

## *Now That the Performance Period is Over*

Another appraisal cycle is over and a new one is beginning. Supervisors need to constantly be seeking ways to motivate employees. Although it seems like just another task to pile onto an already full plate, a few practices in this area can yield extraordinary long term dividends. Two such practices are: (1) setting and communicating clear objectives, and (2) giving immediate positive feedback.

By setting and communicating clear objectives, you let your employees know in plain terms what is expected of them and what criteria will be used to evaluate their performance. AFI 36-1001, paragraph 1.8 requires the rating official and employee to meet at the beginning of each appraisal period to discuss the employee's approved performance elements and standards in the plan (AF Form 1003, *Core Personnel Document* or AF Form 860, *Civilian Performance Plan*.) The employee, rating official and reviewer all sign the performance plan and the employee is provided a copy (each year). This practice serves two purposes: (1) it facilitates employee understanding of project responsibilities, and (2) it saves time and expense associated with having to redo parts of a project due to miscommunication or unclear directions. It also provides valuable documentation if a problem develops.

The second practice, immediate positive feedback for a job well done, can work wonders for an employee's confidence and the morale of your organization. Although it may sound surprising to supervisors, many employees may not know that they are doing a fine job unless someone tells them. By rewarding your employees for a job well done, it reinforces the efforts of their labor, motivating them to continue their excellent work. And, contrary to popular opinion, the compliment does not prevent the supervisor from holding the employee accountable if something substandard is done at a later time. Remember to criticize in private and compliment in public.

By setting and communicating clear objectives to employees and providing immediate positive feedback, you can help create a workforce that has greater career satisfaction and, in turn, does its job better, making your job easier and more enjoyable.