

**Competency-Based Performance  
Appraisals for School Nutrition  
Managers and Assistants/Technicians**



National Food Service Management Institute  
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# **National Food Service Management Institute The University of Mississippi**

## **Building the Future Through Child Nutrition**

The National Food Service Management Institute was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at The University of Mississippi in Oxford. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of NFSMI is to improve the operation of Child Nutrition Programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination. The Administrative Offices and Divisions of Information Services and Education and Training are located in Oxford. The Division of Applied Research is located at The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

### **MISSION**

The mission of the NFSMI is to provide information and services that promote the continuous improvement of Child Nutrition Programs.

### **VISION**

The vision of the NFSMI is to be the leader in providing education, research, and resources to promote excellence in Child Nutrition Programs.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	9
INTRODUCTION .....	11
Research Objectives	
METHOD .....	14
Research Design	
Phase I: Development of Performance Appraisal Forms and Guide	
Telephone Interviews	
Expert Panel Evaluation	
Phase II: Directed Review of Performance Appraisals and Guide	
Informed Consent	
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION .....	21
Characteristics of Expert Panel and Review Panel Participants	
Phase I: Development of Performance Appraisal Forms and Guide	
Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers	
Expert Panel A: Responses to Telephone Interview	
Expert Panel A: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers	
Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians	
Expert Panel B: Responses to Telephone Interview	
Expert Panel B: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants	
Performance Appraisal Guide	
Expert Panels A and B: Responses to Telephone Interview	
Expert Panels A and B: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Guide	

Phase II: Directed Review of Performance Appraisal Forms and Guide	
Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers	
Performance Appraisal for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians	
Directed Review of Performance Appraisal Guide	
<i>Competency-Based Performance Appraisals for School Nutrition Managers and Assistants/Technicians</i> Web-Based Resource	
Section One: Performance Appraisal Process	
Sections Two and Three: Performance Appraisal Form	
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	43
Research Study Conclusions	
Applications	
Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research	
REFERENCES .....	46
APPENDIX: Competency-Based Performance Appraisals for School Nutrition Managers and Assistants/Technicians .....	47

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## LIST OF TABLES

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Table 1:	List of Questions for Structured Telephone Interviews .....	16
Table 2:	Personal and Program Characteristics of Expert and Review Panels (N=13) .....	22
Table 3:	Results of Expert Panel A: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers .....	27
Table 4:	Results of Expert Panel B: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians .....	30
Table 5:	Expert Panels A and B: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Guide .....	32
Table 6:	Summary of Review Panel Evaluation of Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers .....	34
Table 7:	Summary of Review Panel Evaluation of Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians .....	36
Table 8:	Summary of Review Panel Evaluation of Performance Appraisal Guide .....	38
Table 9:	Description of Rating Scale for Performance Appraisal Forms for School Nutrition Managers and Assistants/Technicians.....	40

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## LIST OF FIGURES

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Figure 1: Excerpt from Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers .....	41
Figure 2: Excerpt from Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians .....	42

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## COMPETENCY-BASED PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS AND ASSISTANTS/TECHNICANS

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Food Service Management Institute, Applied Research Division (NFSMI, ARD) conducted structured telephone interviews with expert panels of school nutrition (SN) professionals to explore components needed in performance appraisal forms and guide for evaluating managers and assistants/technicians. The expert panel members indicated that an effective performance appraisal form should have the following qualities: criteria clearly defining expected performance; a rating scale appropriately reflecting criteria; clear instructions; a user-friendly format; space for comments; and a plan for improvement. For the guide to be useful and comprehensible to SN practitioners at all levels of responsibility, the expert panels specified that it should include general and specific guidance customized to SN professionals written in clear and specific language familiar to potential users.

Drafts were developed using expert panel results, a review of pertinent research literature, and samples of existing forms submitted by SN professionals. The appraisal forms were developed with specific criteria denoting performance expectations for each functional area. The performance criteria for each functional area were based on resources developed by NFSMI, ARD, namely the *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for Effective School Nutrition Managers* and the *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*. Numerical rating was anchored on a five-point scale (1 = *below standard*, 2 = *needs improvement*, 3 = *meets standard*, 4 = *area of strength*, and 5 = *exceeds standard*). The accompanying guide discussed the importance of a standardized and periodic performance

appraisal, the appraisal process, challenges to effective performance evaluation, and techniques for improving results of a performance appraisal.

The expert panels evaluated the drafts using a directed review instrument in the spring of 2008. After revisions were made, the forms and guide were sent to a second review panel of SN professionals and state agency personnel for further evaluation. The researchers analyzed comments and recommendations received from the review panel and completed final revisions to the performance appraisal forms and guide.

Evaluating performance is essential for employee growth and program improvement. Using the appropriate performance appraisal process and forms will facilitate effective assessment that contributes to achieving organizational goals. These appraisal forms were designed to be used as independent documents, but are also useful as supplements to school district-mandated evaluations. The forms and resource are available in a downloadable format on the NFSMI Web site.

## INTRODUCTION

Performance appraisal is a distinct and formal management function that assesses an employee's performance during a specified period of time (Byers, Shanklin, & Hoover, 1994; Spears & Gregoire, 2007). It is a continuous process (Mondy, Noe, & Premeaux, 2002; Painter, 2003) involving formal written evaluation of work performance, verbal interview, and informal, unscheduled feedback throughout the appraisal period (Byers, et al., 1994; Painter, 2003).

The primary goals of conducting an appraisal are to provide feedback to the school nutrition (SN) employee, measure employee performance, track growth, identify areas for further improvement, and provide suggestions for meeting operational goals and standards (Byers, et al., 1994; Spears & Gregoire, 2007). Results of performance appraisals also provide a basis for personnel decisions such as job assignments, salary recommendations, promotions, disciplinary actions, and organizational rewards (Chandra, 2006). Employee performance appraisals can assist in identifying training needs and facilitate communication between employees and supervisors (Byers, et al., 1994; Hansen, 2005).

Criteria used for evaluation should be measurable, clearly stated, and reflective of work-related behavior specific to the responsibilities of the employee (Byers, et al., 1994; Mondy, et al., 2002; Spears & Gregoire, 2007). Furthermore, competent work performance depends on employees having the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Managers* (Cater & Carr, 2006) and the *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians* (Nettles & Carr, 2006) developed by the National Food Service Management Institute, Applied Research Division (NFSMI, ARD) provide a comprehensive overview that defines the job responsibilities of managers and assistants/technicians within the local SN operation. These categories serve as an

umbrella for all job responsibilities that occur on a daily, weekly, seasonal, or yearly basis.

Twelve functional areas define the SN manager's responsibilities: "Nutrition and Menu Planning"; "Program Accountability"; "Sanitation, Safety, and Security"; "Equipment Use and Care"; "Procurement"; "Food Production"; "Food Acceptability"; "Service"; "Financial Management and Record Keeping"; "Marketing"; "Personnel Management"; and "Professional Development" (Cater & Carr, 2006). Six functional areas describe the job of the SN assistant/technician: "Food Production"; "Sanitation, Safety, and Security"; "Customer Service"; "Program Regulations and Accountability"; "Equipment Use and Care"; and "Professional Excellence" (Nettles & Carr, 2006).

Generally, foodservice directors must comply with school district policies for performance appraisal schedules. In many SN programs, the performance appraisal form is mandated by the school district administration. In others, the SN program utilizes an appraisal form focused specifically on the tasks and responsibilities of SN staff. The SN-specific performance criteria, used in conjunction with more general employee evaluation forms, contribute to a more focused and objective review of performance. In the absence of a structured system of appraisal, work performance will be judged informally and arbitrarily (McNamara, 1997). Thus, a structured appraisal system facilitates fair, defensible, and accurate evaluation (McNamara, 1997; Neuhauser, 2005).

### **Research Objectives**

The purpose of the research was to develop competency-based performance appraisal forms and an accompanying guide for SN managers and assistants/technicians. The specific objectives of this project included the following:



- Identify performance standards for SN managers and assistants/technicians based on the NFSMI *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Managers* (Cater & Carr, 2006) and the *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians* (Nettles & Carr, 2006);
- Develop performance appraisal forms utilizing the identified competencies for use in evaluating the job performance of SN managers and assistants/technician; and
- Develop a performance appraisal resource for SN professionals to guide the appraisal process.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

A two-phase process was used to accomplish the goal of developing competency-based performance appraisal forms for school nutrition (SN) managers and assistants/technicians. A summary of responses from Phase I structured telephone interviews with a panel of SN professionals and a literature review provided information for the development of draft performance appraisal forms and an accompanying guide. After expert panel review, Phase II involved a second panel of SN professionals and state agency personnel in a directed review of the forms and guide. Final revisions were made prior to making it available for use by SN directors and managers nationwide.

#### **Phase I: Development of Performance Appraisal Forms and Guide**

SN directors and managers were invited to serve on expert panels to assist in the development of the competency-based performance appraisal forms and accompanying guide. Five members composed Expert Panel A, which addressed the SN manager's performance appraisal, while another five participants composed Expert Panel B, which focused on the appraisal form for SN assistants/technicians. Both expert panels participated in the development of the guide. Panel members were selected from a roster of SN professionals with the education, expertise, skills, and experience needed to offer constructive and useful advice and recommendations.

Potential expert panel members received e-mail invitations describing the project, the purpose of the expert panel, estimated time required for participation in the project, and the researchers' contact information for clarifications, questions, or concerns. The invitation emphasized that participation was voluntary and participants could choose to discontinue

involvement in the project at any time without penalty or prejudice. The expert panel members were asked to participate in a structured telephone interview exploring the components needed in a performance appraisal and guide, as well as a review of the drafted documents. All expressed the desire to contribute in a meaningful manner to their profession.

### ***Telephone Interviews***

A structured telephone interview lasting approximately 45 minutes was conducted with each member of the two expert panels. Thirteen specific questions were asked about the components needed for an effective performance appraisal, appropriate format elements, and preferred rating scale (Table 1). In addition, the expert panel members were asked to provide input on the desired content for a resource that will help guide SN professionals in conducting effective performance appraisals. At the conclusion of the interview, each participant was allowed to initiate topics or questions he/she felt had not been addressed adequately. Interview notes were transcribed and summarized. Trends and recommendations were noted and incorporated into the development of draft performance appraisal forms and the accompanying guide.

In addition to interview results, the *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Managers* (Cater & Carr, 2006) and the *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians* (Nettles & Carr, 2006) developed by the National Food Service Management Institute, Applied Research Division (NFSMI, ARD), were used as the primary foundation for developing competency-based performance appraisal tools specific to the jobs of the SN manager and assistant/technician. Supplementary information from literature review and examination of sample appraisal forms shared by expert panel members and

solicited from practitioners on Mealtalk (an electronic mailing list hosted by the United States Department of Agriculture [USDA]), also aided the development of the appraisals.

Table 1

*List of Questions for Structured Telephone Interviews*

Questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you use a school nutrition program-specific performance appraisal form or a district-mandated performance appraisal form?</li> <li>2. What about written guidance? What information is provided to guide you through the appraisal process?</li> <li>3. Would you be willing to share the form and any guidance resources you use?</li> <li>4. Are the employees in your district unionized? How does this affect the performance appraisal process?</li> <li>5. What makes an effective performance appraisal?</li> <li>6. What do you think school nutrition directors want in a performance appraisal form and resource guide? What do you want a performance appraisal to do?</li> <li>7. What do you want the resource guide to do? What topics should it include?</li> <li>8. What parts/components do you think are necessary to include in an effective performance appraisal form? What parts are essential to guide the process?</li> <li>9. Do you think the length of the performance appraisal form and resource is important?</li> <li>10. How about issues such as the reading level, language, format, font, readability? What tangible aspects do you think are important?</li> <li>11. How do you see school nutrition directors using performance appraisal forms?</li> <li>12. Do you think it is important to include a plan for improvement in the performance appraisal?</li> <li>13. What type of rating scale do you consider the most useful and effective? Examples: numeric (1-5), word-based (good, excellent, etc.), narrative (descriptions of performance?)</li> <li>14. What have I forgotten that you think I need to include in either the performance appraisal form or the guide?</li> </ol>

Two versions each of the performance appraisal evaluation form were drafted for SN managers and assistants/technicians. Detailed instructions and an overview of the appraisal process was provided for all versions. All versions used identical five-point rating scales (1 = *below standard*, 2 = *area of growth*, 3 = *meets standard*, 4 = *area of strength*, and 5 = *exceeds standard*) and corresponding performance criteria. A plan for improvement was included in all versions. The plan included space for the evaluator and staff member to identify specific competencies to improve, key actions, measurement, resources needed, and time frame for achieving improvement targets for each functional area.

Version 1 (long form) included a separate table for each functional area. Each table was divided into four columns: *below standard* (rating 1), *standard* (ratings 2-4), *exceeds standard* (rating 5), and *not applicable* (N/A). Competencies within the functional areas were used as the criteria for standard performance for managers. Although the competencies of assistants/technicians were identified, these were not used as the criteria for performance standards. Instead, the performance standards were more detailed and provided specific examples connected to each performance rating. For both cases, examples of non-compliance to standards denote a *below standard* rating, while examples of commendable performance denote an *exceeds standard* rating. These guiding statements were imbedded within the table under the corresponding column. Space for comments was provided at the bottom of each functional area. Version 2 (short form) was composed of one table, with seven columns. The first column indicated the functional area, followed by the numerical ratings 1 through 5, and N/A. A space for comments was provided under the numerical ratings. Version 2 appeared to be a much shorter form because the performance criteria were provided on a separate document that the evaluator can refer to.

At the end of both versions, the evaluator is asked to provide a general overall rating of *below standard*, *meets standard*, or *exceeds standard*. The staff member and evaluator are then provided the space to sign and date the document. Both versions emphasize that the employee signature does not signify his or her agreement or disagreement, but that the evaluation was discussed with the employee.

### ***Expert Panel Evaluation***

Copies of the guide and two versions of the draft performance appraisals were sent via e-mail to each expert panel member along with a cover letter, directed review instrument, and instructions for completing the evaluation. The cover letter provided a review of the following: the purpose and importance of the project; the voluntary nature of participation; an assurance of confidentiality; the time commitment needed to complete the review and evaluation; instructions for completion and return of the directed review instrument; and researcher contact information to resolve any questions or concerns.

Expert panel members were asked to evaluate the forms for ease of use, appropriateness of language used, comprehensiveness of criteria, suitability of rating scale, length, and formatting. The draft guide was evaluated for conciseness, clarity, verbiage, organization, and ease of use and understanding. In both cases, panel members were encouraged to provide additional comments that were not specifically addressed by the evaluation questions. The draft performance appraisal forms and guide were revised using feedback from the expert panel members.

## **Phase II: Directed Review of Performance Appraisals and Guide**

State agency child nutrition directors were asked to recommend SN professionals and state agency personnel whom they believed would be willing to participate as reviewers for the project. Each director was asked to provide contact information for at least three SN professionals who met one of the following criteria:

- SN directors who demonstrated strong management skills, administered exemplary programs, were knowledgeable of the tasks/duties of SN managers and assistants, and regularly conducted performance appraisals at their district; or
- State agency personnel who had strong human resource management backgrounds, and experience developing and/or administering performance appraisals, preferably with experience in a local school district as a school nutrition director or manager.

From the pool of names provided, a review panel of nine SN directors and four state agency personnel were invited to evaluate the revised documents. The e-mail invitation outlined the study objectives, assurance of confidentiality, and estimated length of time for participation in the project. The invitation emphasized that participation was voluntary and could be discontinued at any time without penalty or prejudice.

Following the e-mail, each participant was mailed a packet containing draft performance appraisal forms, a draft of the guide, directed review instruments, and a self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope. The cover letter provided an overview of the purpose and importance of the project, the voluntary nature of participation, assurance of confidentiality, instructions for completion and submission of the directed review instrument, and researcher contact information to resolve any questions or concerns. The review panel members were asked to use the directed review instruments to conduct the assessment of the performance appraisal forms and guide. No

identifying codes were associated with the directed review instrument to preserve the anonymous nature of the activity. Return of the completed evaluations signified consent to participate in the study.

Responses from the review panel members were tabulated and comments were analyzed individually. All comments, trends, and recommendations were utilized to finalize the performance appraisal forms and accompanying guide.

### **Informed Consent**

The Human Subjects Protection Review Committee of The University of Southern Mississippi approved the protocol for the project. Participation in the project was voluntary and agreement to participate served as consent. The anonymity of participants was protected and at no time during the project were names connected to information gathered. There were no risks associated with the project. No sensitive questions were asked in the telephone interviews or on the questionnaires in either Phase I or Phase II. Only the researchers had access to the evaluation questionnaires, which will be maintained in the NFSMI, ARD office for three years after publication of manuscript and will then be shredded and discarded.



## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Characteristics of Expert Panel and Review Panel Participants**

Expert and review panel members represented the Western, Midwest, Southeast, and Southwest United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regions. Their job titles included SN director, state agency staff member, and other (manager, assistant superintendent) (Table 2). Student enrollment in the districts in which they practiced ranged from less than 2,799 to 65,000 or greater students. The majority (62.5%) of school districts represented have programs with less than 20,000 students.

All members had considerable experience in SN programs with service ranging from six to greater than 20 years. Most have been employed in SN programs for more than ten years (58.4%) and have held their current position at least six years (77%). The majority (84.4%) completed baccalaureate degrees, six (46.2%) of whom have completed at least a Master's degree. Credentials and certifications included School Nutrition Specialist (SNS) credentialed (61.5%), State Department of Education certified (46.2%), School Nutrition Association (SNA) certified (38.5%), and Registered Dietitian (15.4%).

### **Phase I: Development of Performance Appraisal Forms and Guide**

#### ***Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers***

##### **Expert Panel A: Responses to Telephone Interview**

Each of the five members of Expert Panel A was interviewed in a telephone conference. All participants responded that they were required to use district-mandated performance appraisal forms for employee evaluations; three, however, were allowed to customize the district form to more accurately reflect SN duties and considerations. Two respondents received training or assistance from district resources on conducting performance appraisals. Of the five districts,

two were unionized but participants stated that the unions had minimal impact on SN employee performance appraisals.

Table 2

*Personal and Program Characteristics of Expert and Review Panels (N=13)*

<b>Demographic Question</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
What best describes your job title? (n=13)		
SN Director	7	53.8
State Agency Staff	4	30.8
Other	2	15.4
How many years have you worked in SN programs? (n=12)		
5 years or less	3	25.0
6 to 10 years	2	16.7
11 to 15 years	2	16.7
16 to 20 years	2	16.7
Greater than 20 years	3	25.0
How long have you been in your current position? (n=13)		
1 to 5 years	3	23.1
6 to 10 years	4	30.8
11 to 15 years	1	7.7
16 to 20 years	2	15.4
Greater than 20 years	3	23.1

*(Table 2 continues)*

*(Table 2 continued)**Personal and Program Characteristics of Expert and Review Panels (N=13)*

<b>Demographic Question</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
What is your certification/credentialed status? (n=13)		
SNS credentialed	8	61.5
State Department of Education certified	6	46.2
SNA certified	5	38.5
Registered Dietitian	2	15.4
Licensed Dietitian/Nutritionist	1	7.7
Other	1	7.7
What is your highest level of education? (n=13)		
High school diploma or GED	1	7.7
Associate degree	1	7.7
Baccalaureate degree	5	38.5
Master's degree	4	30.5
Graduate degree beyond master's	1	7.7
Doctoral degree	1	7.7
In which USDA region do you work? (n=12)		
Southwest	7	58.3
Southeast	3	25.0
Midwest	1	8.3
Western	1	8.3

*(Table 2 continues)*

*(Table 2 continued)**Personal and Program Characteristics of Expert and Review Panels (N=13)*

<b>Demographic Question</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
What is the approximate student enrollment of your school district? ( <i>n</i> =8)		
2,799 or less	1	12.5
2,800 to 9,999	3	37.5
10,000 to 19,999	1	12.5
20,000 to 44,999	1	12.5
45,000 to 64,999	1	12.5
65,000 or greater	1	12.5

Panel members agreed that effective performance appraisals should have criteria that clearly define expected performance and a rating scale that appropriately reflects the criteria. Two participants preferred a numeric rating scale (e.g., Likert-type scale from 1 to 5) and three preferred a word-based scale (e.g., semantic differential-type scale from unsatisfactory to excellent, below standard to above standard, or poor to excellent). Panel members emphasized the importance of clarity and use of appropriate language that is readily comprehensible to the evaluator and the employee, particularly for the description of criteria and provision of specific instructions for completing the appraisal. A plan for improvement was desired by all panel members, with three of the five preferring the plan as a separate document to accompany the appraisal form.

An uncomplicated format with categories and sections highlighted in bold print and easily readable font was important to the panel members. Also deemed significant was the

addition of space for comments to elaborate on individual ratings, if needed. Most panel members stated that brevity was an important characteristic of a useful performance appraisal form, since the evaluator often must evaluate many employees; thus, ease of use and length were important factors in the performance appraisal process.

Panel members stated that the form should facilitate an appraisal that is fair and objective, since the evaluation should be a tool to help employees improve. All agree that it is a means of providing feedback to the employee to reinforce expectations, and also to empower the employee when planning improvement. Because the results of appraisals could be used for promotion, reward, and other employment decisions, it also is important for litigation documentation.

When additional comments were elicited, the possibility of the form being computerized and Web-based was mentioned, as was the need for directors to field test the form prior to adopting it to their whole district's SN program. Participants provided copies of the forms and any written guidance used in their respective districts. All responses, examples, and comments were tabulated by the researchers and reviewed for trends. Recommendations were implemented in the development of the draft documents.

### **Expert Panel A: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School**

#### **Nutrition Managers**

Three of the five Expert Panel A members reviewed and returned their evaluation of the draft performance appraisal for SN managers (Table 3). The respondents agreed that the form provided an accurate description of the SN manager's responsibilities, and that the instructions for the appraisal were clear and complete. Panel members indicated preference for Version 1 because it was easier to relate the numerical rating to the corresponding performance criteria. It

was suggested that the rating *area of growth* be changed to *needs improvement*. For each performance category listed, there was an element of disagreement with the statements defining the levels of employee performance. Analysis of written comments showed that this disagreement arose because not all managers have the level of control that the competency indicated. In addition, some expert panel members wished to add performance criteria that were not included in the competencies. One panel member suggested adding a rating category to recognize outstanding performance in areas not included in the competencies. In general, the respondents felt the document was a strong beginning effort, but needed further refinement.

Table 3

*Results of Expert Panel A: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers*

Evaluation Question	Frequency			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The performance appraisal form provides an accurate description of a school nutrition manager's responsibilities.			2	1
The instructions for using the appraisal form are clear and complete.			2	1
The statements under each performance category ( <i>below standard</i> , <i>standard</i> , and <i>exceeds standard</i> ) clearly define the levels of employee performance.				
Nutrition and Menu Planning		2	1	
Program Accountability		2	1	
Sanitation, Safety, and Security		1	2	
Equipment Use and Care		1	2	
Procurement		2	1	
Food Production		1	2	
Food Acceptability		1	2	
Service		1	2	
Financial Management and Recordkeeping		1	2	
Marketing		1	2	
Professional Development		1	2	

(Table 3 continues)

(Table 3 continued)

*Results of Expert Panel A: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers*

Evaluation Question	Frequency			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The rating scale is appropriate (1 = <i>below standard</i> , 2 = <i>area of growth</i> , 3 = <i>meets standard</i> , 4 = <i>area of strength</i> , and 5 = <i>exceeds standard</i> ).		1		1
The time required to complete the appraisal form is appropriate.			3	
The plan for improvement is a necessary component of the appraisal.		1	2	
The competency-based appraisal form is useful to SN personnel.			3	
The performance appraisal form can be used by directors with all levels of practice (beginner to experienced).			3	

*Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians***Expert Panel B: Responses to Telephone Interview**

Following the interview protocol used for Expert Panel A, five members of Expert Panel B were also asked thirteen specific questions related to performance appraisals for SN assistants/technicians (Table 1). Similarly, at the conclusion of the interview, participants were allowed to provide input in addition to their answers during the structured interview. Two panel members used SN program-specific performance appraisal forms while two were required to use district-mandated appraisals. Only one panel member received any information to guide the appraisal process. Of the five districts represented, three were not unionized. The other two



districts were unionized, but this did not affect the performance appraisal process, particularly for one district where SN technicians were not even represented in the union.

Panel members used performance appraisals for advancements and raises, employee placement, salary decisions, training, documentation, and employee motivation. Thus, members wanted a performance appraisal form that allowed for an honest, standardized, fair, and objective evaluation where performance, not the personality of the employee, was judged. Members stressed that it is important for the appraisal to focus specifically on the assistant's/technician's responsibilities for the SN operation so that good performance could be maintained and poor performance improved. All five panel members stated that the plan for improvement was important and should be included in the appraisal as a goal setting tool.

The appraisal should have criteria that clearly define the differing job responsibilities of an SN assistant/technician, and an appropriate scale to measure performance. Three panel members preferred a numeric rating scale and one preferred a narrative format. It was also suggested that the appraisal allow for a means to provide praise for strong performance beyond the basic standards, as well as a section for comments to justify evaluations given. Panel members stated that the format should be simple, with bulleted items rather than a narrative format. The reading level should be geared to SN assistants/technicians. Computerization was mentioned by one participant as an alternative that could be explored.

### **Expert Panel B: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School**

#### **Nutrition Assistants**

Four of the five Expert Panel B members reviewed and returned their evaluations of the draft performance appraisal for SN assistants/technicians (Table 4). All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the draft performance appraisal form for SN assistants/technicians was a

useful tool for evaluating staff. One panel member expressed uncertainty about the clarity of the rating scale, and suggested that a four-point scale would suffice. The panel indicated that although Version 2 was shorter, it was more difficult to use because the list of criteria for evaluation was on a separate document. Also, the panel indicated that the plan for improvement was too complicated and that a streamlined form will be more useful. Very minimal formatting and verbiage revisions were suggested for the document.

Table 4

*Results of Expert Panel B: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*

Evaluation Question	Frequency			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The performance appraisal form provides an accurate description of a school nutrition assistant/technician's responsibilities.			1	3
The instructions for using the appraisal form are clear and complete.			1	3
The statements under each performance category ( <i>below standard</i> , <i>standard</i> , and <i>exceeds standard</i> ) clearly define the levels of employee performance.			1	3
Food Production			1	3
Sanitation, Safety, and Security			1	3
Customer Service			1	3
Program Regulations and Accountability			1	3
Equipment Use and Care			1	3
Professional Excellence			2	2

(Table 4 continues)

*(Table 4 continued)**Results of Expert Panel B: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*

Evaluation Question	Frequency			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The rating scale is appropriate (1 = <i>below standard</i> , 2 = <i>area of growth</i> , 3 = <i>meets standard</i> , 4 = <i>area of strength</i> , and 5 = <i>exceeds standard</i> ).		1		3
The time required to complete the appraisal form is appropriate.			2	2
The plan for improvement is a necessary component of the appraisal.			2	2
The competency-based appraisal form is useful to SN personnel.			1	3
The performance appraisal form can be used by managers with all levels of practice (beginner to experienced).			2	2

***Performance Appraisal Guide*****Expert Panels A and B: Responses to Telephone Interview**

Expert panel members stated that the guide should include basic information on the process to follow when performing a performance appraisal. An explanation of the job expectations, criteria for quality of performance, and evaluation scale is needed to facilitate an effective appraisal. Expert panel members suggested that the following topics be included in the guide: frequency of monitoring; examples of what to look for and avoid in performing the appraisal; examples of how evaluators can assist the employee in meeting job expectations;

legal aspects of appraisals; and examples of words and phrases to use or avoid. Preferably, examples given should be specific to SN programs. Members agreed that the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the guide superseded any length considerations.

### **Expert Panels A and B: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Guide**

Six of the ten members of Expert Panels A and B reviewed and returned their evaluation of the draft performance appraisal guide (Table 5). All expert panel members agreed or strongly agreed that the guide presented topics useful to SN personnel, and was an effective supplement to the performance appraisal forms. In particular, several members commented that the guide presented useful information, especially for new SN managers and directors.

Table 5

#### *Expert Panels A and B: Evaluation of Draft Performance Appraisal Guide*

<b>Evaluation Question</b>	<b>Frequency</b>			
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
The resource presents an inclusive overview of the performance appraisal process.			1	5
The resource offers specific guidance for evaluating job performance.			2	4
The resource topics are organized in a logical sequence.			1	5
The information is presented concisely, but in enough detail to clarify the topic/issue.			1	5
The resource facilitates the evaluation of employee performance behavior.			2	4
The resource is useful to school nutrition directors and managers.			1	5

It was suggested that the guide stress the constructive, and not merely punitive, nature of the performance appraisal. It would be beneficial to remind evaluators to applaud and recognize good performance, as well as to identify areas for improvement. Additionally, panel members wanted to emphasize that monitoring improvement throughout the year is more effective than waiting only for the annual appraisal. Minimal verbiage and editorial suggestions were given.

### **Phase II: Directed Review of Performance Appraisal Forms and Guide**

Based on expert panel feedback, only Version 1 of the performance appraisal forms for managers and assistants/technicians were retained for Phase II. After revision of the guide and draft forms, including the plan for improvement, e-mail invitations were sent to nine SN directors and four state agency personnel to solicit their participation in the final stage of review. Evaluation questionnaires were received from eight of the 13 originally invited.

#### ***Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers***

Although additional comments were minimal, specific concerns about the wording of manager responsibilities as stated in the functional areas of “Nutrition and Menu Planning,” “Service,” and “Marketing” were noted. Reviewers underscored that SN programs across the nation are different, and not every manager is assigned all the responsibilities listed in the competencies. This point was addressed by the researchers in greater detail in the accompanying guide. One respondent expressed the opinion that the highest rating category could be deleted as it was redundant; the majority, however, expressed that the scale and descriptors were appropriate. Several reviewers also suggested that behaviors such as promptness, attendance, and attitude be addressed by the appraisal form. These suggestions were reflected in the final revision of the form. Table 6 shows that the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the form was appropriate for use in the SN setting.

Table 6

*Summary of Review Panel Evaluation of Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers*

Evaluation Question	Frequency			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The performance appraisal form provides an accurate description of a school nutrition manager's responsibilities.		1	4	3
The instructions for using the appraisal form are clear and complete.			3	5
The statements under each performance category ( <i>below standard</i> , <i>standard</i> , and <i>exceeds standard</i> ) clearly define the levels of employee performance.				
Nutrition and Menu Planning		1	3	2
Program Accountability			4	2
Sanitation, Safety, and Security			5	2
Equipment Use and Care			5	1
Procurement			5	1
Food Production			4	2
Food Acceptability			4	2
Service		1	5	2
Financial Management and Recordkeeping			5	2
Marketing		1	4	2
Personnel Management			4	2
Professional Development			4	2

(Table 6 continues)

(Table 6 continued)

*Summary of Review Panel Evaluation of Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers*

Evaluation Question	Frequency			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The rating scale is appropriate (1 = <i>below standard</i> , 2 = <i>needs improvement</i> , 3 = <i>meets standard</i> , 4 = <i>area of strength</i> , and 5 = <i>exceeds standard</i> ).	1		2	3
The time required to complete the appraisal form is appropriate.		1	3	3
The Performance Improvement Plan is a necessary component of the appraisal.			3	2
The competency-based appraisal form is useful to SN personnel.			3	3
The performance appraisal form can be used by directors with all levels of practice (beginner to experienced).			6	2

*Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*

Overall, the review panel considered the performance appraisal form for SN assistants/technicians a useful and effective tool that clearly defines realistic performance requirements for tasks typically performed by SN assistants/technicians (Table 7). As suggested for the performance appraisal for managers, the review panel felt that work behaviors such as promptness and reliable attendance should be added to the form. Several comments addressed specific wording preferences to improve clarity of the performance criteria and the improvement plan.

Table 7

*Summary of Review Panel Evaluation of Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*

Evaluation Question	Frequency			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The performance appraisal form provides an accurate description of a school nutrition assistant/technician's responsibilities.		1	1	5
The instructions for using the appraisal form are clear and complete.			3	4
The statements under each performance category ( <i>below standard</i> , <i>standard</i> , and <i>exceeds standard</i> ) clearly define the levels of employee performance.			2	5
Food Production		1	2	4
Sanitation, Safety, and Security		1	2	4
Customer Service		1	3	3
Program Regulations and Accountability		1	2	4
Equipment Use and Care			3	4
Professional Excellence		1	2	4
The rating scale is appropriate (1 = <i>below standard</i> , 2 = <i>needs improvement</i> , 3 = <i>meets standard</i> , 4 = <i>area of strength</i> , and 5 = <i>exceeds standard</i> ).	1		2	5
The time required to complete the appraisal form is appropriate.		1	3	5
The Performance Improvement Plan is a necessary component of the appraisal.			3	4

(Table 7 continues)



(Table 7 continued)

*Summary of Review Panel Evaluation of Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*

Evaluation Question	Frequency			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The competency-based appraisal form is useful to SN personnel.			3	5
The performance appraisal form can be used by managers with all levels of practice (beginner to experienced).		1	5	2

***Directed Review of Performance Appraisal Guide***

The members of the review panel agreed or strongly agreed with all elements of the directed review of the performance appraisal guide (Table 8). One reviewer suggested that the guide underline the need for following district employee policies as these appraisal forms are implemented in their districts. Minimal editorial changes were made prior to finalizing the guide.

***Competency-Based Performance Appraisals for School Nutrition Managers and Assistants/Technicians Web-based Resource***

The Web-based resource is divided into three sections: “Performance Appraisal Process,” “Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers,” and “Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians.” The introduction to the resource provides an overview of the methodology used to develop the guide and the appraisal forms. The resource can be viewed in its entirety in a downloadable format on the NFSMI Web site. The appraisal forms are also available for download as separate files on the Web site.

Table 8

*Summary of Review Panel Evaluation of Performance Appraisal Guide*

<b>Evaluation Question</b>	<b>Frequency</b>			
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
The resource presents an inclusive overview of the performance appraisal process.			4	4
The resource offers specific guidance for evaluating job performance.			3	5
The resource topics are organized in a logical sequence.			4	4
The information is presented concisely but in enough detail to clarify the topic/issue.			4	4
The resource facilitates the evaluation of employee performance.			4	4
The resource is useful to school nutrition directors and managers.			5	3

*Section One: Performance Appraisal Process*

Section one is a comprehensive, reader-friendly guide to conducting the performance appraisal in the SN setting. The guide provides an overview of the goals and objectives of the performance appraisal, as well as suggestions for the frequency of conducting appraisals. A brief description of the performance appraisal forms leads into the discussion of the performance appraisal process. Pointers for conducting the performance appraisal are provided, as well as a summary of common challenges faced by evaluators and techniques for addressing these challenges. A list of additional resources is available for evaluators who would like to learn more about the appraisal process and materials used to develop the resource.

### ***Sections Two and Three: Performance Appraisal Forms***

The appraisal forms were designed to address the fundamental roles of SN managers and assistants/technicians, but can be modified to meet the specific appraisal needs of the SN program. These forms were designed to be used as independent documents which may also be used as supplements to school district-mandated evaluations. The SN-specific standards, used in conjunction with more general staff member evaluation forms, contribute to a more focused and objective performance appraisal.

Each performance appraisal was composed of an instruction page, rating pages, and the “Performance Improvement Plan”. An instruction section included objectives for the performance appraisal and a description of the rating scale. Both performance appraisal forms use a five-point scale ranging from 1 (*below standard*) to 5 (*exceeds standard*) for each functional area (Table 9). When the performance criterion is not a responsibility of the staff member being evaluated, a mark of N/A (*not applicable*) is given. Instructions for computing the overall rating were provided, as well as spaces for evaluator and employee signatures. The “Performance Improvement Plan” was designed as a supplementary document to the performance appraisal form. The form includes space for the evaluator and staff member to identify key actions, measurement, resources needed, and time frame for achieving improvement targets.

The *Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers* addresses twelve functional areas: “Nutrition and Menu Planning”; “Program Accountability”; “Sanitation, Safety, and Security”; “Equipment Use and Care”; “Procurement”; “Food Production”; “Food Acceptability”; “Service”; “Financial Management and Recordkeeping”; “Marketing”; “Personnel Management”; and “Professional Development.” Competencies within the functional areas were used as the criteria for standard performance (Figure 1). Examples of non-compliance of

standards are given to denote a *below standard* rating, while examples of commendable performance are given to denote an *exceeds standard* rating.

Table 9

*Description of Rating Scale for Performance Appraisal Forms for School Nutrition Managers and Assistants/Technicians*

<b>Numerical Value</b>	<b>Anchor</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Below Standard	Staff member fails to perform the minimum requirements of the job and immediate improvement is necessary
2	Needs Improvement	Standards for all competencies are met but performance is weak or inconsistent; improvement is needed in a specific competency
3	Meets Standard	Performs all job requirements satisfactorily
4	Area of Strength	Meets all job requirements and performs above standard for a specific competency
5	Exceeds Standard	Consistently surpasses job standards to improve personal performance and advance the school nutrition program
N/A	Not Applicable	Performance is not observed or the competency is not a responsibility of the position

Figure 1

*Excerpt from Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers*

NUTRITION AND MENU PLANNING						
PERFORMANCE LEVEL						
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not provide needed quantity b. Menus fail to meet nutrition standards and meal requirements c. Does not facilitate nutrition education d. Disregards the needs of children with special food and nutrition needs	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Provides atmosphere for healthful eating b. Ensures meals meet nutrition standards and age-appropriate meal requirements, including children with special food and nutrition needs c. Implements the <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i> d. Executes plans for meals that encourage student consumption e. Facilitates nutrition education in school program			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Volunteers for district menu planning/nutrition committee, if appropriate b. Offers suggestions for improving menu acceptability, nutrition integrity, and financial feasibility	<b>N/A</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>N/A</b>	
Comments:						

The *Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians* addresses six functional areas: “Food Production”; “Sanitation, Safety, and Security”; “Customer Service”; “Program Regulations and Accountability”; “Equipment Use and Care”; and “Professional Excellence”. The competencies for each functional area were also provided, but were not used as the performance criteria for standard performance. Unlike the manager’s appraisal form, the performance standards for the assistants/technicians were more detailed and provided specific examples connected to each performance rating (Figure 2).

Figure 2

*Excerpt from Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*

FOOD PRODUCTION		Competencies Maintains high standards of control for quality food production and service. Follows operational procedures for efficient and effective food production and service.				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL						
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not consistently produce food items that meet established quality standards b. Does not produce accurate food quantities c. Disregards operational procedures for food production	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Uses appropriate quantity food production techniques to produce appealing and nutritious food b. Follows policies and procedures for holding and serving food, portioning food items, batch cooking, using standardized recipes, inventory, and maintaining production records c. Prepares meals for special diets according to instructions d. Checks products during preparation and service to ensure quality standards are met e. Organizes tasks for efficient and effective food production and service			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Offers suggestions for improving operational procedures for food production b. Volunteers to learn new production techniques	N/A	
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	
Comments:						

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Research Study Conclusions

Evaluating performance is essential for the growth of school nutrition (SN) staff and the improvement of the SN program. Using the appropriate performance appraisal forms and following a standardized process for all staff members will facilitate effective assessment that contributes to achieving organizational goals. Thus, the purpose of the research was to develop performance appraisal forms and an accompanying guide using competency-based performance standards for SN managers and assistants/technicians. Three panels comprised of SN directors and Child Nutrition state agency staff participated in developing the performance appraisal forms for managers and assistants/technicians, as well as a guide for the appraisal process.

The expert panels indicated that an effective performance appraisal form should have the following qualities: criteria clearly defining expected performance; a rating scale appropriately reflecting criteria; clear instructions; a user-friendly format; space for comments; and a plan for improvement. The performance appraisal forms developed in this study were tailored to the specific competencies identified by research and practitioners as fundamental and central to the job expectations of SN managers and assistants/technicians. The appraisal forms developed were anchored on a five-point scale (1 = *below standard*, 2 = *needs improvement*, 3 = *meets standard*, 4 = *area of strength*, and 5 = *exceeds standard*) with specific criteria denoting performance expectations for each functional area. Clear, positive language comprehensible to both supervisor and employee provides specific instructions for use and completion of the appraisals. An organized, user-friendly format incorporated space for comments. A concise, goal-oriented, and easy to use performance improvement plan template was included as part of the performance appraisal form.

The performance appraisal guide included general and specific information customized to SN professionals. Sections of the guide include goals and objectives of performance appraisals; frequency of conducting appraisals; description of the appraisal forms; step-by-step guide through the appraisal process; guidelines for effective performance appraisals; a summary of common challenges encountered by evaluators; and techniques to address these challenges. The language used in the document was clear, specific, and familiar to users. Reviewers indicated that it was a useful document comprehensible to SN practitioners at all levels of responsibility and experience.

### **Applications**

The development of a performance appraisal resource, based on the National Food Service Management Institute, Applied Research Division's (NFSMI, ARD) *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Managers* and the *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*, provides a universal platform for evaluation relevant to SN programs of all types and sizes across the nation. The performance appraisal resource may be used as a general reference, as well as for individual learning, employee training, and as a component of departmental orientation. The performance appraisal forms for SN managers and assistants/technicians may be used to:

- Evaluate current performance and develop improvement goals for SN managers and assistants/technicians;
- Assist with developing or modifying existing appraisal forms; and
- Augment district-mandated forms to focus appraisal more closely on SN activities, and concentrate evaluation on the essential elements of SN managers' and assistants'/technicians' job performance.



### **Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research**

These appraisal forms and guide have been developed utilizing expert advice from a small number of practicing professionals. To validate effectiveness, the appraisal forms should be tested in SN programs of varying types and sizes. The experienced SN practitioners identified many essential factors to consider when developing performance appraisal forms. Further research could strengthen the validity of the forms developed, and offer additional insights into the appraisal process. Additional and related avenues of research might seek to:

- Implement and evaluate a Web-based evaluation system for SN programs using the developed materials;
- Examine district administrators' and school principals' knowledge and attitude toward competency-based performance appraisal forms; and
- Investigate district administrators' and school principals' evaluation of the developed materials.

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Appendix

Competency-Based Performance Appraisals for  
School Nutrition Managers and Assistants/Technicians

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National Food Service Management Institute  
*The University of Mississippi*

# **COMPETENCY-BASED PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS AND ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS**

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NATIONAL FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

**National Food Service Management Institute  
The University of Mississippi**

**Building the Future Through Child Nutrition**

The National Food Service Management Institute was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at The University of Mississippi in Oxford. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of NFSMI is to improve the operation of Child Nutrition Programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination. The Administrative Offices and Divisions of Information Services and Education and Training are located in Oxford. The Division of Applied Research is located at The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

**MISSION**

The mission of the NFSMI is to provide information and services that promote the continuous improvement of Child Nutrition Programs.

**VISION**

The vision of the NFSMI is to be the leader in providing education, research, and resources to promote excellence in Child Nutrition Programs.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Section 1: Performance Appraisal Process.....	2
Goals and Objectives .....	3
Frequency of Performance Appraisals.....	4
Performance Appraisal Form .....	4
The Appraisal Process.....	10
Guidelines for Performance Appraisal .....	13
Challenges and Techniques to Improve Results .....	14
Additional Resources.....	15
Section 2: Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers .....	16
Instructions .....	17
Appraisal Form.....	18
Performance Improvement Plan .....	25
Section 3: Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians.....	27
Instructions .....	28
Appraisal Form.....	29
Performance Improvement Plan .....	33



## COMPETENCY-BASED PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS AND ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS

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### INTRODUCTION

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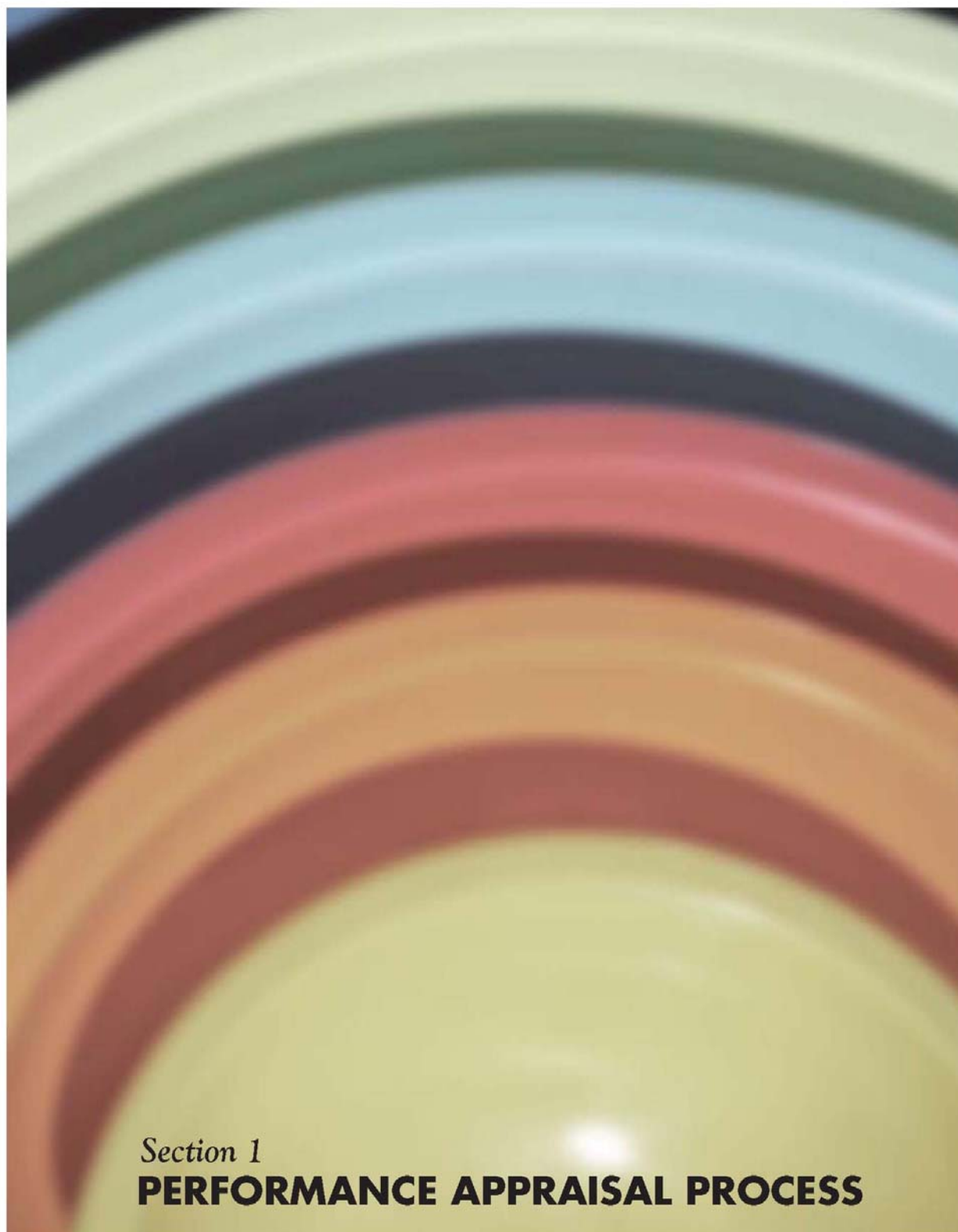
The Applied Research Division (ARD) of the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) conducted structured telephone interviews with expert panels of school nutrition (SN) professionals in the fall of 2007 to explore components needed in a performance appraisal and resource for evaluating managers and assistants/technicians. The expert panels indicated that an effective performance appraisal form should have (1) criteria clearly defining expected performance, (2) rating scale appropriately reflecting criteria, (3) clear instructions, (4) a user-friendly format, (5) space for comments, and (6) a plan for improvement. The expert panels also indicated that a resource should include general and specific guidance customized to SN managers and assistants/technicians that use language which is clear, specific, and familiar to potential users for it to be useful and comprehensible to SN practitioners at all levels of responsibility.

Drafts were developed using expert panel results, a review of pertinent research literature, and samples of existing forms submitted by SN professionals. The appraisal forms developed were anchored on a five-point scale (*1-Below standard, 2-Needs improvement, 3-Meets standard, 4-Area of strength, and 5-Exceeds standard*) with specific criteria denoting performance expectations for each functional area. The performance criteria for each functional area were anchored on the NFSMI *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for Effective School Nutrition Managers* and *Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians*. The accompanying resource discussed the importance of a standardized and periodic performance appraisal, the appraisal process, and challenges and techniques to improve results of a performance appraisal.

The expert panels evaluated the drafts using a guided review form in the spring of 2008. After revisions were made, the forms and resource were sent to a second review panel of SN professionals and state agency personnel for further evaluation. The researchers analyzed comments and recommendations received from the review panel and made final revisions reflected in this publication.

Evaluating performance is essential for employee growth and program improvement. Using the appropriate process and performance appraisal forms will facilitate effective assessment that contributes to achieving organizational goals. These appraisal forms were designed to be used as independent documents but are also useful as supplements to school district-mandated evaluations. The forms and resource are available in a downloadable format on the NFSMI Web site.





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## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

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Performance appraisal is a distinct and formal management practice involving a periodic interview between a supervisor and an employee. Work performance of the employee is examined to identify strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities for improvement and skill development. In the absence of a structured system of appraisal, work performance will be judged informally and arbitrarily. A structured appraisal system facilitates fair, defensible, and accurate evaluation.

A structured appraisal system facilitates fair, defensible, and accurate evaluation.

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## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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The primary goals of conducting an appraisal are to provide feedback to the school nutrition (SN) staff and to improve future staff and organizational performance. Specific objectives of performance appraisal include the following:

- To clarify and modify goals and expectations
- To identify employee strengths, areas to improve, and training needs
- To proactively correct unacceptable performance
- To provide opportunity for organizational problem-solving and development
- To document criteria for reward allocation
- To recognize superior performance
- To form a basis for personnel decisions
- To renew employee commitment to the organization mission
- To validate selection techniques and human resource policies
- To set new goals and objectives for the coming year

The primary goals of conducting an appraisal are to provide feedback to the school nutrition staff and to improve future employee and organizational performance.



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

### FREQUENCY OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

SN directors generally must comply with school district policies for performance appraisal schedules. SN staff may be evaluated at the end of the probationary period (varies by district), six months after hire date, on the first anniversary of employment, and annually thereafter. Additional appraisal documentation may be completed in conjunction with progress on an improvement plan.

### PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM

In many school districts, the performance appraisal form is mandated by the district. In other instances, the SN program utilizes an appraisal form that focuses specifically on the tasks and responsibilities of SN staff. Competent work performance depends on staff having the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) *Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Managers* and *Performance Appraisal Form for School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians* are based on the competencies, knowledge, and skills needed by SN staff to be effective. Keep in mind that SN programs across the nation are very diverse and the responsibilities of managers and assistants/technicians may vary from one district to another. The appraisal forms were designed to address the fundamental roles of managers and assistant/technicians but can be modified to meet the specific appraisal needs of the SN program.

School nutrition programs across the nation are very diverse. The appraisal forms were designed to address the fundamental roles of managers and assistants/technicians, but can be modified to meet the specific appraisal needs of the local SN program.

**School Nutrition (SN) managers** are the professionals who oversee all aspects of the school nutrition program at the school site level.

**School Nutrition (SN) assistants/technicians** are the foodservice employees who work at the local school cafeteria under the direction of a school nutrition manager.

**Functional areas** are the broad groupings or divisions of job responsibilities that are performed by directors/supervisors within the local school nutrition operation. These categories serve as an umbrella for all job responsibilities that occur on a daily, weekly, seasonal, or yearly basis.

**Competencies** are the underlying characteristics within each functional area that lead to successful performance. They may include knowledge and skills as well as various levels of motivation.





## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

**COMPETENCIES, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS  
OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS**

FUNCTIONAL AREA	COMPETENCIES
NUTRITION AND MENU PLANNING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides an atmosphere that ensures the purpose of the school nutrition (SN) program to “safeguard the health and well-being of the nation’s children”</li> <li>2. Ensures all meals served in the SN program meet current nutritional standards and meal pattern requirements, including children with special diet needs</li> <li>3. Maintains nutritional integrity of the SN program through implementation of Dietary Guidelines for Americans</li> <li>4. Plans and provides menus that encourage student consumption</li> <li>5. Establishes leadership role in providing nutrition education as part of the total school education program</li> </ol>
PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintains integrity and accountability of the SN program through compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations</li> <li>2. Ensures accountability of recorded documentation for compliance with federal, state, and local regulations</li> <li>3. Ensures compliance with school/school district mission and/or vision statements</li> </ol>
SANITATION, SAFETY, AND SECURITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides an environment conducive to protecting the health and well-being of the school’s children through high levels of sanitation standards</li> <li>2. Responds to a food hold and recall in an expedient, effective, and efficient manner</li> <li>3. Provides a safe environment for performance of work</li> <li>4. Provides leadership to ensure a secure work environment during an emergency or crisis</li> </ol>
EQUIPMENT USE AND CARE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishes administrative responsibility for all foodservice equipment through proper use and care</li> <li>2. Operates the SN program in compliance with all energy conservation principles</li> </ol>
PROCUREMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conducts the procurement process within the boundaries of federal, state, and local school purchasing guidelines to protect the integrity of the SN program</li> <li>2. Operates the SN program to ensure that proper receiving procedures and storage techniques are followed</li> </ol>
FOOD PRODUCTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applies management principles to establishing and maintaining high standards of control for quality food production and distribution</li> <li>2. Provides a system for preparing and maintaining records that reflect an accurate report of planned menus, food produced, and food discarded</li> <li>3. Ensures the SN program credibility through daily monitoring of food production procedures</li> </ol>



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

**COMPETENCIES, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS  
OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS** *(continued)*

FUNCTIONAL AREA	COMPETENCIES
FOOD ACCEPTABILITY	1. Maintains an operation that responds to student food preferences
SERVICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develops standards of excellence for providing and maintaining quality in the presentation and service of food</li> <li>2. Provides leadership to ensure school meals will be served in pleasant facilities and by a courteous staff</li> </ol>
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND RECORD KEEPING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Operates SN program within established guidelines for a financial management system that provides a cost-effective program of high integrity</li> <li>2. Provides effective office organization and good paper management techniques to ensure all records and supporting documentation are maintained in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations and policies</li> <li>3. Organizes and manages the business function of the school foodservice office to maintain an efficient and effective organization</li> </ol>
MARKETING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implements a marketing plan to create an atmosphere that attracts and pleases students, teachers, administrators, and other school support staff</li> <li>2. Provides leadership that promotes the SN program and creates an interest in the role of the school foodservice program in the school and community</li> </ol>
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manages the SN program staff according to the federal, state, and local district employment laws, policies, and regulations</li> <li>2. Communicates effectively with both supervisor and other employees</li> <li>3. Creates an atmosphere for employee productivity and satisfaction in the workplace</li> <li>4. Implements organizational techniques to accomplish job tasks with efficiency and maximum development of human resources</li> <li>5. Integrates a comprehensive training program and standards for evaluating employee performance into the overall management of the SN program</li> <li>6. Provides leadership that focuses on recognizing, understanding, valuing, and effectively managing diversity for maximum productivity</li> </ol>
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides leadership that sets high professional standards for the SN program and employees</li> <li>2. Establishes professional status for the SN program's role in the education community by acquiring the education and skills necessary for leadership and management roles</li> </ol>



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

**COMPETENCIES, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS  
OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS**

FUNCTIONAL AREA	COMPETENCIES
FOOD PRODUCTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintains high standards of control for quality food production and service</li> <li>2. Follows operational procedures for efficient and effective food production and service</li> </ol>
SANITATION, SAFETY, AND SECURITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintains an environment conducive to protecting the health and well-being of the school's children through high levels of food safety and sanitation standards</li> <li>2. Maintains a safe facility for performance of work</li> </ol>
CUSTOMER SERVICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintains quality standards for the presentation and service of food in a pleasant environment</li> </ol>
PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintains integrity and accountability of the SN program through compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations</li> <li>2. Maintains accountability of recorded documentation for compliance with federal, state, and local regulations</li> <li>3. Assures compliance with school/district policies and procedures</li> </ol>
EQUIPMENT USE AND CARE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implements administrative policies for proper use and care of all equipment</li> </ol>
PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Performs all duties and responsibilities in an ethical and professional manner</li> <li>2. Communicates effectively with unit manager and other employees</li> <li>3. Provides leadership as a team member of the school community</li> </ol>



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

The performance appraisal forms use a five-point scale ranging from 1 (Below Standard) to 5 (Exceeds Standard) for each functional area. When the performance criterion is not a responsibility of the employee being evaluated, a mark of N/A (Not Applicable) is given.

- 1 BELOW STANDARD**  
staff member fails to perform the minimum requirements of the job and immediate improvement is necessary
  - 2 NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**  
standards for all competencies are met but performance is weak or inconsistent; improvement is needed in a specific competency
  - 3 MEETS STANDARD**  
performs all job requirements satisfactorily
  - 4 AREA OF STRENGTH**  
meets all job requirements and performs above standard for a specific competency
  - 5 EXCEEDS STANDARD**  
consistently surpasses job standards to improve personal performance and advance the school nutrition program
  - N/A NOT APPLICABLE**  
performance is not observed or the competency is not a responsibility of the position
- 

The following excerpts (*shown on next page*) illustrate how competencies were used as the foundation for developing performance standards specific to the job of the SN manager and assistant/technician. These forms are designed to be used as independent documents but are also useful as supplements to school district-mandated evaluations. The SN-specific standards, used in conjunction with more general employee evaluation forms, contribute to a more focused and objective review of performance.





## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

TABLE 1: EXCERPT FROM THE NFSMI PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

NUTRITION AND MENU PLANNING					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not provide needed quantity b. Menus fail to meet nutrition standards and meal requirements c. Does not facilitate nutrition education d. Disregards the needs of children with special food and nutrition needs	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Provides atmosphere for healthful eating b. Ensures meals meet nutrition standards and age-appropriate meal requirements, including children with special food and nutrition needs c. Implements the <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i> d. Executes plans for meals that encourage student consumption e. Facilitates nutrition education in school program			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Volunteers for district menu planning/nutrition committee, if appropriate b. Offers suggestions for improving menu acceptability, nutrition integrity, and financial feasibility	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					

TABLE 2: EXCERPT FROM THE NFSMI PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS

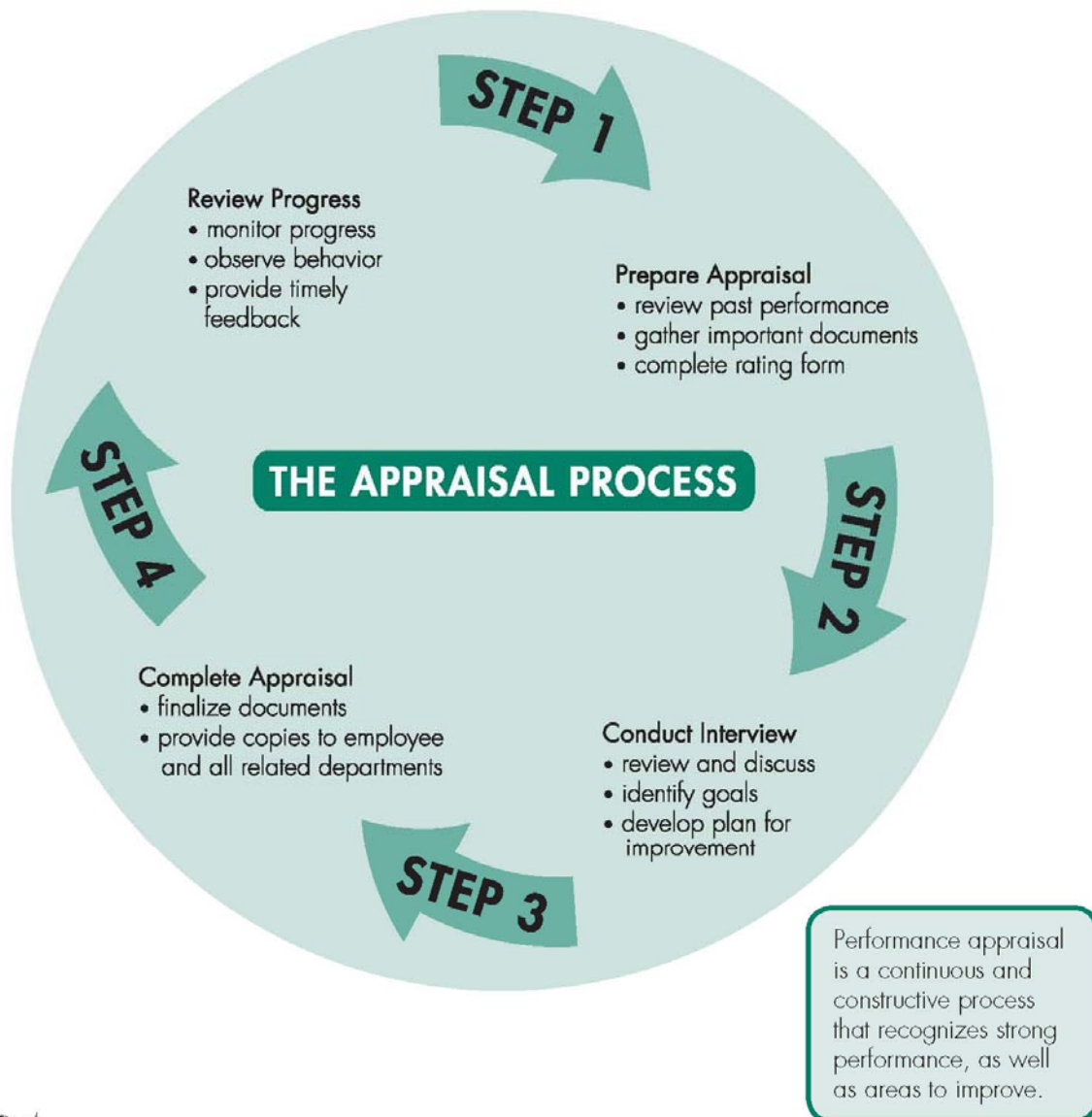
FOOD PRODUCTION		Competencies <i>Maintains high standards of control for quality food production and service.</i> <i>Follows operational procedures for efficient and effective food production and service.</i>			
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not consistently produce food items that meet established quality standards b. Does not produce accurate food quantities c. Disregards operational procedures for food production	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Uses appropriate quantity food production techniques to produce appealing and nutritious food b. Follows policies and procedures for holding and serving food, portioning food items, batch cooking, using standardized recipes, inventory, and maintaining production records c. Prepares meals for special diets according to instructions d. Checks products during preparation and service to ensure quality standards are met e. Organizes tasks for efficient and effective food production and service			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Offers suggestions for improving operational procedures for food production b. Volunteers to learn new production techniques	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

## THE APPRAISAL PROCESS

The performance appraisal process is a constructive method that recognizes strong performance and identifies areas for improvement. In addition, it is a continuous process that includes both the formal, written evaluation of work performance, and the informal, unscheduled feedback throughout the appraisal period. The following diagram illustrates the recurring activities of performance appraisal.



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

### PREPARE THE APPRAISAL

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- Provide staff a blank copy of the appraisal form at least one week prior to appraisal interview
- Gather and review all pertinent documents related to the job and the staff member, such as:
  - Appraisal form
  - Current job description
  - Previous performance appraisal
  - Any records of staff achievements/disciplinary actions
  - Incident reports
  - Safety record(s)
  - Any documentation in staff member's record since last appraisal
  - Any prior improvement plan(s)
- Arrange documents in the order they will be used in the appraisal interview
- Complete written performance appraisal of staff member
- Schedule the interview so that:
  - Evaluator and staff member have ample time to prepare
  - There is enough time for thorough and unrushed discussion of past performance and future goals
  - The meeting is away from operations, providing privacy and facilitating confidentiality
  - The meeting is at an appropriate time to minimize interruptions from operations
- Arrange a comfortable meeting area so that the evaluator and staff member sit face-to-face in comfortable chairs

### CONDUCT THE APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

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The appraisal interview is the most important part of the performance appraisal. The aim is to benchmark performance and make plans for improvement. The process for conducting the appraisal interview includes, but is not limited to, the following steps:

- Begin at scheduled time
- Welcome and put staff member at ease
- Review and discuss with staff member the rating of their performance on each element of the appraisal form
- Keep appraisal open to staff member's input, questions, and concerns
- Emphasize strengths on which to build, as well as areas for improvement
- Concentrate on opportunities for growth within the present job
- Complete Performance Improvement Plan (if needed) in conjunction with staff member



### PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

- Limit plans for improvement to a few objectives that can be measured and accomplished in a reasonable time period
- Check for staff member understanding by inviting him or her to summarize
- Compare points agreed upon
- Allow the staff member's opportunity to discuss any work-related problems and concerns
- Summarize the session and end on a positive note
- Thank staff member for their contribution to the meeting and efforts throughout the year/period
- Assure staff member you are available to help with their improvement plan
- Obtain staff member signature on the appraisal form

Pointers for conducting a performance appraisal interview include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Conduct interview with a positive, constructive, and supportive attitude
- Avoid closed-ended questions that require only a yes or no answer
- Evaluate honestly and carefully
- Discuss only accomplishments and problems relevant to the job
- Focus feedback on behavior rather than the individual
- Remain open-minded and respect staff member's opinions
- Listen actively and avoid forming conclusions with too little data
- Maintain eye contact and attentive posture

### COMPLETE THE APPRAISAL

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- Finalize documents and indicate on the performance appraisal form if a Performance Improvement Plan was initiated
- Attach Performance Improvement Plan to signed performance appraisal
- Ensure completed appraisal documents are provided to relevant departments and individuals
- Provide staff member a copy of the signed performance appraisal and Performance Improvement Plan in a timely manner
- Ascertain that staff member's receipt of his or her copy is documented





## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

### REVIEW PROGRESS

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- Monitor progress based on discussion during the appraisal interview
- Schedule follow-up meeting(s) to review actions completed, commend improvement or outstanding performance, discuss any problems or concerns, and identify future actions
- Conduct informal, day-to-day observations of staff performance and provide feedback

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## GUIDELINES FOR PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

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Objectivity remains a fundamental element of the performance appraisal process.

School nutrition directors should examine their appraisal process to ensure that it is as free of bias as possible. It is also important that supervisors and managers are aware of the process and are properly trained to administer performance appraisals. While absolute objectivity is difficult to achieve, it is essential to the performance appraisal process. Listed below are some guidelines for conducting effective performance appraisals.

- Ensure staff members are aware of performance standards by which they will be evaluated
- Provide performance standards to newly hired staff at orientation
- Use standardized, job-specific appraisal forms to maintain objectivity of appraisal instead of comparing staff to each other
- Evaluate each trait individually because excellence in one does not imply excellence in others nor does deficiency in one trait imply deficiencies in others
- Gather information from the entire appraisal period
- The appraisal should not be based on isolated, recent, or sensational events
- Base appraisal on objective observations and measurements
- Be consistent with the appraisal process for all staff members
- Ensure that appraisals reflect performance for the current review period, not problems from prior rating periods
- Use previous appraisal reports only as a basis for ascertaining changes that have been made
- Ensure that appraisals reflect the actual situation of the staff (e.g., performance of newly hired employees should not be compared to that of experienced employees)



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

**CHALLENGES AND TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE RESULTS**

Listed below are common challenges that evaluators encounter when administering the appraisal process. Below are some techniques for addressing challenges and improving the evaluator's ability to administer an effective appraisal.

CHALLENGES FOR EVALUATOR	TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE
Lack of training on constructive appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in professional development activities sponsored by district and school nutrition organizations</li> <li>• Develop an improvement plan to guide and benchmark progress</li> </ul>
Lack of agreement on meaning of terms used to signify degree of success in meeting performance criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure each staff member is provided written job description, blank appraisal form, and performance standards at time of hire</li> <li>• Document performance throughout rating period and communicate to staff member</li> <li>• Discuss negative performance issues when issue occurs during rating period</li> </ul>
Reluctance of evaluator to confront staff member with negative remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present negative appraisal feedback as the intent to assist in overcoming difficulties and improve future performance</li> <li>• Allow staff member to freely discuss performance with evaluator</li> <li>• Support criticism with clear evidence related to work performance</li> <li>• Present feedback objectively without labeling the behavior as good or bad</li> <li>• Invite staff member to comment and confront their performance issues</li> </ul>
Lack of employee participation in goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate job responsibilities and associated criteria used to evaluate staff performance</li> <li>• Collaborate with staff member to set goals that will meet expectations and improve future performance</li> <li>• Document goals and set schedule for periodically checking progress</li> </ul>

**SUMMARY:** Evaluating performance is essential for staff growth and program improvement. Using the appropriate performance appraisal process and measurement instruments will facilitate effective assessment that contributes to achieving organizational goals.



PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS

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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS, PLEASE REFER TO THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES AND WEB SITES:

Archer North and Associates. (2006). Performance appraisal. Retrieved August, 19, 2007 from <http://www.performance-appraisal.com>

Byers, B. A., Shanklin, C. W., & Hoover, L.C. (1994). Food service manual for health care institutions. Atlanta, GA: American Hospital Publishing, Inc.

Cater, J. B., & Carr, D. H. (2006). Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Managers. Retrieved August 19, 2007 from National Food Service Management Institute Web site: <http://nfsmi-web01.nfsmi.olemiss.edu/documentLibraryFiles/PDF%5C20080222025936.pdf>

Chanddra, A. (2006) Staff member evaluation strategies for healthcare organizations: A general guide. Hospital Topics, 84(2), 34-38.

Conducting Effective Performance Appraisals: Tips for supervisors. (n.d.). Retrieved August 19, 2007 from University of California-Berkeley, Office of Human Resources Web site: <http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/manage/appraisal.htm>

Hansen, D. (2005). Performance appraisal tips help page. Retrieved June 16, 2008 from [http://iso9k1.home.att.net/pa/performance\\_appraisal.html](http://iso9k1.home.att.net/pa/performance_appraisal.html)

Nettles, M. F., & Carr, D. H. (2006). Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians. Retrieved August 19, 2007 from National Food Service Management Institute Web site: <http://nfsmi-web01.nfsmi.olemiss.edu/documentLibraryFiles/PDF%5C20080716085837.pdf>

Painter, C. N. (2003). Ten steps for improved appraisals. Supervision, 64(10),12-14.

Spears, M. C. & Gregoire, M. B. (2007). Performance appraisal. In Foodservice organizations: A managerial and systems approach, (6th ed., pp. 530-534). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

*Please note: The above Web sites were verified as active July 2008 and may expire without notice. The addresses are case sensitive.*







## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of a performance appraisal are to:

1. Maintain desired performance
2. Improve performance
3. Communicate future expectations to the manager
4. Collect information to aid in effective, fair employment decisions
5. Maximize the growth potential of the manager

#### RATING SCALE

Using the scale below, evaluate manager's performance in the 12 functional areas:

Nutrition and Menu Planning	Food Acceptability
Program Accountability	Service
Sanitation, Safety, and Security	Financial Management and Recordkeeping
Equipment Use and Care	Marketing
Procurement	Personnel Management
Food Production	Professional Development

- 1 BELOW STANDARD**  
manager fails to perform the minimum requirements of the job and immediate improvement is necessary
- 2 NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**  
standards for all competencies are met but performance is weak or inconsistent; improvement is needed in a specific competency
- 3 MEETS STANDARD**  
performs all job requirements satisfactorily
- 4 AREA OF STRENGTH**  
meets all job requirements and performs above standard for a specific competency
- 5 EXCEEDS STANDARD**  
consistently surpasses job standards to improve personal performance and advance the school nutrition program
- N/A NOT APPLICABLE**  
performance is not observed or the competency is not a responsibility of the position

Note: For a detailed description of the performance appraisal process, please refer to *Competency-Based Performance Appraisals for School Nutrition Managers and Assistants/Technicians, Section 1*



<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> NAME	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> SCHOOL	<input type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Probationary <input type="checkbox"/> Other  <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Improvement Plan attached
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> CLASSIFICATION/JOB TITLE	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> REPORTING PERIOD	
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> EVALUATOR	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> EVALUATOR'S TITLE	
		<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> DATE

1 BELOW STANDARD	3 MEETS STANDARD	5 EXCEEDS STANDARD
2 NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	4 AREA OF STRENGTH	N/A NOT APPLICABLE

PERFORMANCE LEVEL				
<p><b>BELOW STANDARD</b></p> <p>a. Does not provide needed quantity</p> <p>b. Menus fail to meet nutrition standards and meal requirements</p> <p>c. Does not facilitate nutrition education</p> <p>d. Disregards the needs of children with special food and nutrition needs</p>	<p><b>STANDARD</b></p> <p>a. Provides atmosphere for healthful eating</p> <p>b. Ensures meals meet nutrition standards and age-appropriate meal requirements, including children with special food and nutrition needs</p> <p>c. Implements the <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i></p> <p>d. Executes plans for meals that encourage student consumption</p> <p>e. Facilitates nutrition education in school program</p>	<p><b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b></p> <p>a. Volunteers for district menu planning/nutrition committee, if appropriate</p> <p>b. Offers suggestions for improving menu acceptability, nutrition integrity, and financial feasibility</p>	N/A	
1	2	3	4	5
<p>Comments:</p>				



PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Non-compliance with federal, state, and local regulations b. Does not support district mission	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Ensures compliance with federal, state, and local regulations b. Ensures accountability of recorded documentation c. Complies with district mission/vision			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Serves as role model for implementing district mission/vision	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					

SANITATION, SAFETY, AND SECURITY					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Fails to ensure food safety and sanitation b. Does not provide a safe work environment c. Disregards personal hygiene and appearance guidelines	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Implements high sanitation standards to provide a healthy dining environment b. Responds to food holds and recalls effectively and efficiently c. Provides safe work environment d. Demonstrates leadership in emergency/crisis situations			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Models desired behaviors b. Applies district/local guidelines to develop creative and practical solutions for reducing and recycling waste and other discarded products c. Updates and implements food safety and sanitation policies, as needed	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

EQUIPMENT USE AND CARE					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not ensure proper equipment use and care	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Implements procedures for proper equipment use, care, and preventive maintenance b. Complies with energy conservation principles			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Develops, implements, and updates an effective energy conservation program	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					

PROCUREMENT					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not ensure dependable delivery of goods/services for operation of the SN program	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Complies with federal, state, and local purchasing guidelines b. Ensures that proper receiving procedures and storage techniques are followed			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Recommends appropriate products to ensure high quality goods and customer services at costs advantageous to the SN program	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

FOOD PRODUCTION					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Quality of finished products is inconsistent b. Does not ensure accurate food production reports	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Applies management principles to meet high standards of food quality and control b. Implements system for accurate reporting of planned menus, food produced and discarded c. Monitors food production procedures daily			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Consistently exceeds established criteria for delivery of high quality products b. Effectively directs control system that ensures highest levels of accuracy, accountability, and transparency c. Evaluates and enhances food production system and procedures to improve food quality	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					

FOOD ACCEPTABILITY					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not provide food choices appealing to students	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Encourages customer feedback and responds to student food preference			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Utilizes feedback to develop creative techniques to increase student acceptance of menu items	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					





## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

SERVICE					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not meet customer expectation of presentation and service b. Considers customers an imposition c. Exhibits negative attitude	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Implements standards of excellence for quality presentation and service of food b. Ensures meals are served in pleasant environment by courteous staff			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Consistently receives customer feedback that indicates positive perception of food and service	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND RECORDKEEPING					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Inaccurate accounting of SN program funds b. Fails to safeguard financial integrity of SN program	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Operates within established financial management guidelines to provide a cost-effective foodservice program b. Maintains records and supporting documentation in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations/policies c. Manages business functions effectively and efficiently			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Manages resources to provide funds for new programs and growth	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

MARKETING					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Ineffective implementation of a marketing plan that effectively communicates the role of the SN program in the school and community	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Implements marketing plan to create an atmosphere that attracts and pleases students, teachers, administrators, and other school support staff b. Creates awareness of the SN program and promotes its role in school and community			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Advances the credibility of the SN program to consumers and the public	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not communicate effectively with others b. Overlooks the role of the staff in the success of the SN program	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Manages SN staff according to federal, state, local, and district employment laws, policies, and regulations b. Communicates effectively with supervisor and other staff c. Creates atmosphere for employee productivity and satisfaction d. Uses organizational techniques efficiently for maximum human resource development e. Integrates training program and evaluation standards for staff performance into program management f. Recognizes, understands, values, and manages diversity for maximum productivity			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Maintains highly positive working relationships that promote effective and efficient use of human resources for the benefit of the individual and SN program	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not maintain/learn/apply new skills and knowledge as needed	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Sets high professional standards for program and employees (i.e. attendance, appearance, attitude, demeanor) b. Acquires education and skills necessary for leadership and management roles			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Advances professional knowledge and growth of self and others b. Challenges self and others to meet change with enthusiasm	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					

## OVERALL RATING

## INSTRUCTIONS

Add the total ratings for each functional area and divide by the number of functional areas evaluated (do not include functional areas where N/A was used). Round the result to the nearest whole number and check the appropriate box below (1=Below Standard, 2-4=Meets Standard, and 5=Exceeds Standard).

☐ BELOW STANDARD

☐ MEETS STANDARD

☐ EXCEEDS STANDARD

 \_\_\_\_\_  
 EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

 \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE

*Employee signature indicates the evaluation was discussed with the SN manager and he/she has received a copy of the performance appraisal. It does not signify agreement or disagreement.*

 \_\_\_\_\_  
 EVALUATOR SIGNATURE

 \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE




## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

## PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

EMPLOYEE NAME

SCHOOL

## INSTRUCTIONS

Determine functional areas to be improved. Complete key actions, how progress will be measured, what resources will be needed, and time frame for completion. Use an additional form if necessary. The SN manager and evaluator should discuss and agree upon the priority for completion assigned to each functional area to be improved.

## FUNCTIONAL AREAS

- Nutrition and Menu Planning
- Program Accountability
- Sanitation, Safety, and Security
- Equipment Use and Care
- Procurement
- Food Production
- Food Acceptability
- Service
- Financial Management and Recordkeeping
- Marketing
- Personnel Management
- Professional Development

Functional Area to Be Improved

Functional Area to Be Improved			
KEY ACTIONS	MEASUREMENT	RESOURCES NEEDED	TIME FRAME
PRIORITY			

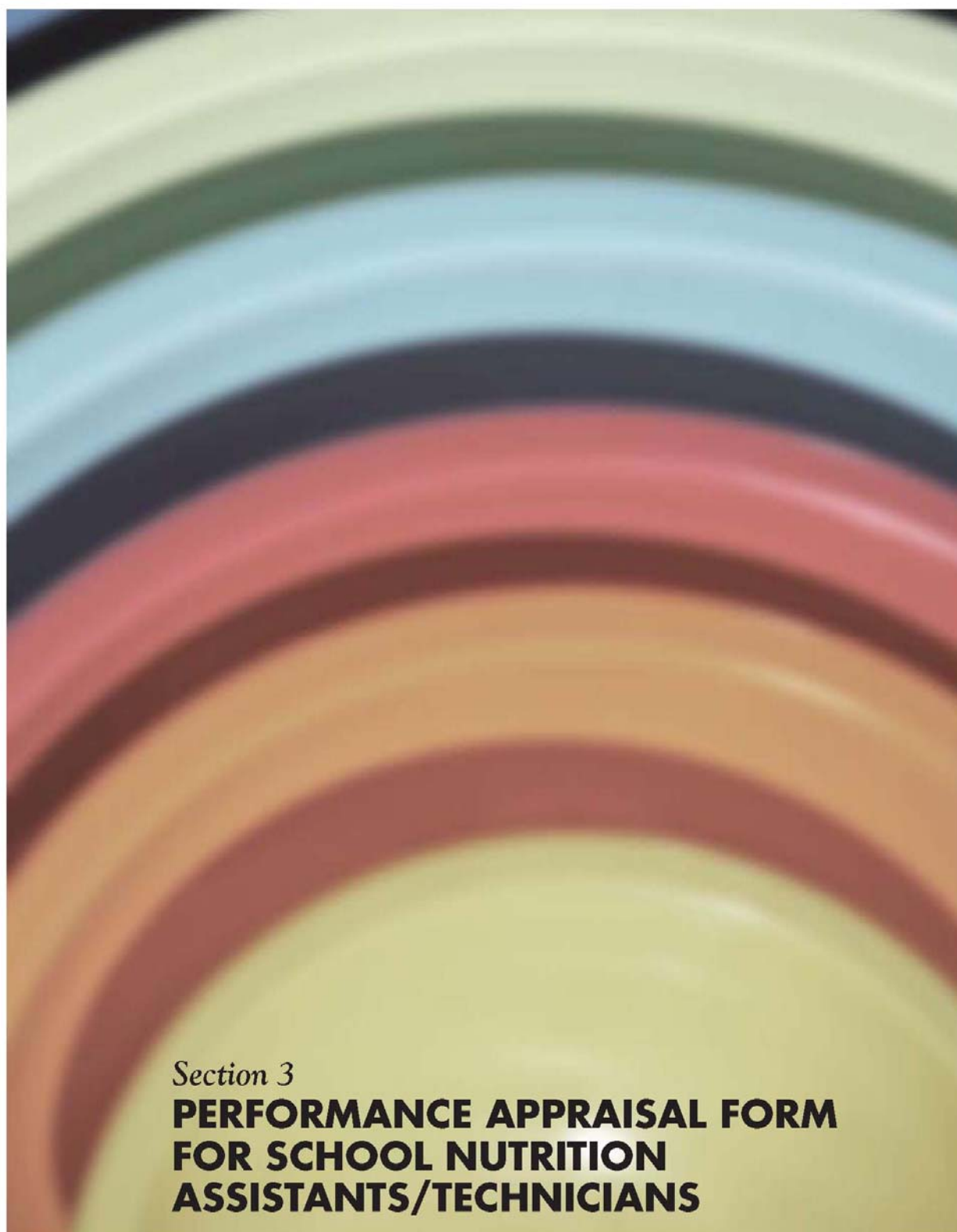


PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION MANAGERS

_____ Functional Area to Be Improved			
KEY ACTIONS	MEASUREMENT	RESOURCES NEEDED	TIME FRAME
PRIORITY			

_____ EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE	_____ DATE
_____ EVALUATOR SIGNATURE	_____ DATE





## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of a performance appraisal are to:

1. Maintain desired performance
2. Improve performance
3. Communicate future expectations to assistant/technician
4. Collect information to aid in effective, fair employment decisions
5. Maximize the growth potential of the assistant/technician

#### RATING SCALE

Using the scale below, evaluate assistant/technician's performance in the six functional areas:

Food Production	Program Regulations and Accountability
Sanitation, Safety, and Security	Equipment Use and Care
Customer Service	Professional Excellence

- 1 BELOW STANDARD**  
assistant/technician fails to perform the minimum requirements of the job and immediate improvement is necessary
- 2 NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**  
standards for all competencies are met but performance is weak or inconsistent; improvement is needed in a specific competency
- 3 MEETS STANDARD**  
performs all job requirements satisfactorily
- 4 AREA OF STRENGTH**  
meets all job requirements and performs above standard for a specific competency
- 5 EXCEEDS STANDARD**  
consistently surpasses job standards to improve personal performance and advance the school nutrition program
- N/A NOT APPLICABLE**  
performance is not observed or the competency is not a responsibility of the position

Note: For a detailed description of the performance appraisal process, please refer to *Competency-Based Performance Appraisals for School Nutrition Managers and Assistants/Technicians, Section 1*



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS

## APPRAISAL FORM

NAME _____	SCHOOL _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Probationary <input type="checkbox"/> Other  <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Improvement Plan attached  _____ DATE
CLASSIFICATION/JOB TITLE _____	REPORTING PERIOD _____	
EVALUATOR _____	EVALUATOR'S TITLE _____	

## INSTRUCTIONS

Circle the rating that best describes performance using the standards listed within each functional area. If a specific standard does not apply, circle N/A in the designated column. A score of 1 or 5 requires a notation in the Comments section to document specific reason for score.

**1** BELOW STANDARD**3** MEETS STANDARD**5** EXCEEDS STANDARD**2** NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**4** AREA OF STRENGTH**N/A** NOT APPLICABLE

FOOD PRODUCTION	<i>Competencies</i> Maintains high standards of control for quality food production and service Follows operational procedures for efficient and effective food production and service				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL					
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Does not consistently produce food items that meet established quality standards b. Does not produce accurate food quantities c. Disregards operational procedures for food production	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Uses appropriate quantity food production techniques to produce appealing and nutritious food b. Follows policies and procedures for holding and serving food, portioning food items, batch cooking, using standardized recipes, inventory, and maintaining production records c. Prepares meals for special diets according to instructions d. Checks products during preparation and service to ensure quality standards are met e. Organizes tasks for efficient and effective food production and service			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Offers suggestions for improving operational procedures for food production b. Volunteers to learn new production techniques	<b>N/A</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	
Comments: _____					





PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS

<b>SANITATION, SAFETY, AND SECURITY</b>		<b>Competencies</b> <i>Maintains an environment conducive to protecting the health and well-being of the school's children through high levels of food safety and sanitation standards</i> <i>Maintains a safe facility for performance of work</i>				
<b>PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>						
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Disregards safe food practices b. Does not adhere to safe work procedures c. Ignores personal hygiene and appearance guidelines	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Follows safe food practices during all food handling processes b. Follows rules of safe time/temperature requirements and corrects deviations promptly c. Maintains a clean and sanitary kitchen and dining area using established procedures d. Uses appropriate measures to safeguard the environment (i.e., waste/grease disposal, water conservation) e. Practices safe work techniques f. Assists with preparation for fire, health, and safety inspections			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Serves as a role model for other staff members in implementing preventive safety measures in work processes b. Offers suggestions for improving sanitation, safety, and security practices	<b>N/A</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>N/A</b>	
Comments:						

<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>		<b>Competency</b> <i>Maintains quality standards for the presentation and service of food in a pleasant environment</i>				
<b>PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>						
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Exhibits a negative attitude when interacting with students b. Considers customers as an imposition	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Assists in creating a pleasant eating environment for students b. Handles customer complaints effectively c. Shares customer feedback with SN manager			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Assists students in making healthy food choices b. Recommends appropriate service modifications in response to customer feedback	<b>N/A</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>N/A</b>	
Comments:						



PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS

PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	<b>Competencies</b> <i>Maintains integrity and accountability of the SN program through compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations</i> <i>Maintains accountability of recorded documentation for compliance with federal, state, and local regulations</i> <i>Assures compliance with school/district policies and procedures</i>				
	PERFORMANCE LEVEL				
	<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Cannot accurately and consistently identify meal components required for a reimbursable meal b. Does not comply with school district policies and procedures related to the SN program  <div style="text-align: center;"><b>1</b></div>	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Maintains confidentiality of students, program, and school b. Identifies, monitors, and ensures that reimbursable meals meet requirements c. Prepares reports and records accurately in compliance with regulations d. Handles cash according to established procedures e. Follows district, local, state, and federal regulations, School Board policies, and SN program policies/procedures  <div style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b></div>	<div style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b></div>	<div style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b></div>	<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Serves as a role model for other staff in maintaining program integrity and accountability  <div style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b></div>
Comments:					

EQUIPMENT USE AND CARE	<b>Competency</b> <i>Implements administrative policies for proper use and care of all equipment</i>				
	PERFORMANCE LEVEL				
	<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Operates equipment carelessly and unsafely b. Does not operate and clean equipment according to established procedures  <div style="text-align: center;"><b>1</b></div>	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Operates equipment safely b. Uses food service equipment suitable for the food product being prepared c. Follows sanitation procedures when using and cleaning equipment d. Monitors equipment operation and reports malfunctions  <div style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b></div>	<div style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b></div>	<div style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b></div>	<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Practices energy conservation b. Conducts preventive maintenance procedures  <div style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b></div>
Comments:					



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE		<b>Competencies</b> <i>Performs all duties and responsibilities in an ethical and professional manner</i> <i>Communicates effectively with unit manager and other employees</i> <i>Provides leadership as a team member of the school community</i>			
		PERFORMANCE LEVEL			
<b>BELOW STANDARD</b> a. Disregards the value of a diverse school and SN program community b. Does not maintain/learn/apply new skills and knowledge as needed	<b>STANDARD</b> a. Performs work-related activities efficiently with limited supervision b. Interacts with others in an ethical and professional manner c. Maintains cooperative and effective working relationships with others d. Reports to work on time and completes tasks according to work schedules e. Attends and participates in training activities			<b>EXCEEDS STANDARD</b> a. Seeks opportunities for improving self and performance b. Strives to create a positive image for school nutrition	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Comments:					

## OVERALL RATING

## INSTRUCTIONS

Add the total ratings for each functional area and divide by the number of functional areas evaluated (do not include functional areas where N/A was used). Round the result to the nearest whole number and check the appropriate box below (1=Below Standard, 2-4=Meets Standard, and 5=Exceeds Standard).

☐

BELOW STANDARD

☐

MEETS STANDARD

☐

EXCEEDS STANDARD

\_\_\_\_\_  
EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

*Employee signature indicates the appraisal was discussed with the assistant/technician and he/she has received a copy of the performance appraisal. It does not signify agreement or disagreement.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
EVALUATOR SIGNATURE\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE



## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS

## PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

EMPLOYEE NAME

SCHOOL

## INSTRUCTIONS

Determine functional areas to be improved. Complete key actions, how progress will be measured, what resources will be needed, and time frame for completion. Use an additional form if necessary. The employee and evaluator should discuss and agree upon the priority for completion assigned to each functional area to be improved.

## FUNCTIONAL AREAS

- Food Production
- Sanitation, Safety, and Security
- Customer Service
- Program Regulations and Accountability
- Equipment Use and Care
- Professional Excellence

Functional Area to Be Improved

Functional Area to Be Improved			
KEY ACTIONS	MEASUREMENT	RESOURCES NEEDED	TIME FRAME
PRIORITY			



PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSISTANTS/TECHNICIANS

_____			
Functional Area to Be Improved			
KEY ACTIONS	MEASUREMENT	RESOURCES NEEDED	TIME FRAME
PRIORITY			

_____	_____
EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE	DATE
_____	_____
EVALUATOR SIGNATURE	DATE





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