



# *CPC CyberFlash*

HONOR

RESPECT

COMMITMENT

## *From the Director's Desk*

In this article, I thought I would share an excerpt from a paper written by a former boss of mine. His paper centered on the book "First Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently." In his paper, he discusses the following statement that is applicable to us all. **"In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress."**

The best managers recognize that the time to discuss the progress and growth of employees is an opportunity to help them understand themselves better and to give them a clear perspective on how their contributions are really making a difference to the organization.

We have all had at least one infamous annual or semi-annual job performance review with our supervisor. The first two minutes of the review are usually focused on what the supervisor likes about us and our work, and the remaining 58 minutes are spent on our "areas of opportunity" (the things we are weak at and should improve upon). We usually walk out of this meeting feeling deflated and, while we have a clearer understanding of what we don't do well, we have little understanding of what we do well.

One of the paradoxes of hiring and retaining talented employees is that they tend to lack an intuitive understanding of how their talents manifest themselves in specific behaviors. They need objective feedback as to how they can focus these talents to become more productive -- feedback supervisors can provide. Such supervisors understand that, because talents are innate and natural, it is impossible to not use one's talents. So, instead of trying to change individual employees through centering on their weaknesses, great supervisors feel compelled to help them gain self-understanding and knowledge about the talents they possess and how they are applied every day at work.

Talent never becomes "talented" until an employee has a role that uses that talent. Great managers are always holding up a mirror to employees and encouraging them to "look in the mirror"-- to know themselves well and to know the roles in which they will most likely succeed. The world's greatest managers can answer some basic questions about every one of their employees. Some of these are:

What do employees enjoy the most about their current and previous work experiences?

What attracted them to come to work for the organization and what keeps them there?

What are employees' strengths, talents, skills and knowledge?

What are their goals for their current roles?

How often would they like to meet to discuss their progress?

Are they the kind of people who will tell me how they're feeling or will I have to ask?

What are their personal goals or commitments?

What is the best praise and recognition they have ever received?

What have been the most productive relationships they have had with a mentor or manager and what made them so special?

Talent only responds in relationship to another human being. Thus, feedback must be specific to the individual, and must be given in the context of a positive employee-manager relationship. The last words of the statement discussed in the first paragraph -- "my progress" -- are a significant part of this item. Employees must walk away from any discussion of their growth with a clearer understanding of who they are, instead of who they are not.

**Roger D. Mason**

**Acting Director, Commissioned Personnel Center**

### **STOLEN LAPTOP AND EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE RECOVERED**

Baltimore, Maryland – The Veterans Administration OIG, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Montgomery County Police Department announce the recovery of the stolen laptop computer and the external hard drive taken during a burglary on May 3, 2006. The electronic equipment contained sensitive information concerning over 26 million veterans and the recovery of the data has been of paramount concern. The protection of the sensitive data, and well being of those potentially affected, has made this investigation a number one priority for the investigating agencies. A preliminary review of the equipment by computer forensic teams determined that the database remains intact and has not been accessed since it was stolen. A thorough forensic examination is underway, and the results will be shared as soon as possible. The investigation is ongoing.

The Veterans Administration OIG, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Montgomery County Police Department would like to thank the United States Park Police for their invaluable work in this case. Their efforts led to the recovery of the equipment.

### **CPC DIRECTORY**

Attached to this CyberFlash is an updated CPC Directory. Please note that each individual can now be reached at his or her own personal telephone number. Please use those telephone numbers.

## **OFFICER EVALUATION SYSTEM**

We recently conducted an assessment of the new Officer Evaluation System (OES). One area of concern continues to be the timeliness of Officer Evaluation Report (OER) submissions.

Timely and accurate performance feedback is a core leadership responsibility that must remain a priority. Reporting Officers/Supervisors must be cognizant of the effects that late OERs have on officer trust in the system, assignment decisions, promotions, and career development. Late OERs sometimes translate to poor quality OERs. In addition, submission delays seriously impact the time available for conducting a quality review and making necessary corrections before a validated OER can be placed in an officer's record. It is imperative that officer records are accurate and complete prior to promotion boards, advanced education panels, command screening and the assignment season. Finally, good leaders employ the practice of timely performance feedback. I recognize that feedback can and should take many forms other than through the OER. However, Reported-on Officers should not be surprised with the content of their OER. Late OER submissions systematically eliminate the important practice of end-of-period counseling. This denies the affected officers the opportunity at the start of the next reporting period to improve performance, thus increasing dissatisfaction, distrust, and frustration with the OER process.

I firmly believe that in order for the OES to remain healthy and viable in the future, Supervisors/Reporting Officers and Reviews must reemphasize timeliness and good leadership practices. I urge all to examine their internal OER processes and to improve their OER submission timeliness if indicated. Commands are strongly encouraged to establish tracking systems that provide visibility on the status of OER submittals at all levels of the Chain of Command. This should serve to create self-correcting behavior to improve this critical part of our OES.

### **Officer Evaluation Submission Requirements**

Annual or semiannual as of the last day of the month as follows:

GRADE	MONTH
Captain	April
Commander	March
Lieutenant Commander	April
Lieutenant	May
Lieutenant (Junior Grade)	July and January
Ensign	March and September

For additional guidance on the OES please go to the following URL:  
<http://www.noaa Corps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/evaluation.html>

### **REFTRA Training Schedule**

The training schedule for Fall 2006 and 2007 REFTRA has been posted at:

<http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/refresherttraining.html>

If you have questions about REFTRA please contact LCDR Lynch at the Officer Training Center, 516-773-5049.

### **Career Assistance Program**

The Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) announced enhancements to the Career Assistance Program (CAP). In response to participants' support through program enrollment, positive feedback, and recommendations, OHRM updated the CAP with expanded program options and customization to the program offerings, schedule, and workshop locations.

The CAP is open to all DOC employees in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area at grades GS-7 through GS-15 (or equivalent). To learn more about the program and/or to participate, click on the following link: <http://www.doccareer.com>

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