One of the most important relationships in any work environment is the relationship between employee and supervisor. Done well, and employees thrive, maximizing their potential and ability to produce quality work. Done poorly, and employees experience impacts that go beyond just what happens at work, it affects the whole of their life, and productivity suffers.

Performance reviews are one way build these vital relationships. Regular performance evaluations help keep the lines of communication open, build trust, manage expectations, and ensure employees feel valued. Here are some tips for getting the most out of the performance review process:

- **Develop a performance plan.** Work with your supervisor to develop a specific, and goal-oriented performance plan. Consider ways to measure your success so expectations are clear and you have something to strive for.

- **Meet often!** Meeting frequently (at least quarterly) with your supervisor ensures you are on the right track. When you meet, review the tasks you have completed and establish future deadlines. Share concerns you may have throughout the year.

- **Providing and receiving feedback.** When receiving feedback, be respectful and listen with an open mind. Ask clarifying questions to ensure that you are understanding your supervisor’s perspective. Talk to your supervisor about support you need from them to accomplish your work. Be prepared to provide positive and constructive feedback to your supervisor.

- **Accomplishments.** It’s your time to shine! Document completed items from your performance form, along with any additional tasks or projects. If you have incomplete tasks, discuss strategies to complete them in the future. Share your accomplishments with your supervisor prior to your performance review. **Try this:** Create a folder to collect your accomplishments and kudos throughout the year. It helps you prepare for your reviews and
can also be a great pick-me-up any time you need one.

- **Planning for the future.** Be curious. Map out your career goals. Talk to your supervisor about developmental opportunities such as details, mentoring, special assignments, and training.

### Important AgLearn Note for Supervisors and Managers

#### Suspended AgLearn Accounts

The suspended AgLearn accounts of former employees will no longer be displayed on the Team tab when a Supervisor or Manager opens this screen. If a suspended account appears on the Team tab, please open an [HR Help case](#) for assistance.

### Upcoming Webinars and Virtual Learning Opportunities

#### Conflict Management and Prevention

*Communicating Effectively During the Performance Appraisal Process*

Performance-based discussions are often challenging and can sometimes be stressful. Effective communication can change the climate of these conversations by creating a space for meaningful and productive dialogue. Join us to discuss this more, learn some new techniques, and share ways to make this process more valuable by communicating respectfully.

**Date:** Wednesday, September 16, 2020  
**Duration:** 1.5 hours  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. Alaska / 10:00 a.m. Pacific / 11:00 a.m. Mountain / 12:00 p.m. Central / 1:00 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard  
**Type of Session:** Webinar/Adobe Connect Meeting  
**How to Join:** [https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-500/](https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-500/)  
**Call-in Number:** 1-888-844-9904; Passcode: 6715754#

**Presented By:** Linda Burroughs-Glover, Alternative Dispute Resolution Specialist, Conflict Management and Prevention Center Manager (CMPC) for the WO, LEI, and ENT and Acting for Region 4

#### Training and Employee Development

**New Employee Onboarding Webinar**

This series is designed for newly onboarded employees who need a “quick start” to the Forest Service. The webinars are available as a two-day webinar series featuring presentations covering many topics such as leave, work schedules, health and life insurance, Paycheck8, AgLearn, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Specialists are available to answer your questions during
the presentations. For the complete 2020 schedule and presentation recordings, please visit our Training & Employee Development webpage.

**Dates:** September 8 - 9, 2020  
**Duration:** 6 hours each day  
**Time:** 7:00 a.m. Alaska / 8:00 a.m. Pacific / 9:00 a.m. Mountain / 10:00 a.m. Central / 11:00 a.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard  
**Type of Session:** Webinar/Adobe Connect Meeting  
**How to Join:** Adobe Connect (Audio is available through your computer speakers)

**Resilience and Personal Effectiveness**

**Mindfulness Communication: Using Self-Awareness and Emotional Intelligence to Avoid Conflict and Increase Productivity**

Find out tips to respond to conflict with openness and patience. The most important takeaway is having an outlet to work with strong emotions in the heat of the moment instead of acting on urges that might end up creating or intensifying problems. Work with your strong emotions so that you can have more choices over how to respond and what to do next  
**Date:** Thursday, September 10, 2020  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. Alaska / 10:00 a.m. Pacific / 11:00 a.m. Mountain / 12:00 p.m. Central / 1:00 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard  
**Type of Session:** Webinar/Adobe Connect Meeting  
**How to Join:** [https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-1000/](https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-1000/)  
**Call -in Number:** 1-877-369-5243 or 1-617-668-3633   Access Code: 0529290##  
Please plan to join the audio through the conference line. The conference call line will open 5 minutes prior to the webinar start time.  
**Hosted By:** Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office

**Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Fall Series: Helping Change our Response to Stressors, Cope with Anxiety, and Build Resilience through Medical and Science-Based Techniques**

MBSR is a program that helps people cope with a range of stressors through mindfulness practice. These practices are a way in which we pay attention to the experiences around and within us. This practice has been found to bolster resiliency in the face of, and in recovering from, stress—by being in the present moment. As humans, we can often be caught reliving the past and planning the future, but often miss being in the present, which can be detrimental to our health. Practicing mindfulness helps us focus on the “here and now” which can have major impacts on our work effectiveness and satisfaction in all that we do.

Below is a sample of the feedback from employees who recently attended an 8-week MBSR course:
“I don’t yet have the words to express how valuable this course was for me, my family, my co-workers and my staff and anyone else who benefits from a more grounded version of myself. I will tell you this experience has been literally life changing. I can think of no training I have ever taken with this agency which has been as valuable.”

“This was the most valuable training I have taken.”

“The MBSR program in the Forest Service WILL change the Forest Service culture, reduce harassment and bullying, and allow employees to engage more fully in the jobs that they love. I can think of nothing else that will be as effective as MBSR.”

MBSR Fall Series

Dates: Tuesday, September 29 – November 17, 2020 (2 – 2.5 hrs. each Thursday for 8 weeks)

Duration: 2 – 2.5 hours

Time: 9:00 a.m. Alaska / 10:00 a.m. Pacific / 11:00 a.m. Mountain / 12:00 p.m. Central / 1:00 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

We will accept registration until Thursday, September 24, 2020. Please email Michelle Reugebrink michelle.reugebrink@usda.gov to be placed on a mailing list and to receive access to materials and communication during the course.

REQUIRED: Add this training manually to your individual development plan (IDP) as a goal.

Type of Session: Conference Call (More information will be provided at sign-up)

Hosted By: Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office

Weekly Guided Breaks

Mindfulness Meditation is a simple, effective method that can help us be more productive and face setback with resiliency. The right side of our brain, which is responsible for creating new ideas, will increase in activity when for those who meditate regularly. As a result, improved creativity, engagement, and productivity are often a result. To see the weekly guided breaks schedule, please click here.

Type of Session: Conference Call

Hosted By: Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office

Call-in Number: 1-888-844-9904; Passcode 5637452#

Date: Friday, September 4, 2020

Duration: 15 minutes

Time: 7:00 a.m. Alaska / 8:00 a.m. Pacific / 9:00 a.m. Mountain / 10:00 a.m. Central / 11:00 a.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

Date: Monday, September 21, 2020

Duration: 15 minutes
Date: Friday, September 25, 2020
Duration: 15 minutes

Time: 8:30 a.m. Alaska / 9:30 a.m. Pacific / 10:30 a.m. Mountain / 11:30 a.m. Central / 12:30 a.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

Interested in learning more about meditation and mindfulness-based stress reduction? Check out this [National Institute of Health website](https://www.nih.gov) to learn more about the scientific evidence which suggests that “mindfulness meditation—a mind-body practice which cultivates abilities to maintain focused and clear attention, and develop increased awareness of the present—may help reduce symptoms of stress, including anxiety and depression.”

Recorded Webinars

The Jackson C.R.A.F.T. Model

The Jackson C.R.A.F.T. model was researched, created, and developed as a tool for assisting parties in conflict with identifying their “underlying issues” beneath their “conflict positions.” The acronym C.R.A.F.T. represents the five most common underlying issues present where individuals in conflict are not getting their needs met. The underlying issues are Communication, Respect, Appreciation (recognition), Fairness (equity), and Trust.

[https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/p1q1lwigehe0/](https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/p1q1lwigehe0/)

Playing time: 1 hour, 35 minutes
Hosted By: Work Environment & Performance Office, Conflict Management and Prevention

Noticing Our Response to Our Stressors & Anxiety: Foundation for a Healthy and Productive Response (Part 5 of 5) *Can be attended as a 5 part series or individually.

At times like these, it can be difficult to remain calm and focused. It's easy to get caught up in fearful or worried thinking about what might happen. Stress and anxiety are a part of life, especially during these times of uncertainty—however they don't need to control your day.

[https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/pazmhgwvr7i8/](https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/pazmhgwvr7i8/)

Playing time: 1 hour
Hosted By: Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office
Restorative Justice: How to Heal, Forgive, and Move Forward in the Workplace

Learn tools and techniques to forgive, mend relationships and create a healthy and productive work environment. Negativity can hold you and your team back. Using mindfulness and resilience techniques when you’ve been wronged can help you and your team reset, recover and move forward.

https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/p29t928vyf6o/

Playing time: 1 hour

Hosted By: Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office

Additional Tools and Resources

September is Suicide Prevention Month

Check out the REACH suicide prevention campaign: https://www.wearewithinreach.net/

Finding Trustworthy Health Information on the Internet

https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/finding-and-evaluating-online-resources?nav=govd

Have You Had All Your Vaccines?

https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/index.html

More Information on the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/fs-osoh/Pages/EAP.aspx

National Institute for Health (NIH) Mental Health Resources