Examples of Standards

Element: Customer Service
Standards: Successful
• Usually communicates clearly, courteously, and effectively with customers (quality)
• Routinely responds to customers requests with the most accurate and complete information available (completeness)
• Telephone calls are returned within 3 business days; emails are responded to within 5 business days; formal written correspondence is prepared within 10 business days (time)
• Whenever possible, elicits customer feedback to improve service (initiative)
• If cannot immediately answer question, provides follow-up within 3 business days (time)
• If question requires additional research, keeps customer apprised of progress (quality)

Element: Customer Service
Standards: Outstanding
• Exceeds Successful Standard plus two of the following occur
• Frequently receives praise and/or written commendations from customers (customer satisfaction)
• On own initiative, assumes and accomplishes a significant amount of work beyond the normal load of assigned duties to achieve customer satisfaction (initiative)
• Proactively communicates with customer to establish good working relationship and assess customer needs (initiative)
• Consistently demonstrates in-depth knowledge of customer programs (knowledge)

Element: Conducts Studies
Standards: Successful
• Completed in final form by assigned date
• Clear, concise, and grammatically correct
• Final product is ready to be issued with only minor modifications for clarification or amplification
• Appropriate sources have been consulted, data collected are complete and carefully displayed
• Back-up material available to support questions
• Target date for ABC study: June 30, 200x
• Target date for XYZ study: December 20, 200x

Element: Conducts Studies
Standards: Outstanding
• On own initiative, proposes subject for study
• Completes extensive research to complete the study, which results in exemplary report
• Develops applicable, understandable models and examples
• Synthesizes complex issues and condenses and explains them so that they are understandable to a general audience
• Study provides leadership in the field

Element: Plans and Analysis
Standards: Successful
• Uses appropriate planning and analytical techniques
• Data collected supports recommendations and conclusions
• Final product is accepted with only minor modifications for clarification and conclusions
• Due date for 123 Analysis Report: May 6, 200x
Element: Plans and Analysis  
Standards: Outstanding  
• Based on knowledge and insights is able to propose significant changes to policies and procedures, which hold the potential for enhanced effectiveness or cost savings  
• In reviewing project plans, is able to point out major issues or problems not otherwise foreseen or to make suggestions for significant improvement  

Element: Supports Program  
Standards: Successful  
• Defines what needs to be done and allots time to meet reporting dates and allow for contingencies  
• Information provided is accurate, timely, and consistent with guiding policies and procedures  
• Coordinates input with other Units related to deadlines and reporting requirements  
• Tracks input and takes initiative to overcome delays  
• Advises supervisor of potential problems  

Element: Supports Program  
Standards: Outstanding  
• Creates a favorable impression by seeking the views of others and respecting different points of view  
• Asks probing questions to ensure that everyone understands the critical aspects of the program  
• Shares in-depth knowledge of issues and their relationship to broader Institutional issues and goals  

Element: Written Materials (legal)  
Standards: Successful  
As determined by the supervisor, written materials are usually  
• Considered to be of professional quality  
• Infrequently returned for substantial revision  
• Fully analyze relevant legal and policy issues  
• Reflect thorough investigation of factual and legal resources  
• Do not contain significant extraneous or inappropriate material  
• Completed and presented in accordance with established format and time frames  

Element: Written Materials (legal)  
Standards: Outstanding  
As determined by the supervisor, written materials  
• Are consistently of the highest professional quality  
• Are rarely returned for substantial revision  
• Consistently fully analyze relevant legal and policy issues  
• Reflect thorough investigation of factual and legal resources  
• Do not contain extraneous or inappropriate material  
• Are always completed within established time frames  
• Mentors new employees to help develop their writing skills  

Element: Supervision and Guidance  
Standards: Successful  
• 60-80% of employees achieve the goals and objectives established in their performance plans  
• Requires little intervention in carrying out daily responsibilities  
• Ensures that employees follow required regulations  
• PAS is executed within established timeframes and according to policy
Element: Supervision and Guidance  
Standards: Outstanding  
- Exceeds Successful Standards plus 2 of the following  
- Over 90% of employees achieve the goals and objectives established in their performance plans  
- Provides mentoring to peers or new supervisors  
- Often identifies and implements suggestions for process improvement  
- Assists another unit in achieving its goals without lessening own unit’s achievements

Element: Observes Safety Regulations  
Standards: Successful  
- Coordinates with the Special Assistant for Safety [Claude Russell] to ensure that subordinates are aware of all safety techniques and requirements  
- Ensures that all new employees receive a thorough overview of all safety techniques  
- Disseminates information provided by the Safety Coordinator or other means throughout the work area.  
- Assigns a staff member to serve on the safety committee and ensures that the committee member attends the safety meetings. [for division or unit heads only]  
- Supervisor corrects or improves safety problems by agreed-upon date  
- Supervisor routinely holds one safety audit per week (month)  
- Work unit rarely has any lost time due to safety problems

Element: Safe Work Environment  
Standards: Outstanding  
- Supervisor proactively identifies and takes action to prevent potential unsafe practices or conditions  
- Supervisor works with others across organization to develop policies and practices to prevent and respond to unsafe situations

Element: Equal Employment Policies  
Standards: Successful  
- Actively supports the Smithsonian’s commitment to equal opportunity and diversity  
- Applies these concepts in hiring, promoting, training, and developing employees  
- Works with upper management to identify career growth for under represented groups  
- Supports and participates in outreach activities designed to attract candidates representing diverse populations  
- Communicates to employees the Smithsonian’s commitment to these principles

Element: Equal Employment Policies  
Standards: Outstanding  
- Works to develop innovative programs for identifying and supporting potential supervisors from all represented populations within the Smithsonian Institution

Element: Manages Funds  
Standards: Successful  
- Reconciles purchase cards within established deadline (example: by 25th of month)  
- Records are updated within 24 hours of commitment with correct chart field and amount  
- Provide accurate monthly budget report to supervisor with latest available data in established format and timeframes  
- Expenses do not exceed budget
Element: Manages Funds
Standards: Outstanding

- Reconciles well before established deadline (example: by the 12th of the month)
- Proactively ensures that vendor submits invoices in a timely manner by troubleshooting potential problems and delays
- Offers training to managers and new employees
- Identifies and implements an improvement to funds management process

Many of these samples come from the Office of Personnel Management’s *Handbook for Measuring Employee Performance, 2001*