



Performance reviews in an appointment process



Overview

Hiring managers have a wide range of options and tools to assess candidates in an appointment process. These staffing assessments may review past performance or gain insight into the potential of candidates.

Performance reviews may be a tool used in the assessment of candidates in an appointment process, but there are a number of factors that should be considered first.

This presentation highlights those considerations, and provides guidance on how and when performance reviews may be used appropriately in the context of an appointment process.

Merit criteria

Area of Selection

Assessment

Context

As part of strengthening management in the public service, Treasury Board requires annual performance assessments for all employees. They include:

Narrative information: supports the performance rating by describing **what** the person did, and **how**.

Performance rating: a scale that combines assessment of the **competencies** and the achievement of **work objectives**.

“This employee’s strength is thinking things through. The analysis of system-related challenges this year was particularly thorough, and showed an innovative approach to synthesizing qualitative information. The employee’s diligence in confirming the facts resulted in the closure of several outstanding files. The results were presented...”

1	2	3	4	5
Did not meet	Succeeded -	Succeeded	Succeeded +	Surpassed

Deciding to use performance reviews

- Various factors **limit the effectiveness** of performance information as an assessment tool, such as:
 - Practices related to performance reviews vary across managers and organizations
 - Performance information is less relevant when it relates to a different job at a different level
 - The factors evaluated by a performance review may be unrelated to the qualifications for the job being staffed
 - Strong performance does not necessarily mean someone is qualified, or ready for a promotion
- Performance information provide **minimal value unless**:
 - There is consistency in performance reviews across candidates (e.g. from same manager, for similar jobs)
 - The performance factors evaluated are clearly related to the qualifications needed for the job being staffed
 - Relevant performance information is used in combination with information from other sources and perspectives
- When relevant performance information is not available for one or more candidates, **other sources of information** must be used for decision-making

Merit criteria

Performance ratings are not merit criteria

Example

- Experience negotiating agreements with academic and private sector partners
- Ability to communicate complex information
- Thinking things through
- Judgement
- ~~A minimum rating of 4 (succeeded +) on their 2018-19 performance review~~



Some considerations

Merit criteria focus on the requirements of the job to be staffed. They include essential and asset qualifications, organizational needs and operational requirements.

Performance ratings are the result of a person's performance review in another job and are not merit criteria.

Area of selection

Performance reviews are not an option for area of selection

Example

Who can apply: persons employed by Department X across Canada ~~who achieved a minimum rating of 4 (success plus) on their 2018-2019 performance review~~



Some considerations

The Public Service Employment Act sets out **four** criteria that may be used to determine eligibility through an area of selection (geography, organization, occupation and belonging to an employment equity designated group), and does not provide the discretion to add additional criteria.

Assessment

The narrative information may support the assessment of a qualification

Example

A manager asks candidates to provide a copy of their latest performance review with their application during the appointment process. The manager intends to use the narrative information under “Competencies – Working effectively with others” to assess the qualification “Teamwork” that was indicated on the job ad.

Some considerations

Any source of information may be used for assessment when it is **relevant to a qualification**

The assessment is stronger when performance information is combined with information from other sources and perspectives **to completely assess a qualification** (for example interview, references, work samples).

When relevant performance information is not available, or insufficient for one or more candidates, **other sources of information** must be used to decide if the person meets or does not meet a qualification.

Assessment

Performance reviews may be used as an assessment tool

Example

The departmental CS development program integrates performance management into the program requirements. Participants have standardized work objectives and competency expectations that are aligned with the qualifications required for each level of the developmental program. Program managers participate in calibration discussions to ensure consistency in the assessment of participants' performance reviews. Only participants who are meeting expectations (rating of succeeded (3) or above) are considered for promotion.

Some considerations

A direct link must be established between the skills assessed in the performance review and the qualifications for the position.

This approach relies on consistent and coherent information in the performance reviews across all candidates in the process.

Each qualification must be assessed and met individually.

Overview of considerations

- Each qualification must be **assessed and met individually** for an appointment to be based on merit.
- When relevant performance information is not available for one or more candidates, **other sources of information** must be used to decide if the person meets or does not meet a qualification.
- Performance reviews provide **limited value unless**:
 - there is **consistency in practices for reviewing performance** for all candidates in the process;
 - candidates are in similar jobs, and there is **a link between the skills assessed in the performance review and the qualifications for the job**; and
 - the relevant information is confirmed by **information from other sources and perspectives** (ex: interviews, references, work samples).
- Strong performance does not necessarily mean someone is qualified, or ready for a promotion.

Support

- Your HR Advisor is always the first stop
 - HR advisors provide front line support for hiring managers
- Public Service Commission
 - [Staffing Support Advisors](#) provide policy advice and guidance related to appointments
 - [Personnel Psychology Centre](#) provides expert advice and standardized tools
 - [PSC regional offices](#) provide recruitment and assessment services and products
- Office of the Chief HR Officer
 - For any questions related to the [Performance and talent management programs](#)