



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Wednesday, January 11, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: BETH F. COBERT, ACTING DIRECTOR

Subject: Management Tools for Maximizing Employee Performance

The Federal Government's workforce is critical to driving success on a variety of compelling missions. Numerous research studies have found that employee engagement has great impact on organizational outcomes*. Research demonstrates a strong positive relationship between high levels of employee engagement and desired organizational outcomes such as customer satisfaction, safety, low turnover, and productivity. Supervisors in high engagement agencies define clear performance expectations, develop strong working relationships with employees, provide employees with useful feedback, and recognize their contributions. In short, studies have found that the effort leaders invest in managing their workforce pays off in substantially higher levels of employee engagement and performance.

While the vast majority of Federal employees contribute to their agencies' goals in a positive manner, supervisors must still be prepared to address employee performance and conduct issues. However, too often, implementation challenges and misconceptions related to addressing employee performance and conduct get in the way of taking swift and appropriate action to manage individuals whose performance or conduct detracts from the accomplishment of an agency's mission. Failure to address employee performance or misconduct problems is also certain to be noticed by your workforce. This can damage the morale and productivity of employees who are already positively contributing to agency goals.

Maximizing employee performance and addressing misconduct, when appropriate, is a critical responsibility of managers and supervisors. If the available management tools are used appropriately and when needed, managers and supervisors have an opportunity to deter future performance or misconduct challenges, and employees have an opportunity to improve their performance or correct their behavior, all of which will benefit the agency.

The [attachment](#) to this memorandum is part of a series of instructive materials we are sharing to support leadership in effective management. Specifically, it provides some assistance in addressing employee performance and misconduct issues. By spending the necessary time to utilize existing tools, agencies can avoid these pitfalls.

* See, e.g., Managing for Engagement, Communication, Connection and Courage. A Report to the President and the Congress of the United States by the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (July 2009).

This guidance is not meant to be comprehensive, but rather to highlight the tools generally available to managers and supervisors for this purpose. You should consult your human resources office or the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) with any questions.

Agency Chief Human Capital Officers and/or Human Resources Directors should contact OPM's Employee Services, Partnership and Labor Relations, Employee Accountability, at (202) 606-2930 or employeeaccountability@opm.gov for additional information. Employees should contact their agency human resources offices for assistance with any questions.

Attachment: [Managing Federal Employees' Performance Issues or Misconduct](#)

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers, and Human Resources Directors