



## How to Rate Employee Performance

The Department of Commerce uses a 5-level performance rating system to evaluate the performance of its General Schedule employees. The 5-level rating system is numeric, e.g., 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. 5 is the highest level, 3 means sound, good performance, and 1 means unacceptable performance. There are no adjectives attached to the numeric system, e.g., Outstanding, Excellent, etc. ITA has a performance management website that houses information and guidance about the performance system at <http://www.ita.doc.gov/hrm/pms.htm>.

The performance cycle is October 1 through September 30 each year. There are three suspense periods throughout the rating cycle that are important to remember:

### Beginning of the year

1. Every employee must have a performance plan in place no later than 60 days after the beginning of the new year cycle. The form to use is a CD-430 and is located at <http://www.ita.doc.gov/hrm>.
2. Performance plans are a dual responsibility, i.e., both the employee and the supervisor (rating official) should work together to meet to discuss the performance plan and finalize it before it is approved by the approving official (second level supervisor).
3. Every element in a performance plan is considered “critical”. This means that each element list activities and criteria for evaluating the activities that are deemed critical to the mission of ITA.
4. Every employee has a Customer Service critical element and every leader (team leader, supervisor, manager, and executive) has a Leadership critical element.

### Mid-Term

1. At least one time during the performance cycle each employee must receive a formal mid-term progress review by their supervisor (rating official). This normally occurs during the month of April/May.
2. Employees must be on their performance plan for at least 120 calendar days before they can receive a performance appraisal; this includes a mid-term progress review.

### End-of-year

Every employee must receive an end-of-year appraisal, also referred to as a final summary rating, within 30 days of the end of the performance cycle, September 30, if they are ratable. Ratable means that an employee has been in their position performing the duties listed in their performance plan for at least 120 calendar days.

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The ITA Performance Management Website <http://www.ita.doc.gov/hrm/pms.htm> has a comprehensive list of FAQs about performance management. **If you have any questions contact: Ruben Pedroza** at 202-482-3072 or by email at: [Ruben.Pedroza@trade.gov](mailto:Ruben.Pedroza@trade.gov).