



National Biodiversity Network Secretariat

Performance Management Guidelines

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I. Performance Management Introduction

The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Trust was established to facilitate and grow the National Biodiversity Network to achieve its mission of recording and caring for the UK's wildlife data, making it universally accessible to the public, educators, researchers, conservationists and environmental decision-makers.

The NBN Secretariat's Performance Management process provides a systematic way of ensuring that everyone within the Secretariat works together to contribute to the achievement of the NBN's strategy. It is a powerful tool that helps us achieve our vision, values and strategic aims and objectives.

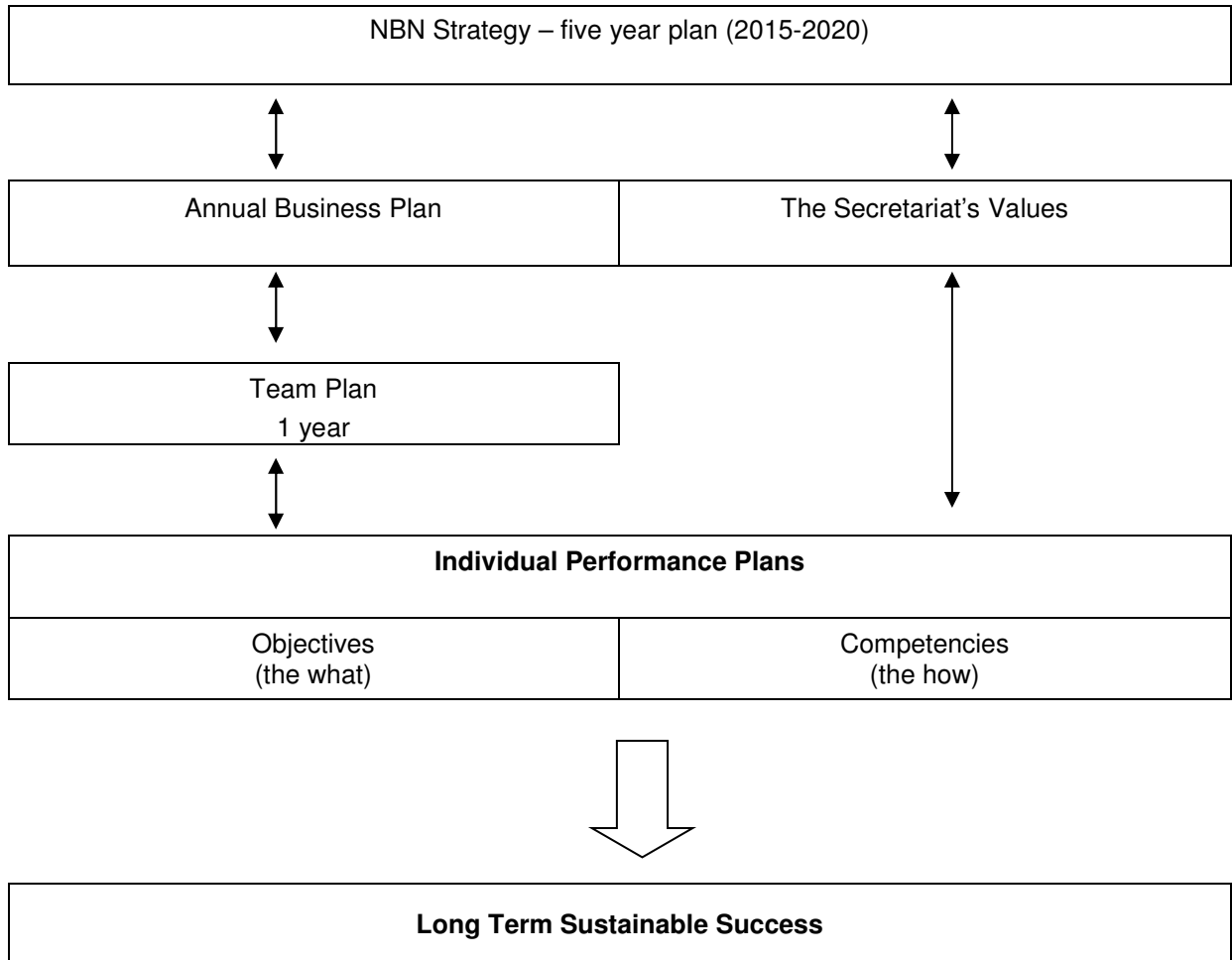
It focuses us on what we need to do individually and within our teams to contribute to NBN's success, providing us all with challenging yet realistic goals for a given period. The Performance Management process provides sound performance information, which may be used for a number of purposes, such as development, recognition, remuneration, promotion, talent management and career planning.

The Performance Management Process applies to all of us employed at the Secretariat. Where we have staff on short term contracts for longer than four months we will ensure they are involved in the Performance Management process so that they can see how they contribute to our overall goals.

Anyone starting on or before 1 December in any performance year will have a Performance Plan and take part in the Performance Management Process for that four month period.

a) Performance Management and Business Planning

The flow diagram below shows the linkages between our business planning process and the Performance Management Process planning process.



b) Performance Management Process Cycle

There are three main phases in the Performance Management Process Cycle: Forward Planning, Mid-Year Review, and End of Year Performance Review :

Phase	Completed By
Forward Planning	April
Mid-year Performance Review	October
End of Year Performance Review	April

Forward Planning Phase	Mid-year Performance Review	End of Year Performance Review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare • Discuss • Confirm Performance Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objectives - Competencies - Development Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather Information • Compare progress • Discuss • Amend expectations as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information • Review, and assess performance • Identify highlights and key learnings • Sign off • Keep own copy and send copy to CEO

II. Forward Planning Phase

What you need to do depends upon the role you hold within the Secretariat. Outlined below are the roles of each person involved in the planning process, namely the staff member, the manager and the manager's manager.

	Prior to Meeting	During the Meeting	After the Meeting
Staff Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend a Team Planning Session Prepare draft Performance Plan for the coming year, including objectives, competencies and development plan. <p>(This may be done with support from your manager).</p>	<p>Purpose of meeting</p> <p>To confirm your performance expectations for the coming year and identify how you will track how you are performing through the year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss and agree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives Competencies Development Plan Discuss and agree on ownership of Performance Plan – who will complete the form and keep it up to date <p>We recommend this responsibility stays with the staff member</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete or update the Performance Plan and sign off Take responsibility for delivering on the Plan Track own performance using agreed tools and processes (eg Feedback Form) Complete Development Plan activities Diarise coaching and tracking meetings
Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the process Hold Team Planning Meeting to ensure staff understand link to Business Plan and team objectives Book room for 1 - 1 meeting Ensure staff member familiar with process Provide guidance and support on developing performance expectations and Development Plan Plan discussion using effective Interpersonal Skills and Discussion Guidelines 	<p>Purpose of meeting</p> <p>To develop or confirm Performance expectations and identify how you and the staff member will track how they are performing through the year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using effective Interpersonal Skills and Discussion Guidelines discuss and agree on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives Competencies Development Plan Set date for first coaching meeting Discuss and agree on ownership of Performance Plan – who will complete the form and keep it up to date <p>We recommend this responsibility stays with the staff member</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign off on Performance Plan Track staff member's performance using agreed tools and processes (eg Feedback Form) Provide opportunities for Development Diarise coaching and tracking meetings

a) Prior to the Meeting

Action	Staff Member	Manager
Team Planning Session	Attend Team Planning Session to discuss and understand how your personal performance impacts on your team and the Secretariat's Business Plan and the strategic aims.	Facilitate Team Planning Session to ensure team understanding of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Plan and strategic aims • competencies and Secretariat values and what these mean in the context of their work • team's contribution to Business Plan and strategic aims • individual contribution to team goals, or team objectives where appropriate • resources/support/barriers/ development opportunities • how the team will operate together, and achieve and celebrate success
Clarify Process	Talk with manager about process if unsure	Ensure staff member understands the process and their role.
Draft Performance Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with the development of measureable objectives. • Make sure you understand your role's competencies. • Think about areas where you might need development to achieve your objectives or, if you are performing well, development that will contribute to your career goals. • Think about how you will track performance against expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review business plan, staff member's position description, and last year's performance plan • Consider what level of performance you would expect for the coming year. • Make sure you understand the role's competencies. • Consider last year's performance to identify areas for development. Consider the DOMA formula (page 12). If the staff member is performing well, consider development that will contribute to their career goals. • Think about how you will track performance against expectations.

Objectives - What does a measurable objective look like?

Objectives are “what” you do in your job. They are the specific, measurable things you need to achieve in order for the Network’s and your team’s business plans to be achieved. It is recommended that you have between **six** to **eight** objectives in your Performance Plan.

They need to be **SMART**:

S - Specific	Clearly describe what you are required to do, providing focus and avoiding misunderstandings
M - Measurable	Include measures of Quality, Quantity and Cost where appropriate
A - Achievable	Be realistically achievable yet also challenging. It is important to review achievements from the last year and build on this previous performance.
R - Relevant	Be derived from your team or directorate business plan or your position description
T - Timeframed	Have realistic dates set for achievement.

Let’s look at measures in a little more detail.

Measures are important as they enable progress to be determined and results to be assessed.

Quality	<p>How well you do something. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Error rates – accuracy - In accordance with standards or operating policy - Meeting stakeholder/user needs
Quantity	<p>How many or how much? This could be a number or a percentage of items. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of calls taken - Number of invoices processed - Percentage increase in number of users/records
Timeframed	<p>By when. What is the timeframe for completion? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By x date - Within x days - Milestones met
Cost	<p>How much will it cost? Do you have control of a budget for this activity? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within budget - Variance from budget

How do you write an objective?

As objectives describe “what” you do in your role then they should be action oriented. A useful formula to consider is **Action + Focus + Measures**

Action	Focus	Measures
To process	95% of invoices	with 100% accuracy within agreed timeframe
To update	the XYZ database	with 100% accuracy in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures.
To provide	advice to users and key stakeholders	with 100% accuracy as required
To review	allocated financial procedures	to identify areas for improvement in delivery of desired outcomes within required timeframes

How do I keep track of my objectives?

It is all very well to write a measurable objective, however you also need to identify at the planning phase how you are going to *track* progress through the year. Some practical ways to track performance may be:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manager observation - Project Manager feedback - Database maintained - Report written - Advice provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial Reports - Stakeholder Feedback - Cost Recovery Targets met - Time, Activity or Complaint Logs - Publications produced
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If an organisational system to measure performance in an objective does not currently exist, you may need to find another measure.

How do I identify my objectives?

1. Look at the business plan and determine what you do in your role that contributes to this. See what measures are in the business plan; these are the minimum requirements.
2. If you work in a supporting role, you may find it hard to identify where you “fit” in the business plan. In this case review your position description and develop objectives that are linked to this instead.
3. Review your last year’s results and ensure the measures you are including build on your performance from the previous year. (Remember measures are **Quality, Quantity, Timeframed** and in some cases **Cost**).
4. Develop an objective for each of the key areas of your role, remembering the formula of **Action + Focus + Measures**. Remember we are looking for a maximum of six to eight objectives.
5. Identify how you will know if you have been successful – your tracking sources.

If you get into a task level for objectives you will end up with too many and spend a great deal of your working life tracking your performance against each objective. If you only have 2 or 3 objectives they will be at such a high level that you could be unsuccessful in two areas of your working life and find that you feel like you are failing as you only are achieving 2/3. We therefore suggest you try to pitch your objectives to ideally around six-eight.

Competencies - What are competencies?

Competences describe “how” you go about achieving your objectives. They are equally as important as the objectives, being a key to enabling their achievement. They are the experience, knowledge, knowledge, skills and personal qualities that determine successful performance. Using Competencies as a tool in our Performance Management System helps us make it clear what actions need to be taken to do a job well. We intend to use competencies to:

- select new employees
- clarify expectations for good performance
- identify areas for improvement and gaps in development
- provide coaching and training
- plan how the organisation will fill critical roles in the future

Competencies remove some of the ambiguity and provide structure and standards for our Human Resource Systems. Every position in the Secretariat will have a set of Competencies appropriate to their role.

Prior to the meeting make sure you review the Competencies for your role and note down any questions you want to ask your manager to ensure you understand what these mean for you in your job.

How do I keep track of my competencies?

It is all very well to include a competency in your Performance Plan, however you also need to identify at the **planning phase** how you are going to **track** progress through the year. Both you and your manager will identify people who can provide appropriate feedback on your competencies. One way to collect information on the demonstration of competencies is to use a **CAR: A vehicle for transporting behavioural information**

C = Circumstance

A = Action

R = Result

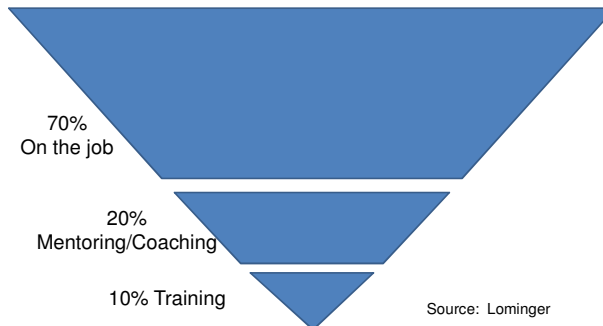
Some practical tracking sources may be:

- Manager Feedback
- Project Manager Feedback
- Unsolicited Stakeholder/User Feedback
- Peer Feedback



Development Planning - What goes into a development plan?

Development is about helping you to learn and grow. Development planning is a key part of the Performance Management Process, and is much broader than merely training and courses.



Research shows that the most effective learning happens informally on the job, as part of a person's everyday work. The above model is based on research undertaken by Lominger.

Four Factors of Performance

There are four factors that determine high performance.

D = Direction	Goals Guidance Leadership Purpose
O = Opportunity	Time Resources Equipment Experience
M = Motivation	Ownership Engagement Control
A = Ability	Skills Knowledge Attributes

To improve performance, you need to identify which factors will have the greatest impact. Each circumstance is different and will require a different solution.

What are the steps for Development Planning?

1. Consider the objectives and associated competencies identified in your Performance Plan.
2. Consider the Performance Review from the previous year as well as current performance.
3. Development plans are not compulsory for everyone, for example short term contract staff.
4. Using the DOMA formula think about what might be causing any performance gaps.
5. Consider what type of development opportunity you might need. *See the list of ideas below.*
6. Find out as much information as you can about the Development activity prior to the meeting, such as costs, dates, time off the job and resources.
7. Think about how you will measure the impact of this development activity on the achievement of your objectives and demonstration of your competencies.

Remember: Development activities in your Performance Plan will primarily focus on what you need to do well to achieve your objectives and demonstrate the competencies in your current role. Where you are performing well and meeting the expectations in your current role, you may consider identifying development activities to support your Career goals.

What are some Development Options?

- Undertake a challenging assignment
- Undertake a special project
- Facilitate some internal training
- Act in someone else's role while they are on leave
- Chair a team meeting
- Complete a study course and provide feedback to the team
- Join a professional association or group
- Join a professional group on a social networking site eg. LinkedIn
- Attend a conference and report back to the team
- Set up a blog
- Research relevant articles on the Net or at the library

b) During the planning meeting

Staff Member	Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the development or confirmation of performance expectations and identify tracking information • Using effective Interpersonal Skills* discuss and agree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objectives - Competencies • Discuss your draft Development Plan with your manager making sure you both agree on the gaps, causes, activities and desired outcomes. Remember: Where you are performing well your development may support your career goals. • Ensure a date is set for your first coaching meeting. • Discuss and agree on ownership of Performance Plan <p>* For further information refer to page 19 and 20 of these Guidelines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop or confirm Performance expectations and identify tracking sources with staff member • Using effective Interpersonal Skills and Discussion Guidelines* discuss and agree on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objectives - Competencies - Development Plan • Set date for first coaching meeting • Discuss and agree on ownership of Performance Plan <p>* For further information refer to the Sections on Interpersonal Skills and Discussion Guidelines (pages 19 and 20).</p>

c) After the planning meeting

Staff Member	Manager	Manager's Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Performance Plan and sign off • Complete Development Plan • Take responsibility for delivering on Plan • Diarise coaching and tracking meetings • Move into the Coaching and Tracking Phase of the Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign off on Performance Plan • Move into the Coaching and Tracking Phase of the Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Performance Plans to ensure alignment with business plan and SOI in accordance with the Consistency process.

III. Performance Review Phase

The Performance Review meeting takes place as soon as possible after the end of the Business Year, 31 March. As it is necessary to have all the business results in prior to having the performance review discussion, these meetings often end up happening in April.

a) What do I need to do in the Performance Review Phase?

What you need to do depends upon the roles you hold within the organisation. Outlined below are the roles of each person involved in the performance review process, namely the staff member, the manager and the manager. The CEO will review the performance plans to ensure that they will enable the Secretariat to achieve its annual business plan.

	Prior to Meeting	During the Meeting	After the Meeting
Staff Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to gather performance information. • Review your Performance Plan and compare actual against planned performance. • Consider what you have achieved during the year; what you would do differently next year and what impact that would have. • Assess the effectiveness of any development undertaken. • Draft these comments onto the Performance Plan. • You may share the draft Plan with your manager. 	<p>Purpose The purpose of the Performance Review meeting is to look over the past year, compare actual against planned performance and identify learnings for the following year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the discussion, providing your manager with information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how you performed against each objective - how you have demonstrated each competency. • Discuss what you would do differently next year and the impact this would have on performance. • Discuss highlights and key learnings for the year. • Note any development opportunities that have been identified for next year's Performance Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Performance Plan and sign off • Diarise next year's planning meeting if you are having a separate meeting
Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to gather performance information. • Review actual against planned performance. • Consider highlights and key learnings. • Assess the effectiveness of any development undertaken. • Draft these comments onto the Performance Plan. • You may share the draft Plan with your staff member. • Plan discussion using effective Interpersonal Skills and Discussion Guidelines. 	<p>Purpose The purpose of the Performance Review meeting is to look over the past year, compare actual against planned performance and identify learnings for the following year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using effective Interpersonal Skills and Discussion Guidelines lead the review discussion focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how they performed against each objective - how they have demonstrated each competency. • Discuss and agree on what they will do differently next year and the impact this would have on performance. • Discuss highlights and key learnings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign off on Performance Plan • Diarise next year's planning meeting if you are having a separate meeting

		for the year. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm any development opportunities that have been identified for next year's Performance Plan and set a date for finalising the next year's planning meeting.	
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IV. Interpersonal Skills

We interact with many people during the course of our working day and in our personal lives. It is important that these interactions are effective both in achieving the desired outcome and in building and maintaining a healthy, positive relationship.

If a person is feeling anxious, undervalued, frustrated or confused they are unlikely to contribute to an effective discussion.

Successful interaction skills are particularly critical to the success of the Performance Management Process, which is a **collaborative** process. It is important that the atmosphere established for any discussion is a shared one where staff and manager are working together to ensure the Secretariat's strategic aims and objectives will be met.

When will you use these skills?	What will you be ensuring?
You will use these skills during your: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• performance planning discussion• coaching and tracking discussions• performance review discussions	That your discussion partner feels: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• valued, respected and confident• listened to and understood• supported.

In addition, interactions where people share their thoughts, ask for any help that they may need and provide the rationale for any decisions they make, are more likely to be successful.

V. Discussion Guidelines

Discussion guidelines help to ensure the outcome of any discussion are met. The outcome may be that the person understands what is expected of them, is able to discuss any issues or concerns, and contributes and agrees on what comes next. How you implement the discussion guidelines depends upon your role.

	Preparing for the Discussion	Undertaking the Discussion
Staff Member	<p>Ensure you have a copy of your:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - draft Performance Plan - Team Plan, where appropriate - Position Description including competencies 	<p>Participate in the discussion.</p>
Manager	<p>Ensure you have a copy of the staff member's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - draft Performance Plan - Team Plan, where appropriate - Position Description including competencies <p>Book a room for the 1-on-1 meeting</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set the scene by establishing the purpose of the discussion and why it is important. 2. Clarify the process to be used during the discussion (the agenda) and any issues, opportunities or concerns that may exist. 3. Progress through the performance expectations to be planned, tracked or reviewed, ensuring that you discuss the rationale, explore any concerns, support or resources required and confirm understanding as you go. 4. Agree on outcomes and any next steps. 5. Conclude the discussion by asking the person to summarise what has been agreed to and confirming belief that they will be successful.

VI. Summary

The NBN Secretariat's Performance Management process provides a systematic way of ensuring that everyone within the organisation works together to contribute to the achievement of the five key strategic aims outlined in our Five Year Strategy:

1. Record, collect, diversify, enhance and mobilise biological data
2. Make biological data and information available to everyone
3. Captivate and engage people about wildlife
4. Provide the best biological information management infrastructure
5. Support the development of the NBN, its Board and its members

But integrating the performance planning and business planning, and engaging you in these discussions, we believe that you clearly see how what you do on a day to day basis ensures that decision-making about nature and the environment in the UK is based on biological data, collected and shared openly through our Network.