Goals-Engagement-Accountability-Results (GEAR)[1] *Model*
Road Map To Improved Employee/Supervisor Engagement

This road map is provided as a best practice and guidance to help agencies foster a joint expectation for engagement of both employee and supervisor through the five key processes of performance management:

1. Planning
2. Monitoring
3. Developing
4. Rating
5. Ensuring Consequences and Rewarding Success

Specifically, the road map identifies specific actions to be implemented in each of the processes in order to improve, foster, and maintain employee/supervisor engagement.

I. PLANNING Performance

a. **Expectations.** Create performance expectations that are clear, accountable, measurable, verifiable, and focused on the mission, customer and result. This will improve the clarity of vision that drives how supervisors and employees engage during the performance period. Employees and supervisors will engage in establishing expectations.

b. **Metrics.** Metrics will be used at all organizational levels to verify goal achievement and accountability for employees and supervisors.

c. **Alignment.** All performance expectations will be aligned with mission/goals identified in the strategic plan or other governing documents.

d. **Accountability.** Employees and supervisors will be held accountable for results.

e. **Distinctions in Performance.** Discuss and set standards that clearly differentiate among levels of performance.

f. **Flexibility.** When applicable, employee and supervisor will engage each other in tailoring and improving individual performance plans.

[1] Taken from the Report to the National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations *Goals-Engagement-Accountability-Results*: Getting in *GEAR* for Employee Performance Management
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g. **Team Performance.** Establish goals and expectations for individuals when participating on teams outside the direct supervision of their supervisor. When applicable, promote team performance by incorporating a special projects element within performance expectations for evaluating individual performance on a team. Supervisors, project leaders, and employees will engage each other in establishing expectations.

II. MONITORING Performance

a. **Model Effective Communication.** Leaders should demonstrate their own commitment to enhance communication.

b. **Informal Feedback.** Agencies should create the expectation for continuous informal feedback (shared responsibility).

c. **Results.** Feedback should be focused on employee- and supervisor-owned outcomes and results.

d. **Levels of Performance.** Encourage dialogue by addressing established expectations as they relate to the employee's performance. Focus on both results and the manner in which they were achieved.

e. **Diversity.** Train on diversity, generational differences, and personality types for effective methods on giving and receiving feedback.

f. **Periodic Reviews.** Supervisors should complete periodic reviews (quarterly at a minimum) of work samples to give feedback on work products to reduce end-of-year surprises.

g. **Team Feedback.** Supervisors should incorporate team feedback into performance. Team feedback will be shared when employees participate on teams that are not under the direct supervision of their supervisor.

h. **Feedback Tools.** Establish new channels and tools to seek guidance, advice, and/or tools and techniques related to the feedback culture, including 360-degree assessments for complete feedback and development.

i. **Virtual Work Environment.** Employees and supervisors must be kept engaged and continuous feedback must continue in a virtual environment. Promote a feedback culture from executive leadership throughout the agency with technology such as e-mails, social media, online videos, events, etc.

j. **Best Practices.** Agencies must continually work to improve the feedback culture within their performance management systems by seeking guidance from experts and be

willing to execute new, innovative ideas.

III. DEVELOPING Performance

a. **Continuous Learning.** Leaders lead by example and should demonstrate their own commitment to continuous learning and improvement.

b. **Learning Opportunities.** Supervisors should develop the ability of others to perform and contribute to the organization by providing opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods.

c. **Mentoring.** Agencies should create an environment for mentoring across the generations that can lead to stronger measures of performance, higher levels of synergy and improved career development.

d. **Employee Involvement.** Employees should be involved and engaged in the determinations of how their work is performed, as well as involved in the development of their individual development plans.

e. **Coaching.** Emphasize the benefits to managers of *coaching* in order to help employees achieve individual and organizational goals.

f. Provide guidance to supervisors and employees on coaching, including discussions on what is working, what is not working, new ideas for doing the work, and requesting assistance when needed.

g. **Improve Communication Skills.** Train both employees and supervisors on effective verbal and written communication.

h. **Training on Employee Performance Management**.

- Training will include the five processes of employee performance management – planning, monitoring, developing, rating, and providing consequences for performance.
- Training should be conducted regularly and utilized by agencies to fit their organization. Agencies should have the flexibility to develop their own training, or us the tools available at HR University.
- Train individuals on creating performance expectations that are clear, accountable, verifiable, and focused on the mission, the public, and results. This will improve the clarity of vision that drives how supervisors and employees engage in the development of performance expectations for the performance period. Employee training will provide guidance on developing and understanding expectations and how expectations will be achieved.

- Provide managers and employees with training on how to provide, receive, request, and use frequent feedback. In particular, train both supervisors and employees on how to give and receive feedback, and teach active listening. Explain how to give and receive feedback in any work environment (office, field, and telework). Provide tools for both supervisors and employees on three types of feedback: coaching, praising, and inquiry. Additionally, training should be provided on having difficult conversations/addressing poor performance.
- Train both supervisors and employees on how to incorporate team feedback into performance. Train supervisors on how to work with project leaders and employees on establishing expectations and giving feedback in a team environment.

Requirements for leadership and supervisory training:

- Training for supervisors either before they become supervisors or directly after they are promoted into the position.
- Training on the benefits of continuous feedback.
- Training should focus extensively on best practices for discussing performance with their employees and encourage employee feedback.
- Training on developing organizational goal statements that link to agency goals.
- Avenues for addressing poor performance (Title 5 Chapters 43 and 75).

IV. RATING Employee Performance

a. **Results.** Employees and supervisors will be held accountable for results within their control.

b. **Team Performance.** Feedback from the team leader and team members should be gathered at the conclusion of the project to inform the employee and supervisor on how well they performed within the established expectations.

V. ENSURING CONSEQUENCES for Performance