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**UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

THESIS

Ross T. Johnston, Major, USAF

AFIT/GRD/ENV/10-M07

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

AIR UNIVERSITY

AIR FORCE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

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AFIT/GRD/ENV/10-M07

UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

AFIT-GRD-ENV-10-M07

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
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March 2010

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UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

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Abstract

Effective employee management is an essential element for achieving and sustaining a competitive advantage. Through a variety of performance management practices organizations can translate competitive strategies into individual performance expectations and transform employee potential into desired organizational outcomes.

Despite the promise of robust performance management practices, a significant research gap exists between the scientific research in Organizational Behavior (OB) and the performance management practices espoused by the “practitioners.” The purpose of this thesis research is to explore a set of performance management practices as an initial step toward providing direct, empirical support for the linkages between performance management practices, the intended behavior or attitude of employees, and the desired employee outcomes measured by perceived organizational support and organizational commitment. The selected performance management “best-practices” of goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback were tested via self-report survey data from a sample of active-duty military and federal civil-service employees. The results indentified the relative effectiveness of the selected practices with respect to perceived organizational support and organizational commitment.

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Ross T. Johnston

Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract	iv
Acknowledgments.....	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	x
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Background	1
Thesis Motivation.....	3
“Performance Management” Defined	3
Performance Management Best Practices	5
Research Problem and Purpose	6
Research Questions	7
Chapter I Summary	9
Chapter II: Literature Review	10
Overview	10
The Research Gap	11
Performance Management.....	12
The Selected Performance Management Practices	14
Goal-alignment	14
Role-clarification.....	16
Engagement	17
Accountability	19
Feedback	20
Chapter III: Methodology	23
Overview	23
Research Method.....	23
Instrument Development.....	24
Sample and Procedure.....	26

	Page
Measures.....	28
Goal-alignment Measures.....	30
Role-clarification Measures.....	31
Engagement Measures.....	31
Accountability Measures.....	32
Feedback Measures.....	32
Perceived Organizational Support Measures.....	32
Organizational Commitment Measures.....	33
Chapter III Summary.....	33
Chapter IV: Results and Discussion.....	35
Overview.....	35
Results.....	35
Goal-alignment Results.....	39
Role-clarification Results.....	39
Engagement Results.....	40
Accountability Results.....	41
Feedback Results.....	42
Results Summary.....	43
Chapter V: Conclusions.....	46
Overview.....	46
Discussion.....	46
Goal Alignment.....	46
Role-clarification.....	48
Engagement.....	49
Accountability.....	51
Feedback.....	52
Sample Discussion.....	54
Research Conclusions.....	56
Limitations of the Research.....	58

	Page
Future Research.....	59
Chapter V Summary.....	60
Bibliography	61
Appendix A: Survey A.....	66
Appendix B: Survey B.....	73

List of Figures

	Page
Figure 1. Experiment Design	13
Figure 2. Description of "Performance Management" provided in Survey A	26

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1. Common Performance Management "Best Practices"	6
Table 2. Selected Survey Demographic Items	28
Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, Reliability Estimates, and Correlations of the Study Variables	37
Table 4. Sobel Mediation Test (P-values).....	38
Table 5. Hypotheses H1x Summary.....	44
Table 6. Hypotheses H2x Summary	44
Table 7. Hypotheses H3x Summary	45

UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Chapter I: Introduction

Background

Effective employee management is not only imperative for any successful organization; it is an essential element for achieving and sustaining a competitive advantage. Through a variety of performance management practices organizations can translate competitive strategies into individual performance expectations and transform employee potential into desired organizational outcomes (Tahvanainen, 2000). A common assertion across performance management literature is that individual performance and effectiveness are related to the way people are managed (Pandey, Coursey, & Donald, Mar 2007; Risher, 2007b; Moynihan & Pandey, 2004). “Performance Management” provides the foundation through which organizations can motivate individuals to contribute most effectively to organizational success.

Despite the promise of robust performance management practices, a significant research gap exists between the scientific research in Organizational Behavior (OB) and the performance management practices espoused by the “practitioners.” Priem and Rosenstein (2001) and Rynes, Bartunek, and Daft (2001) have documented the science-practice gap between OB and other management sub-disciplines. With respect to performance management, Aguinis and Pierce (2007, p. 28) argue “that performance management practices would benefit from research emanating from the field of OB.” Furthermore, because of the prevalence of performance management practices in today’s

human resource (HR) management strategies, scholarly knowledge on performance management practices is relevant, applicable, and addresses the science-practice gap (Aguinis & Pierce, 2007). This research contributes scholarly knowledge focused specifically on that gap. By testing performance management from beginning-to-end, from performance management practice, to individual effect, to individual outcome, this research establishes the effectiveness of performance management practices.

The beginning-to-end approach is the shortcoming of much “practitioner” literature. Often performance management practices are identified because OB literature, HR consultants, or research data highlights a favorable individual quality of successful or high-performing employees. This is easily illustrated with a hypothetical example. Based on extensive research, Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) assert engaged employees possess a sense of energetic and affective connection with their work activities and display positive affectivity toward job demands. The performance management “practitioner” may utilize this data and argue “engagement” is an element a performance management system must address, because “engagement” contributes to individual performance. While the “practitioner’s” argument is logical, it is supported only by the originating research, which links only the individual quality to a positive work-related outcome. The relationship between the performance management practice, the individual quality or effect, and the job-related outcome was not established. This research focused on establishing that three-way, beginning-to-end relationship.

Thesis Motivation

This thesis was motivated by author's 12 years experience in Defense System Acquisition for the U.S. Air Force. Throughout the authors tenure he had multiple positions of responsibility relating to the development of defense end-items. These "project management" positions had staffs, counterparts, and co-workers of varying ability and motivation. Because of the bureaucratic government paradigm, and rigid separation of functional staffs and reporting chains, the author had assigned responsibility for coordinating, organizing and executing the team-related work but had little "formal authority" over processes and personnel. His reliance on expert and reverent power provided the foundation for effective leadership and project management. Informally the author sought ways to motivate and focus the efforts of individuals, capitalizing on individual strengths, expertise, experience, and motivation. With varying degrees of success, these "soft-skills" became a predominate part of his leadership and project management philosophy. This thesis further investigates leadership and management practices focused on optimizing individual of job-performance and organizational commitment.

"Performance Management" Defined

Performance Management necessitates the interaction, alignment and synchronization of employee output with an organization's people, processes, and structures. Graham (2004) describes performance management as an organizing tool; it helps prevent organizational chaos. Proactive performance management blocks undesirable employee behavior while reinforcing and enhancing desired behaviors (Reid

& Hubbell, 2005). Furthermore, performance management means developing stronger links between individual behavior and organizational objectives (Van Der Hiejde & Van Der Hiejde, 2006) . Graham (2004) defines performance management as, “a systematic approach for assigning work and expectations, supporting and enabling employee efforts, providing assessment and feedback, and following through with appropriate recognition or corrective action.” The United States General Accounting Office reports an effective performance management system is a means to drive internal change and achieve desired performance results (GAO, 2003a). It says:

“Specifically, performance management systems must create a line of sight showing how team, unit, and individual performance can contribute to overall organizational results. The system serves as the basis for setting expectations for employees’ roles in the transformation process and for evaluating individual performance and contributions to the success of the transformation process, and ultimately to the achievement of organizational results.” (GAO, 2003a)

For this research, a general definition of a performance management is used. The definition states, a *Performance Management System* is the collection of methodologies, processes, and products an organization utilizes to motivate, focus, control, evaluate, and reward its members. The elements of a performance management system include but are not limited to: performance evaluations/appraisals/reports, job descriptions, job performance expectations, performance feedback, goal setting, promotion practices, awards/rewards, employee development programs, communication practices, pay/bonuses, accountability, and correcting poor performance. Risher (2007b, p. 26) states the exchanges of leaders and their people are affected by the policies, practices and systems used to manage the organization; “Organizations have any number of different practices that in some way send messages to employees.” Performance Management

Practices, regardless of their effectiveness or degree of formality, exist as de facto elements in all organizations.

Performance Management Best Practices

Like many other popular and benchmarked business practices, there is a somewhat common set of general performance management practices labeled “best-practices” or “recommended approaches.” These approaches are commonplace in “practitioner” literature. Table 1 lists many of the generalized “best practices” advocated in human relations, management, and organizational psychology literature. A select set of these “best practices” were the focus of this research. Those “best practices” (Bold type in Table 1) were selected because of their simplicity of concept, ease of measurement with self-report data, presence of validated measures, and their fundamental nature as individual qualities that can be related to individual performance and organizational commitment. The best practices of *goal-alignment*, *role-clarification*, *engagement*, *accountability*, and *feedback* are examined in Chapter II.

Table 1. Common Performance Management "Best Practices"

Common Performance Management “Best-Practices”	
Pay for Performance 5, 14, 17, 24, 25	Proactively Address Under-performance 4, 7, 8, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25
Employee Development 1, 3, 8, 10, 13, 14	Well Defined, Communicated Goals 12, 17, 18
Employee Learning 13, 14, 16, 22	Measure, Track Employee Performance 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24
Cascading Goals 8, 13, 16, 17, 18, 24	Provide Performance Feedback 1, 8, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 24
Align Expectations with Organizational Goals 5, 8, 10, 12, 18, 21, 24, 25	Management Models Desired Behaviors 11, 21
Establish, Document Competencies 5, 9, 24, 25	Competency-based Performance Evaluations 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 24, 25
Clarify Mission, Values, Roles, and Requirements 7, 8, 12, 16, 17, 21, 24, 25	Identify, Develop, Promote Top Performers 3, 6, 16, 17, 18,
Self-managed Teams 2, 14, 16	Individual Accountability 5, 7, 13, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23,
Employee Security, Openness, Trust 13, 14, 16, 23	Importance of Performance Reinforced 8, 17, 21, 23
Employee Engagement 13, 16, 17, 21	Involve Employees in Ownership of the Performance Management System 5, 8, 15, 19, 24
Decentralized Decision Making and Empowerment 1, 12, 14, 16, 22	Mangers accountable for Subordinate performance, development 7, 16, 17, 18

Sources:

1 (Aggarwal, 2004)	2 (Annunzio, 2007)	3 (Berger, 2004)	4 (Forgie, 2007)	5 (GAO, 2003a)
6 (Garrow & Hirsh, 2008)	7 (Gary, 2004)	8 (Graham, 2004)	9 (Grote, Spring 2000)	10 (Heathfield, 2007)
11 (Kotter & Heskett, 1992)	12 (Moynihan & Pandey, 2004)	13 (Ortiz & Arnborg, 2005)	14 (Pfeffer, 1998)	15 (Raynor, 2007)
16 (Reid & Hubbell, 2005)	17 (Risher, 2007)	18 (Risher & Fay, 2007)	19 (Robson, 2005)	20 (Rogers, 2006)
21 (Rosenthal & Masarech, 2003)	22 (Sanger, 2008)	23 (Strickler, 2006)	24 (Trahan, 2007)	25 (Trahan, 2008)

Note. **Bold** type indicates practices addressed in this research.

Research Problem and Purpose

Effective “performance management” systems are not merely used for once or twice-yearly individual expectation setting and rating processes, but are tools to help

organizations manage and lead on a day-to-day basis (GAO, 2003a). The purpose of this thesis research is to explore a set of performance management practices as an initial step toward providing direct, empirical support for the linkages between performance management practices, the intended behavior or attitude of employees, and individual performance and/or organizational commitment. The results identify the relative effectiveness of the selected performance management practices and provide support for recommendations to modify or enhance formal and informal performance management practices within organizations.

Research Questions

There are three research questions for this thesis. The premise is that if performance management “best-practices” are effective, they should create a behavior, attitude and/or condition within the individual employee that causes a response or effect, and the individual’s response or effect should translate into work performance and/or organizational commitment. Much of the organizational behavior research can demonstrate relationships between an individual condition or behavior and work performance, and much of the performance-improvement, “practitioner”-type literature asserts performance practices are related to individual and organizational performance. This research examines if a Performance Management Practice has a significant effect on perceived organization support (POS, which is positively related to individual performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002)) and organizational commitment.

Research Question 1: Do individual levels of goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback relate to POS and/or organizational

commitment? For example, does an individual with a high degree of work engagement also have a high level of performance and/or organizational commitment?

Research Question 2: Do the performance management practices relate to the corresponding individual level of displaying that same trait? For example, If an individual's performance management system specifically addresses and provides performance feedback, does that correspond to condition where the individual feels they receive the necessary performance feedback?

Research Question 3: Do the performance management practices significantly effect POS and/or organizational commitment of the individual? It is useful to know whether a performance management practice leads to the desired outcome. For example, does the performance management practice of role-clarification significantly account for the relationship between the individual and POS and/or organizational commitment? This research question affords a deeper understanding of the selected of performance management practices and their relationship to the outcome variables.

The research questions are developed with hypotheses for each of the selected best-practices evaluated in the study. Chapter 2 details each of the selected performance management practices and associated hypotheses. This exploratory research utilizes qualitative research elements. The approach begins with a literature review exploring key performance management practices in conjunction with the existing "best-practices." The second step identified, via survey results, the effect selected performance management practices had on individual performance and organizational commitment. The culmination of the research is in empirical support for the effectiveness of the

selected performance management practices in fostering POS and organizational commitment. Additional details on the specific data collection approach is presented in Chapter III and data analysis is presented in Chapter IV.

Chapter I Summary

For this study a *performance management system* is defined as the collection of methodologies, processes, and products an organization utilizes to motivate, focus, control, evaluate and reward its employees. Performance management is both formal and informal, and exists as de facto elements of organizations.

A science-practice gap exists between scholarly research and “practitioner” performance management “best-practices.” The purpose of this research is to address that gap by assessing the effectiveness of selected performance management “best practices” from beginning-to-end. This thesis research explores five performance management practices: *goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback*. The objective is determining whether the selected performance management practices are effective in promoting individual performance and organizational commitment. In addition, the results identify the performance management practices most correlated with the corresponding individual qualities and the individual qualities most correlated with POS and organizational commitment. Ultimately, this research provides support for recommendations to modify or enhance formal and informal performance management practices within organizations.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Overview

The following chapter provides a literature review of the five selected performance management practices. Goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback are addressed individually and associated research hypothesis are developed. These performance management practices were selected because of their simplicity of concept, ease of measurement with self-report data, presence of validated measures, and their fundamental nature as individual qualities that can be related to individual performance and organizational commitment. The results of previous scholarly research establishes goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback as valuable attributes or conditions of individual employees and serves as a foundation to evaluate the effectiveness of performance management practices in creating the desired individual outcomes. That outcome is both the individual effect associated with the performance management practice (i.e. addressing accountability in a performance management system fosters the individual's perception and demonstration of accountability) and the practices impact on individual performance, and organizational commitment. The literature review establishes the veracity of the select performance management practices and provides further theoretical and empirical support for recommendations to modify or enhance formal and informal performance management practices within organizations.

The Research Gap

This research began with a desire to find, catalog and evaluate practices intended to improve performance of individual employees. The literature examined for this thesis covered a variety of sources. Books such as *The Human equation: Building Profits by Putting People First* by Pfeffer (1998), journal articles in many forms, government reports (GAO, 2003a), federal human capital plans, and academic publications were canvassed for practices intended to improve employee performance. A divergence in approaches and viewpoints regarding performance management became apparent, particularly among the “practitioner” type literature and the academic literature. In journals such as, *The Journal for Quality and Participation*, *Harvard Management Update*, and *Public Performance Management* it is typical for authors to describe “practices” to enhance employee performance or recommendations to develop robust formal and informal human capital practices. The collection of these practices, as they relate to the human resource management function, are generally referred to as “performance management” or “performance management systems.” The practitioner publications reference academic literature and empirical studies that test relationships between various organizational behavior (OB) variables with respect to the individual employee. Examples of those individual relationships include *goal-setting and job-performance*, *work engagement and proactive behavior*, and *learning orientation and employee development*. OB research is a significant source of data for the assertions of “practitioners” but it falls short of empirically connecting the performance management practices (practices, policies and processes of the organization) with desired employee outcomes.

However, the search for “performance management” in higher-tier academic journals resulted in much different set of literature than the practitioners. For example, Human Resource Management published numerous case-study based articles related to performance management (Jones, 1995; Kim, Rucci, Huselid, & Becker, 1999; Harris, Huselid, & Becker, 1999; Tahvanainen, 2000; Rodriguez, Patel, Bright, Gregory, & Gowing, 2002; Neary, 2002; Barber, Huselid, & Becker, 1999). Instead of listing the “best practices” these articles provide primarily an executive benchmark for overhauling human relations philosophies and practices.

The missing piece of research across the array of performance management literature is highlighted by Aguinis and Pierce (2007, p. 139); they “argue performance management practices would benefit from research emanating from the field of OB.” The concept of the science-practitioner gap in management disciplines is supported by research by Priem and Rosenstein (2001) and Rynes, Bartunek, and Daft (2001). Closing the science-practice performance management gap is relevant because of the prevalence of performance management practices in today’s organizations (Aguinis & Pierce, 2007). This research attempts to fill that gap with respect to the selected performance management practices below.

Performance Management

For this research a general definition of a performance management is presented. The definition is consistent with the multiple descriptions of “performance management” in Chapter I. The definition states; A *Performance Management System* is the collection

of methodologies, processes, and products an organization utilizes to motivate, focus, control, evaluate, and reward its members. The elements of a performance management system include, but are not limited to: performance evaluations/appraisals/reports, job descriptions, job performance expectations, performance feedback, goal setting, promotion practices, awards/rewards, employee development programs, communication practices, pay/bonuses, accountability, and correcting poor performance.

The following literature review examines the performance practices of goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback. Figure 1 depicts the hypothesized relationship among the study variables. The study hypotheses, represented by the arrows in Figure 1, are described in the corresponding performance management literature review sections.

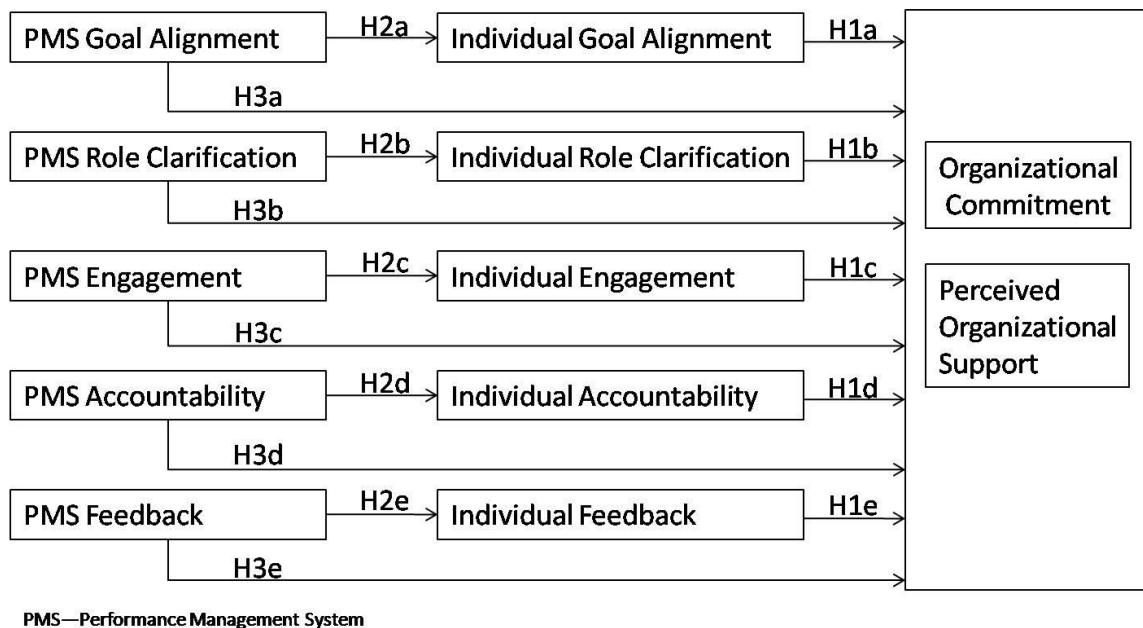


Figure 1. Experiment Design

The Selected Performance Management Practices

Goal-alignment

The alignment of individual performance expectations with organization goals is fundamental to effective performance management. The GAO (2003a) writes the explicit alignment of individual performance expectation with organizational goals enables employees to comprehend the connection between their daily activities and organizational objectives and aids in focusing individual roles and responsibilities toward larger goals. Moynihan and Pandey (2004) found that the success of communicating the organizational goals and the employee's role in achieving this goal had a significant effect on performance. Risher (2007) titles this concept "Work link to mission," and writes that employees desire to know that their work efforts are contributing to overall success. Graham (2004) identifies the same employee desire. Risher (2007) says employees need a "line of sight" from their output to organizational goals. The GAO also uses the phrase "line of sight" to describe the clear linkage and alignment of goals. Trahant (2007) writes the alignment of work goals at all levels within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security "serves to create a strong organizational line of sight on key departmental priorities and focuses on results." He adds organizations must invest time in communicating outcome goals consistent with corporate missions and at an organizational level that promotes innovation and individual performance (Trahan, *Realizing a performance culture in federal agencies*, 2007).

In conjunction with the alignment of individual and organizational objectives, and the "line-of-sight" concept is the notion of cascading goals; the clear delineation of how

achievement of lower-level goals supports the achievement of larger organizational goals and how individual goals arise from strategic objectives. Riser (2007) describes cascading goals as a direct linkage of an objective to both its higher level objective and lower level objective. He states it is often difficult to define the lower-level, day-to-day goals, however, employee engagement are improved after cascading organizational goals. Graham (2004) writes a performance management system cascades the organization-wide strategic plan so that each department, work unit, team and individual has part of the linked plan. Van Der Heijde and Van Der Heijde (2006) explain with the erosion of the traditional dichotomy between managers and staff, employees must perform as part of integrated corporate teams and identify with organizational goals. Job performance involves “sharing responsibilities, knowledge, experience, feelings, credits, failures, [and] goals” (Van Der Hiejde & Van Der Hiejde, 2006, p. 456).

Moynihan and Pandey’s (2004) work supported the hypothesis that clear goals and decentralized decision authority improve performance. Similarly, Trahan (2007) describes the critical role for performance management in driving employee performance; he says performance management requires that organizations monitor employee performance closely and link individual performance expectations to corporate goals. The benefits of the *goal-alignment* are two-fold. Graham (2004) explains, goal-alignment increases more than just individual performance, it helps employees focus on the organization’s products, services, and processes necessary for success. Based on the above literature, this research proposed examining the performance management practice of goal-alignment with the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: Individual Goal-alignment is positively related to POS and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2a: The performance management practice of Goal-alignment is positively related to Individual Goal-alignment

Hypothesis 3a: Individual Goal-alignment mediates the relationship between the performance management practice of Goal-alignment and POS and organizational commitment

Role-clarification

The definition of work roles is a critical factor to the solicitation, performance and general health of employees; it concerns the acquisition and modification of knowledge about the expectations placed on an individual's work behavior and output.

(Schaubroeck, Ganster, Sime, & Ditman, 1993). Trahan (2007) writes after aligning individual performance expectations with organizational goals, the performance management function must clarify roles, responsibilities and expectations. Similarly, Reid and Hubbell (2005) write performance management must provide a clarity and precision focus defining accomplishments and practices. Jones (1995) research on organizational transformation in the Monsanto Company concluded that clarifying roles had a major impact on performance and fostering positive change.

Moynihan and Pandey (2004) report a general distaste for the multiple, conflicting and ambiguous goals placed on public administration and conclude their research provides empirical support for the clarification of simple goals and expectations.

Furthermore, role-clarification fosters an effective means to prevent and address underperformance. Forgie (2007) advocates establishing a clear understanding with employees of what constitutes good performance and translating that concept into specific expected behaviors and outcomes.

Based on the literature, the hypotheses for evaluating the performance management practice of role-clarification are:

Hypothesis 1b: Individual Role-clarification is positively related to POS and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2b: The performance management practice of Role-clarification is positively related to Individual Role-clarification.

Hypothesis 3b: Individual Role-clarification mediates the relationship between the performance management practice of Role-clarification and POS and organizational commitment.

Engagement

Engagement or engaging the “hearts and minds” of employees is a repeated performance management theme. Engagement is the opposite of “burnout;” engaged employees possess a sense of energetic and affective connection with their work activities and display positive affectivity toward job demands (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Sanger (2008, p. 641) writes, after studying organizational transformation in the New York City Department of Finance, “change involves changing the hearts and minds of both managers and employees deep in the organization.” The “emotional contract” (Rosenthal

& Masarech, 2003) created by performance management replaces the implicit agreements and purely economic transactions of work. They recommend engaging employees in the rationale of organizational goals and encouraging employees to assess the personal meaning of those goals. Risher (2007) writes that research shows employees emotionally committed to the success of the organization perform at higher levels. Engagement yields higher productivity, lower absenteeism, and turnover (Risher, 2007b). Bob Tobias, director of Public Sector Executive Education at American University, asserted in his March 2007 congressional testimony, “When employees understand how their own work impacts agency outcomes, their engagement in their work increases, as does their productivity, satisfaction, and morale on the job” (Trahant, 2007).

Creating a personal connection between the individual and organization contributes to performance. Armstrong and Ortiz (2005) emphasize the critical importance of employee engagement in creating high-performance. They assert, “When individuals take an authentic stand for a purpose, it shows in their behavior” (Ortiz & Arnborg, 2005, p. 32). Kahn (1990) concluded work engagement is expected to affect individual performance and Demerouti, Bakker, de Jonge, Janssen, and Schaufeli (2001) reported work engagement is positively related to organizational commitment. Based on the above literature, this research proposes examining the performance management practice of engagement with the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1c: Individual Engagement is positively related to POS and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2c: The performance management practice of Engagement is positively related to Individual Engagement.

Hypothesis 3c: Individual Engagement mediates the relationship between the performance management practice of Engagement and POS and organizational commitment.

Accountability

The ability of an organization to take action builds on individual accountability (Ortiz & Arnborg, 2005). Practical managers should expect people to be both responsible and accountable for delivering real results (Strickler, 2006). Gary (2004) writes the best managers develop a culture of accountability and frankly address situations when goals are not met. He (Gary, 2004) adds a robust performance management structure promotes accountability in two ways. First the system helps ensure employees demonstrate the behavior and achieve the results chosen to evaluate progress toward goals, and second, by encouraging due-diligence in managers' appraisals of performance and results (Gary, 2004). Similar in concept, Reid and Hubbell (2005) stress leaders can ensure accountability with consistent, defined levels of performance expectations. Rosenthal and Masarech (2003) report measuring performance and holding individuals accountable for both behavior and results has an immediate impact on performance. Based on the literature, the hypotheses for evaluating the performance management practice of accountability are:

Hypothesis 1d: Individual Accountability is positively related to POS performance and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2d: The performance management practice of Accountability is positively related to Individual Role-clarification.

Hypothesis 3d: Individual Accountability mediates the relationship between the performance management practice of Accountability and POS and organizational commitment.

Feedback

The importance of timely, continuous performance feedback is a predominate theme. The GAO (2003a) writes high-performing organizations provide objective, constructive performance feedback to employees. This information helps individuals and supervisors manage activities, maximize contribution, track performance and identify performance gaps in support of organizational goals and objectives (GAO, 2003a). Effective performance management ensures performance is continually reviewed, tracked and communicated to employees through both formal and informal mechanisms (Risher & Fay, 2007). Risher and Fay (2007) write organizations have multiple mechanisms that send messages to employees and based on their research, recommend regular performance feedback conversations.

Furthermore, Risher (2007b) writes employees desire to know how they are performing. He notes that in the goal-based environment, communicating performance results reinforces the focus on performance. Regular communication is required to keep

employees informed on performance results; this practice recognizes the importance of employee effort and reinforces how individual contributions contribute to overall success (Graham, 2004). Graham (2004) asserts individual feedback guides and encourages growth, career progression, and performance by assessing actual performance in relation to expectations. Furthermore, she adds that if individual expectations are aligned with organization objects, individual performance feedback informs employees on their contribution to the organization as a whole.

Heathfield (2007) reports similar performance management integrations; she says feedback becomes a discussion of both individual progress and organizational goals. Leaders, formally or informally, providing ongoing feedback and appraising performance was one of six imperative practices for improving employee performance based on research by Reid and Hubbel (2005). Ortiz and Arnborg (2005) write it is impossible to improve performance without renewal; feedback provides insight into performance that is appropriate and insight into performance that must change. They conclude, “Feedback is a result-oriented practice of effective communication that ensures continuous improvement” (Ortiz & Arnborg, 2005).

These performance management recommendations are consistent with previous feedback-related research showing feedback provides information individuals can use to enhance their future effectiveness (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Specifically, Morrison (1993) found feedback positively related to composite ratings of individual performance. Based on the literature, the hypotheses for evaluating the performance management practice of role-clarification are:

Hypothesis 1e: Individual Feedback is positively related to POS and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2e: The performance management practice of Feedback is positively related to Individual Feedback.

Hypothesis 3e: Individual Feedback mediates the relationship between the performance management practice of Feedback and POS and organizational commitment.

Chapter II Summary

This chapter provided a description of research-gap motivating the study and a detailed literature review of the performance management practices of goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback. Three research hypotheses were developed for each performance management practices based on recent research and publications for each of the specific practices. The baseline established by the literature review supports the effectiveness of the selected performance management practices and provides further support for recommendations to modify or enhance formal and informal performance management practices within organizations. The next chapter provides a detailed description of the research method, survey instrument development and data collection procedure.

Chapter III: Methodology

Overview

The following chapter provides a detailed description of the research method, including the survey instrument development, specific survey measures, instrument reliability calculations, and data collection procedure.

Research Method

This research was constrained by time and the limited acceptable disturbance to the study participants. These constraints necessitated a simple, concise research method; collecting maximum data within the time constraints. First, performance management practices were indentified, cataloged and organized. Table 1 represents the common practices across the relevant performance management literature. As with much organizational behavior (OB) research, a survey provided an efficient means to collect self-report data with respect to the performance management practices, and individual variables. As the performance management practices were organized, published measures for the individual variables were selected. The scope of this research and the availability of survey participants necessitated testing only a limited number of performance management practices. Goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback were selected as the performance management variables because of their simplicity of concept, ease of measurement with self-report data, presence of validated measures, and their fundamental nature as individual qualities that can be related to individual job-performance and organizational commitment. Individual

job-performance and organizational commitment were the primary dependent variables. These variables are the primary individual outcomes in OB theory.

The research hypotheses necessitated two surveys. One measured the performance management practices and the second measured the corresponding individual variables and the dependant variables. Statistical data analysis provided a means to evaluate the data, determine support for hypotheses, and provided empirical support for recommendation and conclusions.

Instrument Development

Two surveys were used to collect self-report data on the selected performance management practices, *perceived organizational support* (POS, an indicator of individual performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002)) and *organizational commitment*. Survey A measured the degree to which the participant's performance management system addressed goal-alignment, role clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback. Survey B measured individual levels of goal-alignment, role clarification, engagement, accountability, feedback, POS and organizational commitment.

Survey B was created first by utilizing existing, published research instruments for measuring individual levels of goal-alignment, engagement, role-clarification, feedback and accountability. These items are described below. Leveraging published research instruments enables two essential efficiencies. First, published research instruments have endured rigorous pilot testing by their authors and pier-review by their publishers; the result is the published instruments measure the indented constructs with a

high degree of reliability. Second, utilizing published instruments affords this research a significant time savings by avoiding the necessary pilot testing of new measures.

Survey A was developed utilizing the same measures as Survey B with the addition of an antecedent phrase specifically relating the item to the individual's performance management system. For example, one Survey B item was, "I am involved in achieving my organization's/department's mission." The corresponding Survey A question was, "The performance management system ensures I am involved in achieving my organization's/department's mission."

The participants were briefed the definition of "performance management" generated for this study, along with examples of performance management practices, prior to responding to Survey A. A written definition/explanation of "performance management," the same definition presented in Chapters I and II, was included with Survey A (Figure 1). Other than the demographic questions, both surveys employed a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

A **Performance Management System** is the collection of methodologies, processes, and products an organization utilizes to motivate, focus, control, evaluate and reward its members. The elements of a *performance management system* include but are not limited to:

- Performance evaluations/appraisals/reports
- Job descriptions
- Job performance expectations
- Performance feedback
- Establishing goals
- Promotion practices
- Awards
- Employee development programs
- Communication practices
- Pay increases/bonuses
- Accountability
- Addressing poor performance

Consider how you feel about the *performance management system(s)* in your organization and/or Service and base your answers on your thoughts and experiences.

Figure 2. Description of "Performance Management" provided in Survey A

Sample and Procedure

The sample consisted of 122 student participants at the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), Midwest Campus in Kettering, OH. DAU provides mandatory, assignment specific, and continuing education courses for military and civilian personnel performing duties related to defense systems acquisition, sustainment and support.

Students were both active duty military members and civil service employees from the DoD, US Army, US Air Force, US Navy and one individual from the Marine Corps.

Selected demographic data is displayed below in Table 2.

DAU approved the use of its students as a data source with the understanding that student participation was strictly voluntary and the survey was administered during non-class portions of the training day. Surveys were administered either during a break period or at the conclusion of the training-day. The two surveys were administered at different points during the participants training/class duration at the DAU. The two-survey method was selected to help eliminate the effects of common method biases (Podsakoff, Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Lee, 2003). In some cases the interval between the surveys was as little as three days (58 participants) and as long as seven days (64 participants). 65 of the participants were administered Survey A first, followed by survey B. The survey order was reversed for the other 57 participants.

In order to match the student's responses from the two surveys, the students established a personal identification code consisting of the first two letters of their mother's maiden name followed by the last two digits of their social security number. An example code would be AB12. The personnel identification code enabled the aggregation of the responses from each individual's surveys without collecting identifiable information. In total, 122 students completed both surveys. There was no way to determine a non-response bias based on the survey administration. Non-participants either returned a blank survey or departed the classroom during the administration period. Overall only 14 potential participants declined participation.

Table 2. Selected Survey Demographic Items

Selected Survey Demographic Items	Survey Sample
	122 Participants
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	75.4%
Female	24.6%
<i>Employment Type</i>	
Military	21.3%
Civil Service	58.2%
Civil Service (National Security Personnel System)	20.5%
<i>Years of Work Experience</i>	
0-5 Years	11.5%
06-10 Years	15.6%
11-15 Years	13.1%
16-20 Years	14.8%
21-25 Years	12.3%
25+ Years	32.8%
<i>Highest Level of Education</i>	
High School	3.4%
Associate's Degree	4.9%
Bachelor's Degree	38.5%
Master's Degree	48.4%
Doctorate Level	1.6%

Measures

Two surveys were utilized. Survey A contained measures to assess the degree to which the individual's performance management system addressed goal-alignment, engagement, role-clarification, feedback, and accountability. Survey B contained measures to assess the degree to which the subject reported individual goal-alignment, engagement, role-clarification, feedback, and accountability. Survey B also contained

measures for *perceived organization support* (POS) and *organizational commitment*, the primary dependant variables in this study. POS was used as an indicator of individual performance because performance data could be collected within the limited scope of this study. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) performed a meta-analysis of more than 70 studies relating to POS. Their findings indicated that among other favorable organizational and individual benefits, POS was positively related to individual performance. This result is fundamental to this research design and provides the necessary support to associate positive levels of POS with positive levels of individual performance.

Cronbach's alpha, a measure of internal reliability for a psychometric test scores was calculated for each set of performance management measurements. This parameter provides the researcher confidence that the measure for a specific construct is, in fact, measuring that construct. Higher values of Cronbach's alpha indicate greater internal reliability for the set of measures. All reliabilities for this study were deemed acceptable and the reliability scores for each measure are included with the description of the measures in the following section.

Several survey items were reverse-coded; meaning the phrase (question) presented to participants was worded negatively. For example, a standard survey item may read, "I enjoy my job." The same item, reverse-coded, would be, "I do not enjoy my job." The scores for the reverse-coded items were reversed for data analysis to maintain scale consistency with the other items in the measure.

Goal-alignment Measures

Two separate measurement sets, closely related to the performance management concept of goal-alignment, were used to fully encompass the concept. The first is Van Der Heijde and Van Der Heijde's (2006) measures for "corporate sense." Six of Seven items in Van Der Heijde and Van Der Heijde's (2006) construct were used in the study; the opened item was omitted. The authors describe corporate sense by writing, "in today's organizations employees have to participate more as members of an integrated team, identify with corporate goals and accept collective responsibility for the decision making process...[corporate sense] is about sharing responsibilities, knowledge, experiences, feeling, credits, failures, goals and the like" (Van Der Hiejde & Van Der Hiejde, 2006). A sample item in Survey B (measured by a 7-point Likert-type scale) is, "In my organization, I take part in forming a common vision of values and goals." Chronbach's alpha for the six measures in Survey A was .91 and .92 in Survey B.

The second measurement set for goal-alignment is one of the four facets of Spreitzer's (1995) empowerment construct. Three measures are used to determine the perceived *impact* the individual has on the organization. The practice of goal-alignment recognizes that individuals want to understand how their specific tasks and roles impact organizational objectives (Risher, 2007a). A sample item in Survey B (measured by a 7-point Likert-type scale) is, "My impact on what happens in my department is large." Chronbach's alpha for the three measures in Survey A was .88 and .77 in Survey B.

Chronbach's alpha for the combined nine measures for Goal-Alignment (*corporate sense* and *impact*) in Survey A was .93 and .83 in Survey B. Exploratory

factor analysis was performed on the combined nine measures in order to confirm the combined structure of the goal-alignment measures. The resulting Eigen-values supported the one-factor, combined measure.

Role-clarification Measures

Based on House, Schuler, and Levanoni's (1983) measures for *role ambiguity*, the measures for *role-clarification* were generated for this study. Eight of the eleven House, Schuler, and Levanoni (1983) items were reverse coded originally by the authors and therefore are properly structured to measure role-clarification without modification (role ambiguity is the opposite of role-clarification in this construct). The remaining three role ambiguity measures provided properly structured measures for reverse coded role-clarification items. A sample item in Survey B (measured by a 7-point Likert-type scale) is, "I know what my responsibilities are." Chronbach's alpha for the 11 measures in Survey A was .91 and .92 in Survey B.

Engagement Measures

Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) measures for *trait work engagement* from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale was employed on this study. Only one of the three dimensions of trait work engagement, *dedication*, was applicable to this research. The other two aspects, *Vigor* and *Absorption*, would be difficult to assess in the Survey A item structure measuring the performance management system and were omitted. A sample item in Survey B (measured by a 7-point Likert-type scale) is, "I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose." Chronbach's alpha for the five measures in Survey A was .91 and .92 in Survey B.

Accountability Measures

Hochwarter, Kacmar, and Ferris's (2003) eight-item measure of accountability was employed to measure an individual's level of felt accountability. A sample item in Survey B (measured by a 7-point Likert-type scale) is, "I am held very accountable for my actions at work." Chronbach's alpha for the eight measures in Survey A was .85 and .78 in Survey B.

Feedback Measures

Three feedback items were generated to assess the perception of feedback by the individual. These items are consistent with Morgenson and Humphrey's (2006) Work Design Questionnaire items on *feedback from others*. The three Survey B items (measured by a 7-point Likert-type scale) are, "I am aware of my job performance," "My supervisor provides feedback on my performance," "My supervisor provides me information about my performance." Chronbach's alpha for the three measures in Survey A was .92 and .86 in Survey B.

Perceived Organizational Support Measures

Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa's (1986) items measuring perceived organizational support were used. The 9-item version of POS, consisting of the non-reverse coded items was included in Survey B. A sample item (measured by a 7-point Likert-type scale) is, "The organization values my contribution to its well-being." Chronbach's alpha for the nine measures in Survey in Survey B was .94.

Organizational Commitment Measures

Meyer and Allen's (1997) organizational commitment items were used in Survey B. Scales were included for affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Affective commitment is the employee's positive emotional attachment to the organization; the desire to remain a part of the organization because of strong identification with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Normative commitment is the obligation the individual feels to remain with an organization and continuance commitment is created by the perceived high-cost of losing organizational membership (Meyer & Allen, 1997). A sample item (measured by a 7-point Likert-type scale) for affective commitment is, "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization." Chronbach's alpha for the nine measures in Survey in Survey B was .82.

Chapter III Summary

This research employed two surveys, administered voluntarily to students at the Defense Acquisition University, Midwest Campus. Survey A was designed to assess the degree to which the individual's organization's performance management system effectively addressed goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability and feedback. Survey B assessed the degree to which the individual felt goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, feedback, organizational support, and organizational commitment. All measures originate from published sources and demonstrate acceptable reliability from their original sources and in this research. The

high reliability of the measures in this study serve to strengthen the findings in Chapter IV and reinforce the recommendations in Chapter V.

Chapter IV: Results and Discussion

Overview

This chapter provides the results of the research. The results for the three hypotheses for each of the five selected performance management variables are shown. Tables are provided for the means, standard deviations and intercorrelations of the variables and the mediation (hypothesis3) tests.

Results

The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of the variables are presented in Table 3. Because the first two hypotheses for each performance management practices predicted positive correlations among variables, the data in Table 3 was used for hypothesis testing. Hypothesis 1 for each performance management practice stated the individual performance management variable is positively related to individual performance and organizational commitment. Similarly, Hypothesis 2 stated the performance management practice is positively related to individual performance management variable. With only one exception, which is noted in the *accountability results* section, the correlations associated with hypotheses 1 and 2 were significant at a P-value of 0.01. For this research P-values smaller than 0.05 (standard level in social-science research) indicate a significant relationship between the variables and support hypotheses 1 and 2. All hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported by the survey data but had varying effect sizes. The effect size, the amount of correlation between variables, was evaluated using the standard established by Cohen (1992); correlations of .2 are small, .5

are moderate, and .8 large. Larger correlations indicate stronger relationships between the variables.

In addition, the third hypothesis for each of the performance management practice predicted the mediating relationship of the individual variables through the performance management variables to POS/organizational commitment. The mediation analysis was performed to indirectly assess the effect of the performance management variables on POS and organizational commitment through the individual variables as mediators. Barron and Kenny (1986, p. 1176) concluded a variable may be labeled a mediator “to the extent that it accounts for the relation between the predictor and the criterion.” This analysis was fundamental to the study; if a performance management practice could not significantly affect the relationship between the individual and the desired outcome (POS and organizational commitment) there would be no benefit to including this practice in formal or informal performance management systems. Table 4 shows the level of significance (P-value) the individual variables display as mediators of the performance management and POS/organizational commitment variables. The significance levels for mediation were calculated using the Sobel test and associated SPSS code published by Preacher and Hayes (2004, p. 717) which, “facilitates estimation of the indirect effect with a normal theory approach and a bootstrap approach to obtaining confidence intervals, as well as the traditional approach advocated by Baron and Kenny (1986).” Significance levels (P-values) below 0.05 indicate a significant mediating relationship

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, Reliability Estimates, and Correlations of the Study Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Perf Mgmt Sys Goal-alignment	4.1	1.20	(.93)											
2. Perf Mgmt Sys Role-clarification	4.5	1.06	.68**	(.91)										
3. Perf Mgmt Sys Engagement	3.4	1.29	.64**	.41**	(.93)									
4. Perf Mgmt Sys Accountability	4.0	.98	.54**	.38**	.61**	(.85)								
5. Perf Mgmt Sys Feedback	4.8	1.52	.65**	.74**	.45**	.37**	(.92)							
6. Individual Goal-alignment	5.5	.83	.39**	.26**	.19*	.16	.25**	(.83)						
7. Individual Role-clarification	5.0	1.15	.41**	.66**	.20*	.10	.52**	.50**	(.92)					
8. Individual Engagement	5.6	1.23	.33**	.37**	.29**	.29**	.30**	.51**	.44**	(.92)				
9. Individual Accountability	4.7	.97	.33**	.20*	.25**	.29**	.27**	.58**	.41*	.50**	(.78)			
10. Individual Feedback	5.1	1.37	.34**	.53**	.20*	.10	.54**	.34**	.68**	.30**	.40**	(.86)		
11. Individual POS	4.7	1.18	.57**	.59**	.38*	.25**	.50**	.56**	.72**	.46**	.43**	.66**	(.94)	
12. Individual Org Commitment	4.1	.89	.44**	.41**	.31*	.34**	.36**	.25**	.37**	.51**	.21*	.34**	.48**	(.82)

Note: Reliability estimates are between parentheses.

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4. Sobel Mediation Test (P-values)

Mediator	Independent Variable	PMS Goal-alignment	PMS Role-clarification	PMS Engagement	PMS Accountability	PMS Feedback
1. Individual Goal-alignment	POS	0.0005*				
	Org. Commitment	0.2789				
2. Individual Role-clarification	POS		0.0000*			
	Org. Commitment		0.1100			
3. Individual Engagement	POS			0.0076*		
	Org. Commitment			0.0048*		
4. Individual Accountability	POS				0.0089*	
	Org. Commitment				0.2064	
5. Individual Feedback	POS					0.0000*
	Org. Commitment					0.0403*

Note: PMS (Performance Management System)

*. P-values < 0.05, indicate significant mediating relationships, supporting the corresponding Hypothesis (H3x) for either POS or organizational commitment or both.

Goal-alignment Results

As Table 3 shows, Individual Goal-alignment was positively correlated with both POS and organizational commitment: $r=.56$ for POS and $r= .25$ for organizational commitment. Therefore, Hypothesis 1a was supported; Individual Goal-alignment is positively related to POS and organizational commitment. The second goal-alignment hypothesis, 2a, was also supported. The performance management practice of goal-alignment is positively related to individual goal-alignment: $r=.39$.

The mediation analysis was performed to assess the indirect effect the performance management practice of goal-alignment had on POS/organizational commitment through individual goal-alignment as a mediating variable. Hypothesis 3a proposes individual goal-alignment as a potential mediator of the relationship between the performance management practice of goal-alignment and POS and/or organizational support. As Table 4 shows, Hypothesis 3a is partially supported. The results for organizational commitment show no significant mediating relationship. However, individual goal-alignment was a mediator for the relationship between the performance management practice of goal-alignment and POS. The mediation analysis shows the performance management practice of goal-alignment leads to increased POS by affecting individual engagement.

Role-clarification Results

Individual Role-clarification was positively correlated with both POS and organizational commitment: $r=.72$ for POS and $r= .37$ for organizational commitment.

Therefore, Hypothesis 1b was supported; Individual Role-clarification is positively related to POS and organizational commitment. The second role-clarification hypothesis, 2b, was also supported. The performance management practice of role-clarification is positively related to individual role clarification: $r=.66$.

To test hypothesis 3b, the mediation analysis was performed to assess the indirect effect the performance management practice of role-clarification had on POS/organizational commitment through individual role-clarification as a mediating variable. Hypothesis 3b proposes individual goal-alignment as a potential mediator of the relationship between the performance management practice of role-clarification and POS and/or organizational support. As Table 4 shows, Hypothesis 3b is partially supported. The results for organizational commitment show no significant mediating relationship. However, individual role-clarification was a mediator for the relationship between the performance management practice of role-clarification and POS. The performance management practice of role clarification leads to increased POS by affecting individual role-clarification.

Engagement Results

Individual engagement was positively correlated with both POS and organizational commitment: $r=.46$ for POS and $r= .51$ for organizational commitment, as Table 3 shows. Therefore, Hypothesis 1c was supported; individual engagement is positively related to POS and organizational commitment. The second engagement hypothesis, 2c, was also supported. The performance management practice of engagement is positively related to individual role engagement: $r=.29$.

Mediation analysis was performed to assess the indirect effect the performance management practice of engagement had on POS/organizational commitment through individual engagement as a mediating variable. Hypothesis 3c proposes individual engagement as a potential mediator of the relationship between the performance management practice of engagement and POS and/or organizational support. As Table 4 shows, Hypothesis 3c was fully supported. Individual engagement was a mediator for the relationship between the performance management practice of role-clarification and both POS and organizational commitment. The performance management practice of engagement leads to increased POS and organizational commitment by affecting individual engagement.

Accountability Results

Individual accountability (Table 3) was positively correlated with both POS and organizational commitment: $r=.43$ for POS and $r= .21$ for organizational commitment. The correlation for individual accountability and organizational commitment was significant only at the 0.05 level, the weakest significance of all hypothesis 1 versions in this study. However, hypothesis 1d was supported; individual accountability is positively related to POS and organizational commitment. The second accountability hypothesis, 2d, was also supported. The performance management practice of accountability is positively related to individual accountability: $r=.29$.

Mediation analysis was performed to assess the indirect effect the performance management practice of accountability had on POS/organizational commitment through

individual accountability as a mediating variable. Hypothesis 3d proposes individual accountability as a potential mediator of the relationship between the performance management practice of accountability and POS and/or organizational support. As Table 4 shows, Hypothesis 3d is partially supported. The results for organizational commitment show no significant mediating relationship. However, individual accountability was a mediator for the relationship between the performance management practice of accountability and POS. The performance management practice of accountability leads to increased POS by affecting individual engagement.

Feedback Results

As Table 3 shows, Individual Feedback was positively correlated with both POS and organizational commitment: $r=.66$ for POS and $r=.34$ for organizational commitment. Therefore, Hypothesis 1d was supported; Individual Goal-alignment is positively related to POS and organizational commitment. The second feedback hypothesis, 2e, was also supported. The performance management practice of feedback is positively related to individual feedback: $r=.54$.

To test hypothesis 3e, mediation analysis was performed to assess the indirect effect the performance management practice of feedback had on POS/organizational commitment through individual feedback a mediating variable. Hypothesis 3e proposes individual feedback as a potential mediator of the relationship between the performance management practice of feedback and POS and/or organizational support. As Table 4 shows, Hypothesis 3d was fully supported. Individual feedback was a mediator for the

relationship between the performance management practice of feedback and both POS and organizational commitment. The performance management practice of feedback leads to increased POS and organizational commitment by affecting individual feedback.

Results Summary

In total, these findings imply that the relationship of all the performance management variables and individual variables, with the exception of the individual engagement, have a greater correlation with POS than organizational commitment. With respect to the mediation tests only the individual engagement and individual feedback variables significantly mediated both POS and organizational commitment for their respective performance management practices. Individual goal-alignment, individual role-clarification, and individual accountability were significant mediators only for POS and not organizational commitment. Stronger and/or more significant relationships exist between the performance management and individual variables with POS than organizational commitment. Chapter V examines these results, explains the implications for modifying performance management systems, and establishes research-based recommendations. Tables 5, 6, and 7 provide summary of the hypothesis tests in this chapter.

Table 5. Hypotheses H1x Summary

Hypothesis	Correlation (POS/Organizational Commitment)	Hypothesis Supported?
H1a (Goal-alignment)	.56 /.25	Yes
H1b (Role-clarification)	.72 /.37	Yes
H1c (Engagement)	.46/ .51	Yes
H1d (Accountability)	.44/.21	Yes
H1e (Feedback)	.66 /.34	Yes

Hypothesis H1x example:

- Hypothesis 1a: Individual Goal-alignment is positively related to individual performance (indicated by POS) and organizational commitment.

Note: Bold type indicates correlations above .50 (moderate)

Table 6. Hypotheses H2x Summary

Hypothesis	Correlation	Hypothesis Supported?
H2a (Goal-alignment)	.39	Yes
H2b (Role-clarification)	.66	Yes
H2c (Engagement)	.29	Yes
H2d (Accountability)	.29	Yes
H2e (Feedback)	.54	Yes

Hypothesis H2x example:

- Hypothesis 2a: The performance management practice of Goal-alignment is positively related to Individual Goal-alignment

Note: Bold type indicates correlations above .50 (moderate)

Table 7. Hypotheses H3x Summary

Hypothesis	P-value (POS/Organizational Commitment)	Significant Mediation Present	Hypothesis Supported?
H3a (Goal-alignment)	.0005 /.2789	For POS only	Yes
H3b (Role- clarification)	.0000 /.1100	For POS only	Yes
H3c (Engagement)	.0076 / .0048	Both	Yes
H3d (Accountability)	.0089 /.2064	For POS only	Yes
H3e (Feedback)	.0000 / .0403	Both	Yes

Hypothesis H3x example:
 – Hypothesis 3a: Individual Goal-alignment mediates the relationship between the performance management practice of Goal-alignment and individual performance and organizational commitment

Note: Bold type indicates P-Values below .005

Chapter V: Conclusions

Overview

The objective of the this thesis research was to explore a set of performance management practices as an initial step toward providing direct, empirical support for a link between a performance management practice, the behavior or attitude of the employee, and individual performance and/or organizational commitment. The study designed three hypotheses for each of five popular performance management practices. The results showed varied positive correlations between the individual variables and POS/organizational commitment, and varying positive correlations between the performance management practices and the corresponding individual variables. In addition, the study investigated which individual variables mediate the relationship between the performance management practices and POS/organizational commitment. The mediation results show significant mediation for POS with all individual variables, but varied significance for organizational commitment. This chapter provides the conclusions, limitations, and follow-on studies for this thesis.

Discussion

Goal Alignment

The GAO (2003a) writes the explicit alignment of individual performance expectation with organizational goals enables employees to comprehend the connection between their daily activities and organizational objectives and aids in focusing individual roles and responsibilities toward larger goals. In this study two dimensions of

goal-alignment were measured. The dimension of corporate sense (Van Der Hiejde & Van Der Hiejde, 2006) measured the degree of integration one has with the goals and objectives of the organization. The impact dimension (Spreitzer, 1995) measures the work impact one has on the organization. The correlation between individual goal-alignment and POS indicated a moderate positive effect of .56. As POS is positively related to individual performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), the finding indicates individual goal alignment as a desirable attribute in an individual employee. Performance management systems should address goal-alignment and attempt to positively foster individual goal-alignment. The results for organizational commitment were not as favorable. Individual goal-alignment had small positive correlation (.25) with organizational commitment. The weaker correlation is surprising because the objective of goal-alignment is to tightly integrate the individual and organization with respect to goals, objectives and outcomes which is similar to the description of organizational commitment. Referring to Myer and Allen's (1997) constructs of organizational commitment, affective commitment is the employee's positive emotional attachment to the organization; the desire to remain a part of the organization because of strong identification with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Normative commitment is the obligation the individual feels to remain with an organization and continuance commitment is created by the perceived high-cost of losing organizational membership (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The implication, according to these results, is goal-alignment affects individual performance but the alignment of individual and organization goals does not develop increased organizational commitment.

The second goal-alignment hypothesis predicted a positive relationship between the performance management practice of goal-alignment and individual goal-alignment. The hypothesis was supported; however, the correlation of .39 only represents a moderate correlation between these two variables. In this case, it is possible individuals derive a sense of goal-alignment from sources other than their performance management systems. The mediation analysis (hypothesis 3a) provided insight on the indirect effect the performance management practice of goal-alignment had on POS and organizational commitment through individual goal-alignment as a mediating variable. The data (Table 4) indicates a significant mediating relationship for POS only. This information indicates the performance management practice of goal-alignment as an effective practice with respect to POS but is not an effective means to generate organizational commitment. The reasonable manager could conclude goal-alignment has benefits as an administrative function (establishing work priorities and duties contributing to higher level objectives) and psychological motivator (identifying personally with organizational objectives) contributing to individual employee performance.

Role-clarification

Individual role-clarification demonstrated the strongest positive correlation to POS in the study (.72). This correlation value represents a strong positive correlation between an individual's sense of role-clarification and POS; indicating a potential benefit in the performance of the individual. Like goal-alignment, role clarification demonstrated a weaker correlation to organizational commitment (.37) than POS (.72). These findings indicate role-clarification as a desirable attribute of employees and likely

correlated with individual performance. Individual role-clarification was also positively correlated (.66) to the performance management practice of role-clarification, while this correlation does not indicate causality it indicates role clarification as valuable practice because individual role-clarification also has a strong positive correlation with POS.

The mediation analysis (hypothesis 3b) provides further insight into these relationships. A significant indirect effect exists between the performance management practice of role-clarification and POS through individual role-clarification as a mediating variable. Similar to goal-alignment, the data (Table 4) indicates a significant mediating relationship for POS only. These results indicate the performance management practice of role clarification is an effective practice with respect to POS but is not a means to generate organizational commitment. The practical manager should note the results of this study confirm that the definition of work roles as defined by Schaubroeck, Ganster, Sime, and Ditman (1993) are a critical factor to the solicitation, performance and general health of employees.

Engagement

Engaged employees possess a sense of energetic and affective connection with their work activities and display positive affectivity toward job demands (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Consistent with that definition, individual engagement demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with both POS and organizational commitment. Unlike all other individual level variables in this study, individual engagement demonstrated a slightly stronger correlation with organizational commitment (.51) than POS (.46). This result should not be surprising. Schaufeli and Bakker's definition references "affective

connection” and “positive affectivity” of the individual. One of the three subscales of organizational commitment is affective commitment and has similar measures in Survey B. As a practical performance management application, individual engagement is moderately related to both POS and organizational but has the highest correlation to organizational commitment in this study. However, the performance management practice of engagement shows a weak positive correlation (.29) to individual engagement. This could indicate individual employees are “engaged” in job demands for reasons other than the features or priorities in their respective performance management systems. The mediation analysis tested the indirect effect the performance management practice of engagement had on POS and organizational commitment through the mediating variable of individual engagement. Engagement showed a significant mediating relationship for both POS and organizational commitment, indicating high-value as a performance management practice.

Managers should note individual engagement had that highest individual-variable correlation, in this study, to organizational commitment and significant results for POS and organizational commitment in the mediation analysis. These results should motivate an increased emphasis on fostering engagement among employees but that effort comes with a challenge. The challenge, as indicated by the data, is that the performance management practice of engagement is not strongly correlated with individual engagement meaning individual engagement is likely to have other contributing factors aside from the practices of one’s performance management system.

Accountability

Ortiz and Arnborg (2005) assert the ability of an organization to take action builds on individual accountability. The study results may have important implications for the design of performance management systems with respect to accountability. Individual accountability was positively related to both POS (.43) and organizational commitment (.21). However, these correlations were the weakest correlations for POS and organizational commitment of all five individual variables. There may be practical applications for these findings, especially for the federal government. The sample population, in this study, consisted entirely of federal civil service and military service members in mission support roles (program management, engineering, contract management, test, logistics and quality assurance). The lower correlations for individual accountability with POS and organizational commitment could indicate that accountability is not necessarily important for individual performance or organizational commitment. An alternative explanation may be the low correlation could be an artifact of the sample, indicating accountability is not paramount in continued government employment. The latter conclusion is consistent with a growing body of literature focusing on performance management practices and shortfalls within the federal government personnel systems as highlighted by GAO report GOA-03-488 in March 2003. Furthermore, reliability estimates for individual feedback were the lowest in the study indicating the possibility that the measure for accountability may not be completely appropriate for the sample population.

The performance management practice of accountability shows a weak positive correlation (.29) to individual accountability. This finding could indicate individual employees are accountable for results for reasons other than the features or priorities in their respective performance management systems. Further information is provided by the mediation analysis. The mediation analysis tested the indirect effect the performance management practice of accountability had on POS and organizational commitment through the mediating variable of individual accountability. Accountability, like goal-alignment and role clarification showed a significant mediating relationship for POS only. These results indicate the performance management practice of accountability is an effective practice with respect to POS but is not a means to generate organizational commitment. Like the recommendations for goal-alignment and role clarification, the practical manager must understand the specific effects of accountability. Accountability is a method to increase performance but not a method effective at generating organizational commitment.

Feedback

Individual feedback demonstrated one of the stronger positive correlations to POS in the study (.66). This correlation value represents a moderate positive correlation between an individual's perception of feedback and POS; indicating a potential benefit in the performance of the individual. Like individual goal-alignment, individual role-clarification, and individual accountability, individual feedback demonstrated a significantly weaker correlation to organizational commitment (.21, significant only at the 0.05 level). These findings indicate feedback as a desirable positive condition for

employees and likely correlated with individual performance. Individual feedback was also positively correlated (.53) to the performance management practice of feedback indicating there is a moderate relationship between a performance management system that address feedback and the individual perception of feedback.

The mediation analysis (hypothesis 3e) provided similar results to mediation analysis of engagement. The mediation analysis tested the indirect effect the performance management practice of feedback had on POS and organizational commitment through the mediating variable of individual feedback. Feedback showed a significant mediating relationship for both POS and organizational commitment, indicating high-value as a performance management practice.

This result should not be surprising, the performance advantage of closed-loop systems (systems with feedback mechanisms) in mechanical, electrical, social, political, biological, and other systems has been documented across multiple scientific disciplines and practical managers know feedback is important for employee performance. What makes feedback so important with respect to the results in this study is, that of the two post-performance types of performance management practices (accountability and feedback) is that the correlation of the performance management feedback to individual feedback is nearly double that of the accountability relationships. The weaker relationship between the performance management practice of accountability and individual accountability indicates individual accountability is not directly derived from the existing performance management systems. For the manager, these feedback results translate to an effective post-performance practice that can be successfully implemented within the constructs of

existing performance management systems. The manager needs no other administrative controls in order to provide increased levels of feedback. Feedback is an easily administered high-value performance management practice.

Sample Discussion

Further insight into the results of this study is obtained with an analysis of performance management systems or human capital philosophies of the research participant's organization. The sample consisted entirely of individuals employed by the federal government, either civil service or activity-duty military. The participants represented a limited number of career fields within the Department of Defense (DoD); these career fields are associated with Defense System Acquisition, but are not functionally unique to the DoD. GAO reports since the beginning of the "transformation" movement, earlier this decade, highlight the shortcomings and challenges of the human capital systems within DoD and the federal government. These shortcomings may have implications on these research results.

Simply, the performance management concepts and practices within the federal government are neither ideal nor fully implemented. The GOA (2003a) writes, the federal government faces an array of challenges to enhance individual performance and accountability. A report later that year recommended "adopting leading practices to implement effective performance management systems (GAO, 2003b). In 2005, the GAO recommended the federal government reexamine business processes, outmoded organizational structures, and management approaches with respect to the management of its employees and other critical aspects of high-performing organizations (GAO, 2005).

Recently, the GAO (2009) notes the DoD lacks information on the skill sets of its organic personnel and lacks information on the work force required for the Defense Acquisition mission. With respect to this study, the underperformance of formal human capital and performance management systems within the federal government indicate the possibility of stronger positive relationships among study variables if federal performance management was more effective.

For example, the performance management practice of engagement, in this study, was positively correlated with individual engagement, but that correlation was somewhat weak at .29. It is logical to assume if the federal government or government supervisors were to increase the effectiveness and/or frequency of the performance management practices of engagement, levels of individual engagement would increase. Recall that individual engagement significantly moderated the relationship between the performance management practice of engagement and the dependent variables, POS and organizational commitment. Again it is logical to assume that increases in the effectiveness of the performance management practice of engagement would pay dividends in terms of the indirect effect on POS (an indicator of individual performance) and organizational commitment. With respect to the performance management practice of engagement, this research supports the concept that the performance management practice leads to increased POS and organizational commitment by affecting individual engagement. Understanding that DoD's performance management practice of engagement may not be ideal indicates the possibility of greater levels of POS and

organizational commitment if the performance management practices increased in effectiveness and/or frequency.

Research Conclusions

Based on the defined investigative questions, comprehensive literature review, and statistical data analysis, the following research conclusions were developed;

1. Individual goal-alignment, role clarification, accountability and feedback have greater positive relationships with POS than organizational commitment. With the exception of individual engagement, correlations of all other individual variables to POS were nearly twice as strong as the correlation between the individual variable and organizational commitment. The exception, individual engagement, had moderate positive correlations with both POS and organizational commitment; the correlations were within 10% of each other. Managers should recognize the significant potential performance impact of fostering goal-alignment, role-clarification, accountability, and feedback but recognize these performance management practices are not as effective as engagement in fostering organizational commitment.

2. Organizational commitment is more difficult to foster with performance management practice than POS. Both the correlations analysis and the mediation analysis demonstrated less positive and less significant, respectively, relationships with organizational commitment as opposed to POS. Managers concerned primarily with fostering organizational commitment, possibly in a scenario where higher performing employees might leave the organization, should not focus entirely on these five performance management practices. However, individual engagement showed the

strongest correlation to organizational commitment. Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) write, engagement is the opposite of “burnout.” Managers looking to generate commitment might look for ways to stem burnout and generate engagement.

3. *The performance management practices of engagement and feedback represent high-value performance management practices.* The indirect effect of the performance management practices of engagement and feedback were significant for both POS and organizational commitment through the mediating variables of individual engagement and individual feedback, respectively. These were the only two mediating relationships in this study demonstrating significance for both POS and organizational. This result is significant for both managers and organizations. Engagement and feedback offer practices related to both POS (indirectly performance) and organizational commitment. Implementing these practices formally, within an organizations performance management system, or informally in the day-to-day practices of effective managers yields the combined effect of increased individual performance and organizational commitment. Managers often have limited interaction with subordinates; therefore, focusing on engagement and/or feedback offers the increased benefit of effecting employee performance and organizational commitment with a single performance management practice. Furthermore, organizations have limited resources and overhauling a formal performance management system could be prohibitively costly and time consuming. Tweaking the existing performance management systems to specifically address employee engagement and feedback could yield increased levels of employee performance and organizational commitment without a full system overhaul.

Limitations of the Research

Although mitigating actions were developed to address threats to reliability and internal validity, sample bias and a degree of common method bias may exist. The sample consisted entirely of individuals employed by the federal government, either civil service or activity-duty military. The participants represented a limited number of career fields within the Department of Defense; these career fields were generally related to mission support functions. However, these functions are not unique to the Department of Defense and exist in many organizations, especially multi-national corporations and defense contractors.

Although two surveys were employed to address common method bias between the performance management variables and the individual variables, all the individual variables, POS, and organizational commitment were collected in Survey B. There is potential common method bias among the measures in Survey B. In addition, the study was unable to directly measure individual performance. Obtaining performance information from the sample population was beyond the thesis scope. POS provided an indication of individual performance because it generally correlates with individual performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Two participants, after completing Survey B, indicated a potential issue with the measures of continuous organizational commitment. For federal employees, the concept of one's organization and one's employer are different from the traditional corporate connotation of those terms. For civil servants and military members, their "employer" is the Department of Defense or one of the military branches. Their "organization" is the

unit, agency, or department to which they are assigned and frequently reassigned. Leaving one's "organization," either voluntary or involuntary, does not necessitate termination of employment in the DoD or military service. For example, a military member may have very little continuous commitment to their assigned unit but possess no desire to end employment with the military. For civil servants, the concept is the same; belonging to an "organization," as worded in Survey B, is significantly different than being employed by the Department of Defense.

Future Research

Because of the evolving list of performance management "best practices" and the proliferation of enhanced human resource strategies across the literature, the following suggestions for investigative study may enhance and further this thesis effort

1. How do these performance management results differ with respect to career field, years of experience, rank, grade, or level of education?
2. Feedback and accountability represent "post-performance" performance management practices; meaning an employee must demonstrate work performance before these practices can be utilized. Similarity, goal-alignment, role-clarification, and engagement are "pre-performance" or "concurrent-with-performance" practices. How do these types of practices differ with respect to individual performance and organizational commitment?
3. Are any of the individual variables mediators for other performance management relationships? Does a single individual variable moderate all the relationships

between the performance management practices and POS or organizational commitment?

Chapter V Summary

Chapter V discussed the results of the study, outlined the conclusions, limitations and follow-on studies for this thesis. The research concluded that the performance management practices and the desired individual attributes have stronger relationships with POS than organizational commitment; indicating some difficulty achieving organizational commitment with common performance management practices. Furthermore, individual engagement and individual feedback moderated the relationship of their respective performance management practices and both POS and organizational commitment, indicating their high-value as focus areas for improving or rebuilding performance management systems. The primary limitation of this study was the inability to measure individual performance directly; POS served as an indication of individual performance. Further research, related to this thesis may analyze performance management outcomes with respect to several demographic variables, investigate differences in post-performance and pre-performance practices, and identify the possibility of a moderating variable across multiple performance management practices.

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Appendix A: Survey A

Performance Management Effectiveness—Survey A

Purpose: The purpose of this survey is to gain insight on the effectiveness of multiple performance management practices. A *Performance Management System* is the collection of methodologies, processes, and products an organization utilizes to motivate, focus, control, evaluate and reward its members. Example performance management concepts are provided on page 3. The goal of this study is to identify effective performance management practices and recommend general improvements to performance managements systems and practices

Participation: We would greatly appreciate your participation in our data collection effort. Your participation is COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY. Your decision to not participate or to withdrawal from participation will not jeopardize your relationship with the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), your Service, or the US Department of Defense.

Confidentiality: We ask for some demographic information in order to interpret results more accurately. ALL ANSWERS ARE ANONYMOUS. You will be asked to create a personnel identification code. This code allows us to aggregate your answers from Survey A with Survey B. No one other than the research team will have access to your completed survey. Findings will be reported at the group level only. Reports summarizing trends in large groups may be published.

Contact information: If you have any questions or comments about the survey contact, Maj Ross Johnston at the telephone number, mailing address, or e-mail addresses listed below. You may take the cover sheet with the contact information for future reference.

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INSTRUCTIONS

- Base your answers on your thoughts and experiences
- **Circle** or **X** your response
- Please print your answers clearly when asked to write in a response
- Make dark marks when asked to use specific response options (feel free to use an ink pen)
- Avoid stray marks. If you make a correction, erase marks completely or clearly indicate the incurred response if you use an ink pen

Please provide the following demographic information.

Personally identifiable information is NOT collected.

1. Personal identifier code—The first two (2) letters of your mother’s maiden name and last two (2) digits of your SSN: ____ ____ ____ ____

- **Please Note—the above information is only identifiable by you. This allows your responses from the two surveys to be aggregated for statistical analysis**

2. Rank, grade, or level (e.g. Capt, 0-4, GS-13, etc): _____

3. Gender: _____

4. If Civil Service, are you under the National Security Personnel System (circle one): Y N

5. Career Field (e.g. Program Management, Contracting, Finance, Cost, Logistics, etc.):____

6. Branch of Service: _____

7. Years of federal or military service: _____

8. Years of work experience: _____

9. Highest level of education: _____

10. Organizational level of current position (e.g. HQ Staff, Functional Staff, Wing, Group, Squadron, Program level): _____

11. Organization (MAJCOM level): _____

Read prior to continuing survey

A **Performance Management System** is the collection of methodologies, processes, and products an organization utilizes to motivate, focus, control, evaluate and reward its members. The elements of a *performance management system* include but are not limited to:

- Performance evaluations/appraisals/reports
- Job descriptions
- Job performance expectations
- Performance feedback
- Establishing goals
- Promotion practices
- Awards
- Employee development programs
- Communication practices
- Pay increases/bonuses
- Accountability
- Addressing poor performance

Consider how you feel about the *performance management system(s)* in your organization and/or Service and base your answers on your thoughts and experiences.

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. The performance management system ensures I am involved in achieving my organization’s/department’s mission	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. The performance management system ensures I do that extra bit for my organization/department over and above my direct responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. The performance management system ensures I support the operational processes within my organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. The performance management system ensures In my work, I take the initiative in sharing responsibilities with colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. The performance management system ensures, in my organization, I take part in forming a common vision of values and goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. The performance management system ensures I share my experience and knowledge with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. The performance management system ensures my impact on what happens in my department is large	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. The performance management system ensures I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. The performance management system ensures I have significant influence over what happens in my department	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

21. The performance management system ensures my authority matches the responsibility assigned to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. The performance management system prevents me from knowing what is expected of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. The performance management system ensures my responsibilities are clearly defined.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. The performance management system ensures I feel certain about how much authority I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. The performance management system ensures I know what my responsibilities are.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. The performance management system ensures I have clear planned goals and objects for my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. The performance management system obscures the clarity of planned goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. The performance management system obscures how I will be evaluated for a raise or promotion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. The performance management system ensures I know what is expected of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. The performance management system ensures explanations are clear of what has to be done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. The performance management system ensures my supervisor makes it clear how he/she will evaluate my performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
32. The performance management system ensures I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. The performance management system ensures I am enthusiastic about my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. The performance management system ensures my job inspires me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. The performance management system ensures I am proud of the work that I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. The performance management system ensures to me, my job is challenging.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. The performance management system ensures I am held very accountable for my actions at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. The performance management system ensures I often have to explain why I do certain things at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. The performance management system ensures my supervisor holds me accountable for all of my decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. The performance management system ensures If things at work do not go the way that they should, I will hear about it from my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. The performance management system ensures to a great extent, the success of my immediate work group rests on my shoulders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. The performance management system ensures the jobs of many people at work depend on my success or failures.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43. The performance management system ensures in the grand scheme of things, my efforts at work are very important.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. The performance management system ensures co-workers, subordinates, and supervisors closely scrutinize my efforts at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 45. The performance management system ensures I am aware of my job performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 46. The performance management system ensures my supervisor provides feedback on my performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 47. The performance management system ensures my supervisor provides me information about my performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Appendix B: Survey B

Performance Management Effectiveness—Survey B

Purpose: The purpose of this survey is to gain insight on your individual perceptions and attitudes within the context of your work organization. The goal of this study is to identify effective practices and recommend general improvements to management systems and practices

Participation: We would greatly appreciate your participation in our data collection effort. Your participation is COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY. Your decision to not participate or to withdrawal from participation will not jeopardize your relationship with the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), your Service, or the US Department of Defense.

Confidentiality: We ask for some demographic information in order to interpret results more accurately. ALL ANSWERS ARE ANONYMOUS. You will be asked to create a personnel identification code. This code allows us to aggregate your answers from Survey B with Survey A. No one other than the research team will have access to your completed survey. Findings will be reported at the group level only. Reports summarizing trends in large groups may be published.

Contact information: If you have any questions or comments about the survey, contact Maj Ross Johnston at the telephone number, mailing address, or e-mail addresses listed below. You may take the cover sheet with the contact information for future reference.

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INSTRUCTIONS

- Base your answers on your thoughts and experiences
- **Circle** or **X** your response
- Please print your answers clearly when asked to write in a response
- Make dark marks when asked to use specific response options (feel free to use an ink pen)
- Avoid stray marks. If you make a correction, erase marks completely or clearly indicate the incurred response if you use an ink pen

Please provide the following demographic information.

Personally identifiable information is NOT collected.

1. Personal identifier code—The first two (2) letters of your mother’s maiden name and last two (2) digits of your SSN: ____ ____ ____ ____

- **Please Note—the above information is only identifiable by you. This allows your responses from the two surveys to be aggregated for statistical analysis**

2. Rank, grade, or level (e.g. Capt, 0-4, GS-13, etc): _____

3. Gender: _____

4. If Civil Service, are you under the National Security Personnel System (circle one): Y N

5. Career Field (e.g. Program Management, Contracting, Finance, Cost, Logistics, etc.):____

6. Branch of Service: _____

7. Years of federal or military service: _____

8. Years of work experience: _____

9. Highest level of education: _____

10. Organizational level of current position (e.g. HQ Staff, Functional Staff, Wing, Group, Squadron, Program level): _____

11. Organization (MAJCOM level): _____

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. I am involved in achieving my organization’s/department’s mission.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I do that extra bit for my organization/department over and above my direct responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I support the operational processes within my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. In my work, I take the initiative in sharing responsibilities with colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. In my organization, I take part in forming a common vision of values and goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I share my experience and knowledge with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. My impact on what happens in my department is large.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. I have significant influence over what happens in my department.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

21. My authority matches the responsibility assigned to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I don't know what is expected of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. My responsibilities are clearly defined.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I feel certain about how much authority I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I know what my responsibilities are.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I have clear planned goals and objects for my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. The planned goals and objectives are not clear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I don't know how I will be evaluated for a raise or promotion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. I know what is expected of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Explanations are clear of what has to be done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. My supervisor makes it clear how he/she will evaluate my performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

32. I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. I am enthusiastic about my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. My job inspires me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. I am proud of the work that I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. To me, my job is challenging.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. I am held very accountable for my actions at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. I often have to explain why I do certain things at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. My supervisor holds me accountable for all of my decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. If things at work do not go the way that they should, I will hear about it from my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. To a great extent, the success of my immediate work group rests on my shoulders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. The jobs of many people at work depend on my success or failures.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43. In the grand scheme of things, my efforts at work are very important.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. Co-workers, subordinates, and supervisors closely scrutinize my efforts at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

45. I am aware of my job performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. My supervisor provides feedback on my performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. My supervisor provides me information about my performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. My organization values my contribution to its well-being.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. My organization strongly considers my goals and values.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. Help is available from my organization when I have a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. My organization really cares about my well-being.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. My organization is willing to help me when I need a special favor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. My organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. My organization cares about my opinions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. My organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. My organization tries to make my job as interesting as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

57. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with my current organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside of it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59. I really feel as if my organization’s problems are my own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60. I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to my current one.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
61. I do not feel like “part of the family” at my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62. I do not feel emotionally attached to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
63. My organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65. I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
67. I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
68. My organization deserves my loyalty.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
69. I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
70. I owe a great deal to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Read each statement and using the scale below as a reference, circle the number rating from 1 “Strongly Disagree” to 7 “Strongly Agree” which indicated how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

71. I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
72. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
73. Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization right now.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
74. It wouldn't be too costly for me to leave my organization right now.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
75. Right now staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
76. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
77. One of the few serious consequences of leaving my organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
78. One of the major reasons I continue to work for my organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice – another organization may not match the benefits that I have here.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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14. ABSTRACT Effective employee management is an essential element for achieving and sustaining a competitive advantage. Through a variety of performance management practices organizations can translate competitive strategies into individual performance expectations and transform employee potential into desired organizational outcomes. Despite the promise of robust performance management practices, a significant research gap exists between the scientific research in Organizational Behavior (OB) and the performance management practices espoused by the "practitioners." The purpose of this thesis research is to explore a set of performance management practices as an initial step toward providing direct, empirical support for the linkages between performance management practices, the intended behavior or attitude of employees, and the desired employee outcomes measured by perceived organizational support and organizational commitment. The selected performance management "best-practices" of goal-alignment, role-clarification, engagement, accountability, and feedback were tested via self-report survey data from a sample of active-duty military and federal civil-service employees. The results identified the relative effectiveness of the selected practices with respect to perceived organizational support and organizational commitment.					
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