your management style is effective for them and get suggestions for change
Discuss any overall roadblocks or distractions that might be affecting the employee
- Discuss Employee Career Development
Discuss employee's career goals
Discuss how you can work together to achieve their career goals
Discuss opportunities and career paths for the employee
Set clear expectations for any lateral/upward movement
- Plan for the Week/Month/Quarter
Review the priorities for the short and long term

Before the employee leaves the meeting, spend a few moments to summarize the key discussion points. This will help remind employees of any action-items and reinforce any acknowledgement or coaching tips provided. Ask the employee if anything was missed and remind them of when the next meeting will be.

Suggested Questions:

Any wins since we last spoke?

What are you most proud of this quarter?

Have you noticed anyone going above and beyond? If so, how?

Have you thought about expanding your role?

Supervisors, try these out:



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Conducting FUEL Check-Ins – Tune Ups and maintenance!

Practical Tips for Supervisors

- Be prepared to recommend training opportunities based on the individual employee's performance and experience.
- Know how to direct the employee to Munis Self-service to sign up for City-sponsored training.
- Encourage continuing education to include apprenticeships and certifications for specific job functions.
- Suggest mentorship opportunities for the employee (both having a mentor and being a mentor).
- Don't shy away from cross-training moments or job shadowing to broaden an employee's perspective and exposure to other operations. This also helps show employees you are investing in them and helps to make them more well-rounded and viable employees.



Suggested Questions:

What have you always wanted to know about the City but never had time to ask?

If you could learn one thing to better perform your job, what would it be?

What holds you back from participating in more training (time, resources, cost, etc.)?

How can I help you overcome that?

What is your dream job and what would it take to get you there?

At the End of the Meeting: Summarize

After the Meeting: Document

This very small but significant step is often skipped and yet can make a big difference. Take 2-5 minutes after each meeting to record key discussion points, action-items or feedback. This will help kick-start the next meeting and will serve as a useful log when supervisors are looking at trends in performance. Keep these notes in a centralized location.

Managers who make 1-2 notes about each employee per month shave 50% of the time off of entering year-end comments on the FUEL Progress Summary Report because they aren't trying to remember key milestones or trends in behavior that took place earlier in the performance year.

How Did You Do?

Take a few moments after each meeting to evaluate how you did. Even the best supervisors should be striving to improve their communication and meeting skills.

- Did you talk too much/not enough?
- Did you actively listen?
- Did you ask questions?
- Did you acknowledge the employee's feelings?
- Did you paraphrase key items to confirm understanding?
- Did you provide effective coaching tips?
- Were you distracted in the meeting?
- Do you feel the meeting was valuable?
- Did you discuss all important points?
- What could you do to improve the next meeting?

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Check-In Example



I'D LOVE TO FOCUS ON GETTING BETTER AT EXECUTING WITH SPEED!

Example #1: Make your feedback specific to the behavior.

Specific: “Henry, I am concerned about your punctuality. You have been 15 minutes late for the last three mornings. Please explain why.”

Vague/poor: “Henry, you have a bad attitude toward your job.”

Example #2: Consider your timing. Provide feedback either before the event in the form of advice, or immediately after it as positive feedback.

Specific: (advice before the event) – “Sally, I’d like to review the content of your presentation with you before your speech next week so you can really do a good job in front of the group”

Specific: (positive feedback after the event) – “Sally, you did an outstanding job in organizing your presentation for the meeting. The speech was well-researched and logical.”

Vague/poor: (criticism after/before the event) – “Sally, because you’ve done such a poor job in the past, I need to preview the speech you plan on giving next week.”

Example #3: Focus on behavior the receiver can do something about.

Specific: “Sam, we would appreciate you keeping the team informed about the status of the project. How about scheduling a weekly status meeting?”

Vague/poor: “Sam, why are you so shy that you don’t like to talk to other people?”

Example #4: Solicit feedback rather than impose it.

Specific: “Linda, I heard you say you would like to learn how to handle your most difficult customer more effectively. Would you like me to share some techniques I have seen work?”

Vague/poor: “Linda, I saw how you handled Mrs. Dawson during this crisis. It really stinks.”

Example #5: Avoid labels and judgments by *describing rather than evaluating* behavior.

Specific: “Steve, I have given you five chances to attend training programs in the last year and you haven’t enrolled yet. What’s getting in your way?”

Vague/poor: “Steve, you are very lazy about improving your skills and don’t seem to care about your career here”.

Example #6: Define the impact of the behavior on you, the unit, the team, and the organization.

Specific: “Sarah, when you don’t get your report to me on time, I can’t complete the report for my boss’s deadline. This slows up decisions about resources needed for next month.”

Vague/poor: “Sarah, can’t you ever get your reports to me on time?”

Example #7: Use “I” statements as opposed to “you” statements to reduce defensiveness when asking for a change in behavior.

Specific: “Tim, when you play your radio in the work area, I lose my concentration. Would you mind turning it off during regular work hours?”

Vague/poor: “Tim, you are so inconsiderate of other people when you leave your radio on.”

Example #8: Check to be sure that clear communication has occurred.

Specific: “Mary, do you know the procedure for recording your expense report? Can you go over the procedure to be sure I covered everything?”

Vague/poor: “Mary, I’m sure you got it all, huh?”

Example #9: Give the feedback in a calm, unemotional language, tone and body language.

Specific: “Joe, I’m sure your progress will be much faster now that you are clear on how to use this new machinery.”

Vague/poor: “Joe, isn’t it about time you improved your skill with this machine?”

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FUEL Progress Summary

Employee Information

Employee Name: _____ Employee ID: _____

Department: _____ Position: _____

Check-In Information

Quarterly Discussion Dates: _____ Supervisor will fill in dates

Supervisor Acknowledgement:

Employee Acknowledgement:

Comments: _____

City Standards

	Seldom	Regularly	Continuously	Not Rated
Provides excellent customer service and promotes Newport News through positive interactions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shows engagement in their role and with the City through commitment to attendance and conduct standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Takes pride in the City which is reflected by their use and care of resources and tools provided to perform the job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

Contribution Toward Department Goals

	Seldom	Regularly	Continuously	Not Rated
Accomplishes assignments aimed at reaching a 15% increase in production of widgets for the current year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supports team members and supervisor by offering assistance, encouraging positive behaviors, showing respect, and other similar actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

Job-Specific Accomplishments and Progress

	Seldom	Regularly	Continuously	Not Rated
Conducts inspections and investigates errors to ensure quality and scope of completed work meets established standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitors, inventories and substitutes widget materials, supplier and equipment; coordinates the operation and care of tools for division staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follows proper procedures to provide for safety of equipment and others; ensures compliance with federal, state and local regulations and City policies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

Developmental Opportunities Discussed

Comments and developmental notes can be added at any check-in.

Overall Progress Rating

Developmental Successful Exceptional

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Check-In Follow-Up Surveys

Following each quarterly check-in period, all full-time and part-time employees will receive an emailed survey with three (3) to five (5) questions for their response. The survey questions will vary each quarter and are intended to:

- Encourage continued engagement from employees
- Monitor that check-ins are being regularly conducted by all supervisors
- Ensure check-ins are productive and effective
- Improve communication for all employees
- Accommodate reporting capabilities for management teams

Supervisors who find it challenging to manage the check-in process, or whose check-in meetings are not having the desired impact, will be assisted by their management team and the Human Resources Department so that all employees receive the intended benefits of the program.



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Managing Employee Performance Checklist

Below is a sample chart which may be requested from Human Resources to assist supervisors with managing performance for employees who are not meeting expectations. This fillable form may be used to assist with ensuring supervisors have taken the appropriate steps to correct performance or behavior issues before utilizing the formal disciplinary process.



City of Newport News
Human Resources Department

PRINT FORM

CLEAR FORM

MANAGING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE CHECKLIST

Employee Name:		Position Title:	
Hire Date:	Probationary Employee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Probationary End Date:	
Supervisor:		Department:	
Issues/Situations Being Addressed:			
Process per UM Policy	Documentation Type & Dates	Meeting Date(s)	Comments:
• Advised employee re: policy and expectations; work direction or notification of standards			
• Follow-up with employee; provide clarification (may be multiple times)			
• Verbal warning			
• Written counseling			
• Performance Evaluation			
• Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)			
• Follow-up on PIP			
• Recommend disciplinary action			
• Provided additional or retraining			
• Any other appropriate disciplinary action steps			

Supervisor's Responsibility

Supervisors are expected to communicate department policies and practices. Supervisors also communicate and monitor job performance expectations and assignments. To make detailed annotations on the current issue, please use the Comments/Notes section on page 2.

- 1) Has employee been provided adequate training? Yes No
- 2) Are training resources available within the agency or community? Yes No
- 3) Can the employee function within the work group without using the deficient skill? Yes No
- 4) Do you reinforce acceptable behavior? Yes No
- 5) Has acceptable behavior been communicated with understanding to the employee? Yes No

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Performance Improvement Plans

On many occasions, an employee's performance will not meet supervisor's or department's expectations. As an alternative to immediate disciplinary action, it may be appropriate to place an employee on a performance improvement plan (PIP). A PIP is helpful when a supervisor has noticed a specific area or areas of **underperformance** and sets specific goals for the employee to attain in order to improve performance within a specified timeframe. The PIP is an ongoing process that requires monitoring and feedback from the supervisor.

During a Check-In, the supervisor should explain how and why the employee's performance is failing to meet expectations. Whenever possible, the supervisor should provide clear and specific examples of when the employee's performance was poor. For example, telling the employee that others have complained about him or her being rude to customers does not give them much guidance. On the other hand, explaining that on a specific date an employee overheard him or her tell a customer that the customer should "get over it" is a specific example of unprofessional conduct that provides guidance to the employee of what not to do.

The supervisor should provide the employee with clear guidance on how to meet expectations as well as inform the employee of the consequences of failing to improve performance. The supervisor should document the discussions had at the Check-In and use the examples and discussion to prepare the PIP. An effectively written PIP will have the following key parts:

1. IDENTIFY THE ISSUE(S) REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT

When possible, the PIP should list specific facts or events in which the problem occurred. Additionally, if the employee received any counseling or discipline related to the specific issues, this information should be included in the PIP. This section should be clear, objective and factual. There should be no opinions, hearsay or workplace gossip included in the PIP.

2. EXPLAIN THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PIP

This section should list clear, quantifiable objectives for the employee to show improvement. List the specific work requirement that needs improvement and how the employee's progress will be measured. Set a deadline by which the employee must satisfy the requirements of the PIP.

3. DESCRIBE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ASSIST THE EMPLOYEE

The PIP should identify and provide information on how to obtain the resources, materials, training and coaching that the employee can use to meet expectations. Commonly used resources include: Training seminars; Coaching by a supervisor or experienced employee; or Employee Assistance Program (typically for behavioral issues).

4. REVIEW THE PIP WITH THE EMPLOYEE

The supervisor should meet with the employee to review the final document. The supervisor should read through the entire PIP to ensure that the employee understands what the expectations are, how the employee failed to meet expectations, and what is required of the employee in order to improve performance. The employee should also be given an opportunity to ask any questions about the PIP. After review, the supervisor should have the employee sign the PIP. Although this information should be included in the PIP, the supervisor should review the consequences for failure to meet the requirements of the PIP.

Your Human Resources Generalist is a great resource and will provide you with guidance related to each specific situation and can also offer a PIP template. Signed PIPs should be forwarded to Human Resources to be maintained in the employee's personnel file.

FUEL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

iPROPEL FUEL Badges

Human Resources is excited to announce the implementation of a recognition and reward platform for all full-time and part-time employees. The City's platform will be referred to as iPROPEL, which stands for:

Integrity, Partnerships, Respect, Opportunities, Performance, Ethics, and Leadership



One form of recognition through iPROPEL will include the awarding of badges that identify employee efforts and contributions toward achieving goals and meeting expectations. Several of the available badges for employees will be associated with the FUEL Performance Management Program and examples are listed below. When iPROPEL becomes available, supervisors are encouraged to recognize employees for their efforts and accomplishments.

BADGE NAME	DESCRIPTION OF RECOGNITION/APPRECIATION
Nailed it	Thanks for showing responsibility in your duties & tasks. You consistently get it done and your behaviors help to make City of Newport News great!
Follow-Up	Great job with your follow-up on both personal and team assignments! Your recent follow-up had significant impact in achieving the department's and City's overall goals!
Inventor	Employee developed a new solution for an old problem
Engagement	Your commitment to excellence is showing - thanks for your recent attention. Know that your actions show your engagement while engaging others at the same time!
GEM	Thank you for your significant contribution and Going the Extra Mile. Your ability to recognize and respond to a need or problem has been impactful.



More information and guidance will be available soon!