
Do You See What I See?: Are Different Rater Sources Evaluating the Same Thing?

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CWH Management Solutions

Critical Role of Job Performance in Organizations

- Administrative Decisions
 - Compensation
 - Promotion
 - Termination/Retention
 - Developmental Processes
 - Training
 - Performance Management
 - Research
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Source of Performance Ratings

- Most Common Source—Supervisor Ratings (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995)
 - Use of Multisource Feedback Systems (MSFSs) Increasing.
 - Increased Reliability
 - Reduction in Rater Bias
 - Increased Coverage of the Performance Domain.
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Critical Assumption of MSFSs

- Different Sources Provide Unique Perspectives on Ratee Performance (Borman, 1997)
 - Rater Agreement
 - Higher Agreement Within Sources
 - Lower Agreement Between Sources
 - Incremental Validity
 - Conway, Lombardo, & Sanders (2001)
 - Atwater, Ostroff, Yammarino, & Fleenor (1998)
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Factors that Influence Performance Ratings

- Ratee Effects (Actual Performance)
- Rater Effects
 - Bias/Idiosyncratic
 - Rater Perspective
- Measurement Error

Scullen, Mount, & Goff (2000)

Potential Explanations of Rater Perspective Effects

- Different Mental Models
 - Different Focus
 - Different Dimension Weightings
 - Different Performance Samples
 - Different Opportunity to Observe
 - Changes in Performance Due to Rater Source
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Supervisor Ratings

- Focus on:
 - Production
 - Technical Proficiency
 - Dependability
 - Research
 - Oppler, Campbell, Pulakos, & Borman (1992)
 - Borman, White, & Dorsey (1994)
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Peer Ratings

- Focus on:
 - Interpersonal Skills
 - Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCBs)
 - Competence
 - Dependability
 - Research
 - Borman, White, & Dorsey (1994)
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Self Ratings

- Focus on:
 - Ability
 - Cognitive
 - Physical
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Purpose of Current Study

- Do raters from different perspectives evaluate overall performance differently?
 - What factors influence each rater perspective?
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Unique Features of Current Study

- Examines Broader Range of Performance Dimensions than Previous Research
 - Includes Self Ratings
 - Purpose of Ratings—Research
 - Utilizes Nationwide Firefighter Sample
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Sample

- 469 Firefighters
 - Nationwide Sample (17 Depts)
 - Demographics
 - 84% White, 8% African American, 6% Hispanic
 - 96% Male, 4% Female
 - Mean Age—35 years-old
 - Research Sample
 - Voluntary
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Performance Measures

OCBs

Practical Intelligence

Interpersonal Skills

Cognitive Skills

Communication Skills

Physical Ability

Mechanical Ability

Correlations Between Rater Sources

–Supervisor-Peer: .34*

–Supervisor-Self: .15*

–Peer-Self: .15*

Dimension Correlations with Overall Performance

Dimension	Supervisor	Peer	Subordinate
OCBs	.57*	.72*	.45*
Practical	.44*	.68*	.43*
Interpersonal	.32*	.69*	.41*
Cognitive	.50*	.63*	.49*
Communication	.42*	.66*	.39*
Physical	.35*	.47*	.35*
Mechanical	.30*	.45*	.18*

Supervisor Ratings Expectations

OCBs

Cognitive Skills

Practical Intelligence

Supervisor Ratings Results

OCBs

Interpersonal Skills (Suppressor)

Cognitive Skills

Peer Ratings Expectations

OCBs

Interpersonal Skills

Communication Skills

Physical Ability

Peer Ratings Results

OCBs

Practical Intelligence

Interpersonal Skills

Mechanical Ability

Self Ratings Expectations

Cognitive Skills

Physical Ability

Self Ratings Results

Cognitive Skills

Interpersonal Skills

Physical Ability

Implications

- OCBs explained the most variance for both “Other” ratings.
 - Regarding intelligence, Supervisor and Self ratings gave more weight to Cognitive Ability, while Peers gave more weight to Practical Intelligence.
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Implications

- Interpersonal Skills appear to play a greater role in Peer and Self ratings than in Supervisor ratings.
 - Self ratings appear to focus more on abilities rather than actual work behaviors.
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Contributions

- This research can be used to help ratees better understand ratings they receive from different sources.
 - This research will assist Decision Makers in appropriately interpreting performance ratings from different sources.
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Limitations

- Research Sample rather than Administrative/Developmental Sample
 - No Objective Measures of Performance
 - High Correlations Among Predictor Variables
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