

What are Contributing Factors?

Contributing Factors are attributes of job performance that describe the manner in which you achieve your job objectives. Standardized across the Department of Defense (DoD), Contributing Factors reflect behaviors that DoD deems important for the accomplishment of work in its organizations. While your job objectives define “what” your work priorities should be and what work you need to accomplish, Contributing Factors identify “how” you should approach your work and the behaviors you are expected to demonstrate as you complete your job objectives. Benchmark descriptors are included for each Contributing Factor in the NSPS Implementing Issuances and provide general descriptions of “expected” and “enhanced” behaviors at each NSPS pay schedule and pay band.

There are Seven Contributing Factors:

1. Communication
3. Cooperation and Teamwork
4. Critical Thinking
5. Customer Focus
6. Leadership
7. Resource Management
8. Technical Proficiency

Your manager/supervisor is responsible for selecting Contributing Factors to correspond with each job objective and should select the Contributing Factors that are the **most relevant, critical, and meaningful** attributes for successful work accomplishment. You and your manager/supervisor should work together to establish a shared understanding of work expectations and behaviors. You must select at least one Contributing Factor for each job objective. The best practice is to pick no more than two per job objective.

The Contributing Factor selected for the job objective should:

- Reflect the manner of performance important for accomplishing the job objective;
- Elaborate on the job objective, providing meaningful information about your approach to work; and
- Be selected based on the relevance to the job objective rather than your personal strengths or developmental needs.

The **Leadership Contributing Factor** plays an important role for managers/supervisors in NSPS:

- It **must be** selected for the mandatory supervisory job objective.
- It **may be** selected for a supervisor’s other job objectives.
- It **may be** assigned to any employee who is responsible for directing work and developing other employees.

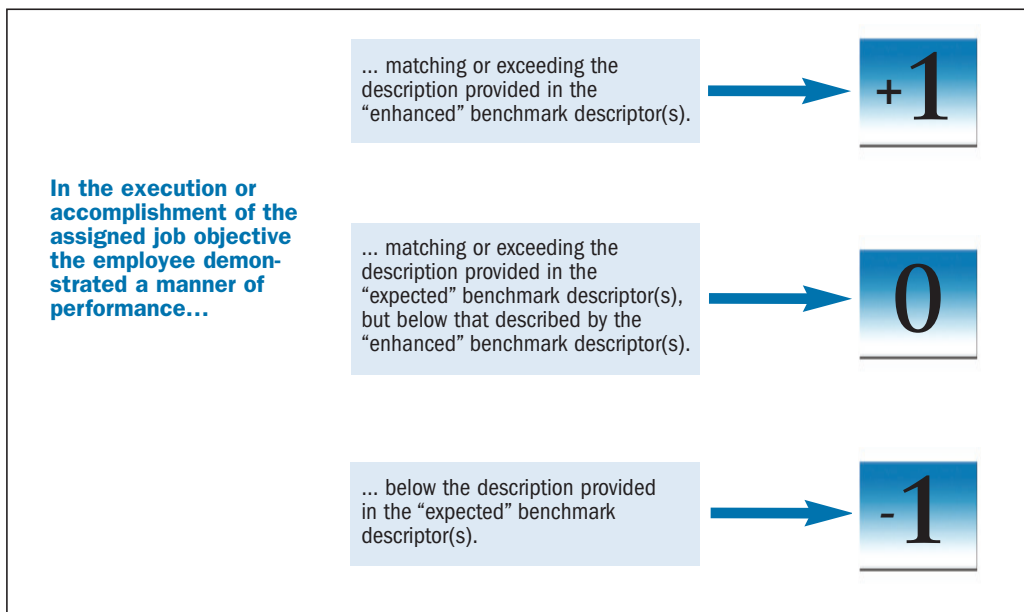
How Are Contributing Factors Evaluated?

When rating your performance, your manager/supervisor first evaluates the work results you demonstrated as compared to each job objective. Next, your manager/supervisor compares your demonstrated work behaviors against the Contributing Factors benchmark descriptors selected for each of your job objectives.

It is important to remember that the behaviors demonstrated are evaluated collectively.

- With the benchmark descriptors in mind, the manager/supervisor decides whether your demonstration of the behaviors identified in the selected Contributing Factors collectively made an impact on the accomplishment of the job objective, and whether your work behaviors (Contributing Factors) were at the “expected” or “enhanced” level based on your work level (pay schedule and pay band).
- Based on the influence of the Contributing Factors, the manager/supervisor determines whether to adjust each job objective rating by +1, -1, or 0 (no impact).
- Your supervisor then calculates your overall rating of record using the adjusted job objective ratings. Your performance plan and recommended rating are provided to the pay pool panel for higher level review.

Your supervisor then calculates your overall rating using the adjusted job objective ratings.



Special Situations to Consider When Evaluating Contributing Factors

In the following special situations, the Contributing Factor may not change the assigned job objective rating:

- If you receive a rating of 1 (Unacceptable) for a job objective, the rating of 1 cannot be raised to a rating of 2 even if you successfully demonstrated the “enhanced” behavior for the linked Contributing Factor.
- If you receive a rating of 2 (Minimally Successful) for a job objective, the rating of 2 cannot be lowered to a rating of 1 even if you did not successfully demonstrate the “expected” behavior for the linked Contributing Factor.
- If you receive a rating of 5 (Role Model) for a job objective, the rating cannot be increased even if you demonstrated the “enhanced” behavior for the linked Contributing Factor. A rating of 5 is the highest rating you can receive.

Learn More about Contributing Factors

For more information about Contributing Factors, refer to the following resources on the NSPS Connect learning web page:

- *iSuccess* web-based tutorial
- *NSPS 101* web-based tutorial
- *From Expectations to Accomplishments* course
- *Performance Management for Employees* course
- *Performance Management for Managers/Supervisors* course
- *Pay Pool Management for Rating Officials and Employees* course
- *Contributing Factors Benchmark Descriptors*
- *Critical Components of Contributing Factors*
- *Pay Pool Management for Rating Officials and Employees* course
- *Action Verbs* Tip Sheet
- *Cascading Goals* Worksheet
- *Job Objective* Worksheet