USA Performance (USAP) is an automated, web-based tool that assists Federal agencies in the implementation of their Senior Executive Service (SES) and non-SES performance management programs and systems. USAP enables agencies to automate their performance appraisal process throughout the entire performance rating cycle. Agencies can develop performance plans, track and monitor employees’ performance, provide feedback and ratings, and electronically sign performance plans.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE USER GUIDE FOR RATING OFFICIALS

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Part 1: General Information

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- USA Performance currently works with Internet Explorer version 10 and above and Google Chrome version 39 and above.
- Your access to the system will be provided by your NIH Administrator. You will receive two emails from USAPHelp@opm.gov – one with your username and one with your password.
- You must be inside the NIH/HHS firewall or VPN to open the link and see the login page below.

Login

Sign In using your PIV card or Email Address and Password

- Access USA Performance
- Type in your work email address
- Enter the temporary password provided to you in the automated email
- You will be prompted to change your password
- Read and accept the Rules of Behavior. You will be directed to the USA Performance Home page.

NOTE: Once you initially log into USA Performance with the temporary password, you may try registering and logging in with your PIV card.

Registering your PIV Card for the first time:

- Access USA Performance
- Click the “Log in with your Smart Card (Insert Card First)” icon
- Certificates will become available to select
- Select the authentication certificate. Only certificates ending in .8, .12 or .14 will be accepted. Do not select the “signature” certificate (ending in .7). To detect which certificate is correct, perform the following:
• Click on one of the certificates and then click “Click here to view certificate properties.” Scroll down on the “General” tab and you’ll see a string of numbers. Use this to determine if you have the right certificate.
• Enter your PIN
• After your PIN has been accepted, you’ll be able to access USA Performance with your PIV for future logins.

Smart Card Login:

• To access USAP navigate to the [USA Performance](#) site
• Click on the “Log in with your Smart Card (Insert Card First)” icon

Select the authentication certificate

• Enter your PIN
• You will be directed to the USA Performance Home page.

Password Requirements:

• Your password must be at least eight (8) characters with at least 3 of the following attributes:
  • At least one number 0-9
  • At least one upper-case letter A-Z
  • At least one lower case letter a-z
  • At least one special character !*? 
• Passwords expire every 120 days.
• If you forget your password, click Forgot Password on the login page. Check your junk folder for a system generated email with the temporary password.
• If you enter the wrong password three times in a row, your account will be locked for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, you will be able to access USA Performance with your most current password.
Part 2: System Navigation

Login ➔ Home

1. Login.
2. Home page will display. The navigation bar includes the following tabs:
3. Home—This button returns you to the Home page where you can see the Dashboard of your performance management actions and alerts.
4. Performance Management—This button takes you to the Performance Management section of the system, which has three tabs: Planning, Monitoring, and Rating. Each tab enables you to view which employees are at each phase of their performance plans. If you are unable to find an employee within a certain tab, it is likely because they are at a different phase, which requires referencing the other tabs. Within each tab, you can take action on employee performance plans such as viewing or signing the plans. Any necessary action will be indicated for each employee.
5. Reports—Allows you to run an Evaluation Report.
6. Resources—Provides USA Performance resources and reference materials.
7. User Profile—Your login in name will appear on the user profile dropdown. Click the dropdown to
8. Manage Proxies or Logoff.

Dashboard

When you first log in to USAP, you will be taken to the Home/Dashboard page with a Navigation bar at the top of the page with three buttons: Home, Performance Management, and Resources. This Navigation bar appears at the top of every page. In the upper right-hand corner is the user profile dropdown, which can be used to logoff or initiate proxy settings.

The Dashboard enables you to see the status of your performance plan (if applicable) and alerts you of tasks you need to complete. It is organized into two sections: “Tasks Requiring My Attention” and “Quick Links.”
**Tasks Requiring My Attention**: This section provides you with the tasks requiring your attention regarding your performance plan in the system. Under this heading, there is a subheading titled “My Active Plans” that provides links to pending tasks for your plans that are active. There is an additional subheading titled “My Employees’ Plans” that shows pending tasks for your employees’ plans.

**Quick Links**: This section has a subheading titled “Performance Plan” with quick links to prior years’ performance plans.

**System Email Notifications**
When certain tasks requiring user action are generated on the Dashboard, it triggers a notification email detailing what needs to be done. Email notification will be sent for the following actions:

- Rating Official: Create plan when cycle is released
- Executive: Sign plan after Rating Official signs Part 1
- Reviewing Official: Sign for progress review, if required for Part 2, after Rating Official signs
- Executive: Sign for progress review after Rating Official signs Part 2
- Rating Official: Review Self-Accomplishment Narrative after Executive releases it
- Reviewing Official (if required): Review the Initial Summary Rating after the Rating Official signs Part 3
- Executive: Sign for rating after the Rating Official or Reviewing Official signs Part 3
- Executives: When plan is signed by Appointing Authority

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**Sample Email Notification**

**Action: Review Executive Self-Accomplishment Narratives in USA Performance**

You have a new task in USA Performance. Log in to USA Performance to review the executive self-accomplishment narratives as the Rating Official for Haverford, Tom.
Part 3: The Planning Phase
Create a Performance Plan

1. To create a performance plan, begin on the Home/Dashboard page.
2. In the Tasks Requiring My Attention section, look under My Active Plans.

**NOTE:** You can also create a performance plan by selecting Performance Management in the navigation bar and clicking Create Plan in the Action column.

Creating a performance plan allows you to take the following actions:

- Enter appraisal period dates
- Add additional text to the Critical Elements to include agency-specific requirements
- Add a performance requirement and provide strategic alignment
- Edit or remove performance requirements
- Add supporting documentation
- Sign plan as an Executive or as Rating Official

Import a Performance Plan from a Previous Year

1. After clicking Create Plan, you may see an option to Import from Previous Plan. This option will only appear if you had a performance plan in USAP in the previous performance management (PM) cycle.
2. When you select Create Plan, a prompt may appear asking if you want to import the data from the previous performance plan.
3. Choose Yes or No.
4. Selecting Yes for this option will copy the contents from Part 1. Consultation, any agency-specific requirements for the critical elements, weight settings, and the performance requirements and strategic alignment.
Navigate the Performance Plan

1. The navigation bar at the top of the performance plan assists you with completing the plan. Items on the navigation bar link to the following actions: Consultation, Progress Review, Rating, Formula, Critical Elements, Narratives, Documents, Notes, Save, and Print. An icon with a red circle and a backslash indicates the action is not available at the current phase.

- **Consultation** — This button takes you directly to Part 1. Consultation of the performance plan.

- **Progress Review** — This button takes you to Part 2. Progress Review of the performance plan.

- **Rating** — This button takes you to the summary rating portion of the performance plan.

- **Formula** — This button takes you to the derivation formula section of the performance plan.

- **Critical Elements** — This button takes you to Part 5. Critical Elements, where Executives and Rating Officials can add text or enter critical element weights.

- **Narratives** — This button takes you to Part 6. Summary Rating Narrative and Part 7 Executive’s Accomplishment Narrative where Executives and Rating Officials can complete the narratives for the performance plan.

- **Documents** — This button takes you to the Employee Documents section where you can upload additional documents to append to the performance plan.

- **Notes** — This button takes you to the notes section of the performance plan where general notes can be added to the performance plan. If you move your cursor over the Notes icon, it will show the last time the notes section was updated.

- **Save** — This button saves any changes made to the performance plan.

- **Print** — This button enables you to print a hard copy of the performance plan.
Enter Appraisal Period Dates

1. The first step in creating a performance plan is to establish the appraisal period. **Establish appraisal period start date**—Select the first box next to Appraisal Pd. and enter the appraisal starting date in the calendar dropdown.

2. **Establish appraisal period end date**—Select the second box next to Appraisal Pd. and enter the appraisal end date in the calendar dropdown.

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Add text to Critical Elements

1. For Critical Elements 1-4, agency-specific performance requirements may be added to the standard element language.

2. Place your cursor in the text box under Agency-Specific Performance Requirements. For NIH SES, SL (Supervisors), and SENIOR-LEVEL TITLE 42 EMPLOYEES—Refer to the current year guidance

3. Insert the additional text.
4. Click **Save** at the top of the page.

**TIP:** Due to system timeouts, we recommend drafting any narratives in a word processing program and then pasting it into the USAP plan. Typing text does not prevent the system from timing out. If the system times out before you save, you will lose your work. Save your work often!

Add text to Critical Element 5
1. Scroll down the page to **Critical Element 5** and click inside the **Performance Requirement** box to add text.

2. Under **Strategic Alignment**, indicate the agency strategic or operational goal to which the requirement is aligned.

3. Select **Save** at the top of the page.

4. To add an additional performance requirement, select the **Add Performance Requirement** button at the bottom of the page and repeat the steps above.
Enter Critical Element Weights
1. To enter critical element weights, type a value into each of the Weight fields and click Save.

- Critical Elements 1-4 have a minimum weight of 5% and a maximum weight of 20%.
- Critical Element 5 has a minimum weight of 20% and a maximum weight of 80%.
- When weighting the performance requirements, the weight must total 100%.

**NOTE:** Weight Restrictions vary by agency. Reference agency-specific policy to ensure compliance with weight restrictions. NIH Specific Performance Requirement for ALL SES, SL (Supervisors), and SENIOR-LEVEL TITLE 42 EMPLOYEES are in the current year guidance.

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**Critical Element 1. Leading Change**

Develop and implements an organizational vision that integrates key organizational and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors. Assesses and adjusts to changing situations, implementing innovative solutions to make organizational improvements, ranging from incremental improvements to major shifts in direction or approach, as appropriate. Balances change and continuity, continually strives to improve service and program performance, creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, collaboration, and transparency; and maintains program focus, even under adversity.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>M</th>
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<td>B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Develop a strategic plan by August 15, 2015, to streamline processes and improve accuracy and timeliness of the delivery of funds and services to grantees.

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Edit a Performance Plan
1. Scroll down to the performance requirement section you wish to edit and click in the Performance Requirement or the Strategic Alignment fields to edit the text.

2. To delete an entire performance requirement, select the red X box next to the performance requirement you wish to delete. You will only be able to delete an optional performance requirement.

3. Click Save at the top of the page.

Sign as a Rating Official

**WHEN A PLAN IS COMPLETE, THE RATING OFFICIAL MUST SIGN THE PLAN BEFORE THE EXECUTIVE WILL BE ABLE TO SIGN.** Sign Plan(s) will be listed in Tasks Requiring My Attention on the Dashboard when a plan is awaiting your signature.

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1. To sign a plan, select Sign Plan(s) to open the list of plans that need signatures for that year.
2. Select employee whose plan you want to sign.
4. Verify that you want to sign the plan by selecting Yes, when the prompt appears.

NOTE: You will not be able to type your name or the date in the boxes. When you select “Yes” to assign the plan, your name and date will automatically appear in the respective boxes.

Sign Your Performance Plan
As a rating Official your tasks includes signing your own plan. Once your Rating Official has signed your plan, you will be able to sign your plan. On the Dashboard, under Tasks Requiring My Attention, you will see Sign My Consultation.

1. To sign the plan, select Sign Own Plan.

2. In Part 1, next to the Executive’s Signature, select Sign.

3. When the prompt Are you sure you want to sign this Performance Plan? appears, select Yes.
NOTE: You will not be able to type your name or the date in the boxes. When you select “Yes” to sign the plan, your name and date will automatically appear in the respective boxes.
Part 4: Monitoring Phase

Progress Review Notes and Signatures

1. When logged in as the Rating Official, navigate to Part 2. Progress Reviews of the Performance Plan to provide progress review notes during the monitoring phase.

2. Select the Notes button to add a Note.

3. Enter text and click Save.

4. After the progress review is complete, a Rating Official must sign before the Executive can sign.

5. After the Rating Official signs, the Executive can sign.

6. Select the Request Reviewing Official Signature box to request a higher level review.

7. Select Release this note to the Executive box if the Rating Official would like the notes to be made available to the Executive.
Adding Supporting Documentation

1. Select **Performance Management** on the navigation bar and click on the individual’s name to view an employee’s Performance Plan.
2. Click the **Documents** icon at the top of the plan or scroll to the bottom of the page and select **Add Document**.
3. Enter a **Description** (optional).
4. Choose a file to upload by clicking **Browse**.
5. Select a **Document Type** from the dropdown menu (optional).
6. Enter text in the **Comments** textbox (optional).
7. Click **Save Changes**.
   - The details of the uploaded document should be listed in the **Employee Documents** table at the bottom of the page.
8. Click **Delete** in order to remove the document.
Part 5: The Rating Phase

The Summary Rating Narrative

The Summary Rating Narrative is an overall review of the Executive's performance which must be completed by the Rating Official. To enter the narrative:

1. Click on Narratives at the top of the plan.


3. Select Save at the top of the page.

4. You also have the option to provide commentary in the Rating Official Narrative box under each critical element. Upon completion, select Save at the top of the page.

5. You also have the option to provide commentary in the Rating Official Narrative box under each critical element. Upon completion, select Save at the top of the page.

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Assign Ratings

1. To assign a final summary rating as a Rating Official, you must first make ratings for each Critical Element and any other additional performance requirements.

2. Once the performance plan is open, you can navigate to the rating section by selecting the Rating icon at the top of the performance plan.

3. Navigate through each requirement and select a rating of 1-5.

4. Provide an explanation on the element’s rating in the Rating Official Narrative text box (optional).
5. **Click Save** at the top of the page.

Summary Rating and Signature

1. Once ratings are saved for all performance requirements, the system will automatically record those ratings under the Initial column in Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation.
2. Based on those ratings, the system will calculate and determine the Initial Summary Rating in Part 3.
   - Click **Sign** next to **Rating Official’s Signature**.

Executive Signature

Once the performance plan has been rated and signed by your Rating Official and the Higher-Level Reviewer (if required), you will have the opportunity to review their ratings and sign the plan under **Part 3. Summary Rating**.

1. Prior to signing the plan, you have the option to **Request a Higher-Level Review**.
2. Before selecting the **Request a Higher Level Review** checkbox, you should upload a justification to Employee Documents explaining why you disagree with the rating.

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**Print a Performance Plan**

1. Select the **Performance Management** link from the top navigation bar.
2. Select the name of the plan to be viewed.

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3. Select the **Print** icon in the upper right corner.
4. **Select Report pdf** in the lower left corner.

5. **Select the Print icon** in the upper right corner.
PART 6: Evaluation Reports

Login → Home → Reports

Generate Evaluation Reports
Throughout the performance plan cycle, as a Rating Official and/or Reviewing Official, you can check on the status of the performance plans for each employee (SES or Non-SES) for which you are responsible. The report displays the status of employee performance plans within an individual or all organizations and divisions for a chosen fiscal year. Further, you can choose to look at performance plans in all phases, or for only the planning, monitoring, or rating phase.

1. To generate a Performance Plans Progress Report, select the Reports link.
2. Click Performance Plans Progress Report.
3. Select the fiscal year from the Rating Cycle FY dropdown list.
4. Select Planning, Monitoring, Rating, or Select All from the Phase(s) list.
5. Select the organization(s) from the Organization(s) list.
6. Select the division(s) from the Divisions(s) list.
7. Click Generate Report.
PART 7: USAP HELP DESK SUPPORT

Login → Home → Resources

Request USAP Help Desk Support

For further questions, contact your designated IC liaison at https://hr.nih.gov/hr-systems/usa-performance/usa-performance-ic-proxies.

1. Click Email Helpdesk.
2. You can also email the Helpdesk directly at USAPerformance@opm.gov.