What actions are allowed during the Closeout Phase?

In the Closeout phase, you may take the following actions:
- Add Summary Rating Narrative and Executive’s Accomplishment Narrative
- Enter initial ratings for each critical element
- Sign Summary Rating as Executive and Rating Official
- Add supporting documentation
- Print performance plans

Are Executives and Rating Officials able to see Part 6. Summary Rating Narrative and Part 7. Executive Accomplishment Narrative in their plans?

Executives and Rating Officials are only able to view the part that they should complete; Rating Officials can see Part 6. Summary Rating Narrative and Executives can see Part 7. Executive’s Accomplishment Narrative only until the other party has released those narratives. For example: Once the Executive releases their Accomplishment Narrative, their Rating Official will be able to see both, Part 6 and 7. Similarly, once the Rating Official releases the Summary Rating Narrative, the Executive will then be able to see Part 6 and 7.


Proxies can see everything the Executive and/or Rating Official they are proxying for can see.

Can a proxy release the Executive Accomplishment Narrative on the behalf of the Executive?

No, Proxies cannot release the Executive Accomplishment Narrative on behalf of the Executive to the Rating Official. The Executive must release their Accomplishment Narrative to the Rating Official.

Can a Proxy remove signatures and make changes to a plan?

No, only an Executive or Rating Official can remove signatures. Only the Executive or Rating Official will see the “Remove Signatures” button in the upper right-hand corner under Part 1. Once either the Executive or Rating Official has clicked the “Remove
Signature” button, all signatures under Part 1. Consultation only will also be removed. Proxies can make changes to an Executive’s plan after either the Rating Official or Executive have removed the signatures. A Proxy cannot sign the plan for either the Rating Official or Executive.

**Must an Executive or Rating Official add their own Proxy?**

Yes, the Executive or Rating Official must add their own Proxy. If a Proxy isn’t listed, please contact Blair Battle, Carmen Garcia, or Megan Goetz.

**Will Proxies have the same dashboard view as the Executive or Rating Official?**

Yes, Proxies have the same dashboard view as the Executive or Rating Official. However, Proxies may not sign the plan on behalf of the Executive or Rating Official.

**Is the Rating Official notified when a plan is ready for signature?**

The Rating Official will not receive a notification that the plan is ready to sign; therefore, the Executive (or Proxy) must inform the Rating Official after the plan is ready for the Rating Official to review/sign. The Executive will receive an email notification from the system after the Rating Official signs.

**Is my work automatically saved if I time out?**

No, to prevent losing your work, make sure to continuously save! Click the ‘Save’ button on the top ribbon (floppy disk icon) often.

**Note:** Users logged into USA Performance (USAP) will remain logged into the system for up to 15 minutes of inactivity. The countdown clock can be viewed in the top left tab of the browser. After the clock has counted down to 5 mins, the user will receive a prompt to select more time.

**How often do I need to change my USA Performance password?**

Users will be prompted to change their password every 60 days. New passwords cannot match the previous 24 passwords for that user.

**Note:** The Password Requirements document provides more information on password troubleshooting.
What should I do if I forgot my USA Performance password?

At any time, users can request a new password through the “Forgot Password” link on the login page. New passwords are sent within 15 minutes of the request (most times almost instantaneously). However, this can only be done once in a 24-hour period. If you initiate “Forgot Password” more than once during a 24-hour period, you will not receive another system generated email notification during that 24-hour period. Users should double check their spam/junk folder for the initial system generated email with the temporary password.

What should I do if my USA Performance account is locked?

If a user enters the wrong password 3 times in a row, their account is locked for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, the user may access USAP with their most current password. Users can either wait 30 minutes and try again or request a new password by clicking the “Forgot Password” button.

Can I use my PIV card to log in to USAP when using an iPad/tablet?

HHS is not PIV Enforced, and users are able to sign in with their username and password.

How do I adjust items on the screen that appear too small/large?

Check the zoom level in your browser. Often you can adjust the screen size either up or down. In Internet Explorer, look for the View option across the top menu bar, then go down to Zoom and adjust the screen display either up or down. In addition, check the browser Text Size setting. Most webpages are designed for viewing with a Text Size of Medium. If the Text Size is set to Larger or Largest, text may run off the bottom of the screen and not appear visible.

Can I copy and paste text into the performance requirements?

Yes, you can copy/paste into the performance requirements. It works best if you use unformatted text. You can highlight, underline, bold, and add rich text formatting within the system.
Is there a Help Desk specifically for USA Performance?

Yes; you can access the Help Desk through the Resources tab at the top of the screen, or by emailing USAPHelp@opm.gov. Additional information is available on the User Resources and Training page.

Is Personally Identifiable Information (PII) allowed in the notes or documents uploaded to the performance plans?

Don’t put PII in the performance plan, notes, or uploaded documents. The user profile has a field for SSNs entry, but they appear as black dots; users don’t have access to that SSN.

What are the system requirements?

You must be logged in to the NIH VPN to access USA Performance. The following browsers are tested and compatible with USA Performance:

- Internet Explorer (IE) 10 or higher,
- Google Chrome version 39 or higher.

Mac user: USA Performance is only accessible using Google Chrome or Internet Explorer.

Is USA Performance 508 complaint?

Yes.

Can I upload documents in USA Performance?

Documents can be uploaded at any time during the performance appraisal period by the Executive or Rating Official. Additional documents may include:

- Interim/Detail Performance Feedback
- Self-Accomplishments
- Supporting Documents
What are the character limits for the various text fields?

USA Performance text fields now contain increased character limits which include updates to the Performance Element Name and Plan Number fields. Character limits for the most common text fields are listed below.

- **Position Title** - 200 Characters
- **Plan Number** - 250 Characters
- **Position Description Number** - 25 Characters
- **Element Name** (including sub-element Name) - 250 Characters
- **Element Text** (including sub-element text) - No Character Limit
- **Element Standards**
  - **Rating Level Name** - 50
  - **Standard Text** - No Character Limit
- **Summary Self-Accomplishment Narrative** - 15,000 (~2 pages)
- **Summary Rating Official Narrative** - 15,000 (~2 pages)

While USAP doesn’t currently limit the numbers of characters for each box, it’s important to adhere to the limits the page count limits stated in the NIH Guidance. It is encouraged that you create your narrative in a word document so that you may track your character count. The USAP default font/size is Arial, 10 pt., one-inch margins and not-to-exceed 2 pages.