

Your Rating Could Determine Your Future

Each year at this time the Union receives a large number of requests from members for advice and guidance on mid-year Balanced Scorecard reviews. This year's reviews should be carried out now.

Balanced Scorecards reviews are being carried out against a background of major restructurings throughout the Group that have resulted in 8,700 redundancies being announced already. There is every expectation of that number increasing significantly before the end of the year.

In respect of those reorganisations the Bank will be following a set process for determining which staff should be selected for roles in the new structures. One of the factors, amongst others, the Bank will take into account is performance ratings and staff will be required to record their last two ratings on their preference forms.

Given the importance of ratings for future job security it is important for members to remember that if they disagree with their mid-year review ratings, they must challenge them immediately.

Although there will always be cases where a higher rating was hoped for, which is only natural, provided the Balanced Scorecard system is followed correctly no one should receive an end of year rating which surprises them. Staff who were rated as 'Exceeded Expectations' or 'Met Expectations' at the end of last year should have been made aware what was required of them to at least maintain that standard. It is unacceptable for them to

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be told suddenly that their performance had deteriorated to a lower rating.

Given the impact it can have on job security and pay awards, staff who have been rated as 'Not Met Expectations' or 'Partially Met Expectations' should have been told at the mid-year review what was required to bring their performance up to the required standard and achieve a 'Met Expectations' rating.

With the likely impact on job security and pay awards to come, any members who received lower ratings than they expected should contact LTU's Bedford Office for independent, professional help and guidance.

Preparing For Your Review...

It is important that members prepare fully for their Mid-Year Review. In preparation for your review you should:

1

Think through carefully your performance during the period, assessing your strengths and identifying any weaknesses.

2

Give very careful consideration to any problems you have faced over the last 6 months in carrying out your job, for example, too heavy a workload, lack of training, frequent changes of job, lack of managerial guidance etc. Make notes of these factors.

3

Ensure that you review your Balanced Scorecard before the meeting. If your Line Manager has completed any of the forms before the meeting make sure that you have read any points on your performance carefully. If there are any adverse comments check that examples have been given to substantiate those comments.

4

Remember the period for which you are being appraised is the previous 6 months. All too often recent events tend to cloud the judgement of Line Managers and they get current problems out of perspective or overlook previous good performance. Performance in previous periods should not be taken into account.

5

Bear in mind that in forming a view of your performance over the last 6 months your Line Manager may have consulted other staff. You have a right to know what information your Line Manager has taken into account and from whom that information was received.

6

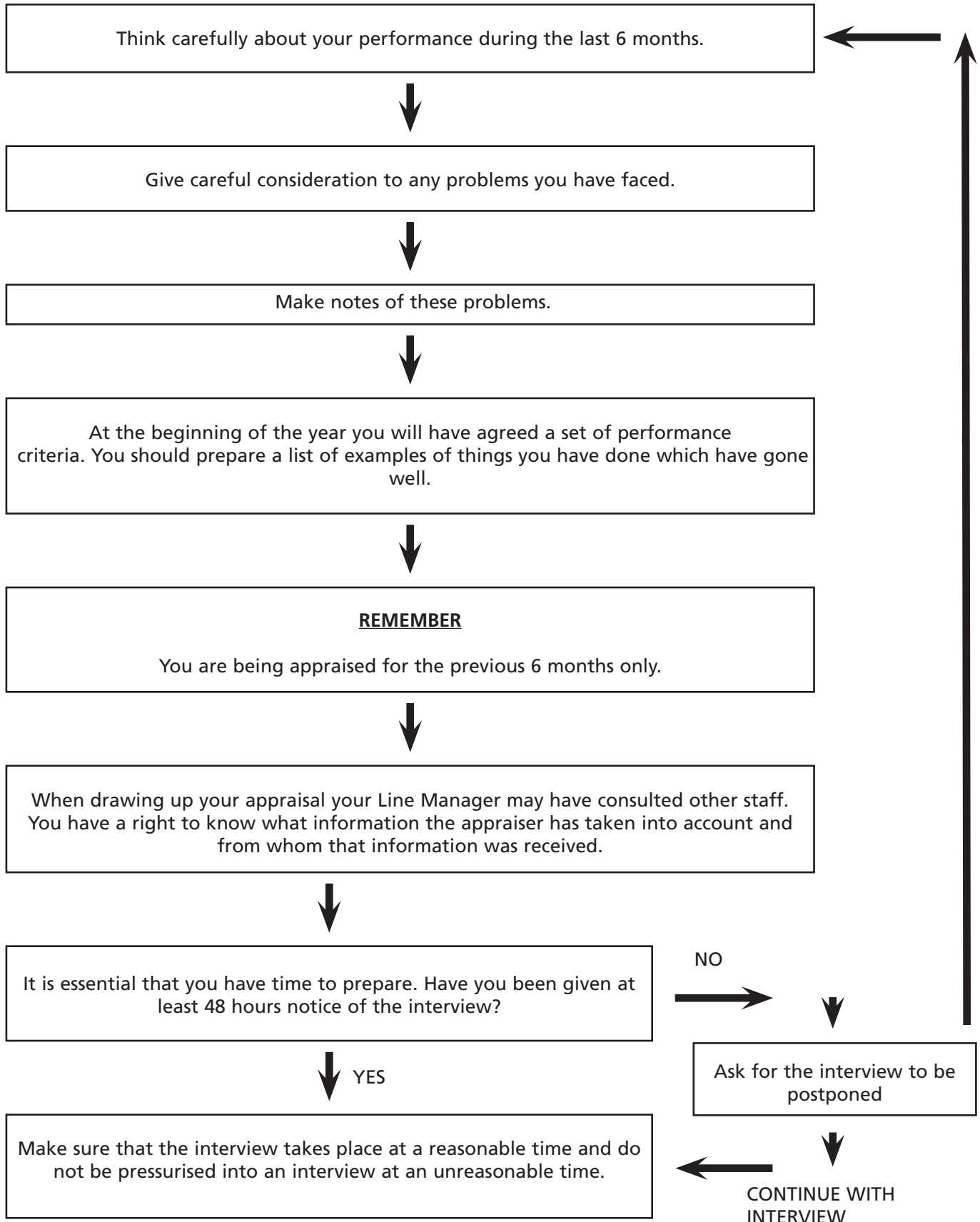
Ensure that you get at least 48 hours notice of the interview. If this is not given consider asking for the interview to be postponed to a more suitable time. It is important that you have enough time to prepare for the review meeting.

7

Make sure that the interview takes place at a reasonable time and do not be pressurised into an interview at an unreasonable time, for example, at 4.30pm on a Friday evening.

- **Present yourself effectively**
- **Check your Balanced Scorecard**
- **Communicate Clearly at the Review Meeting**
- **Learn the lessons of past appraisals**
- **Have any relevant papers or documents to hand**

Preparing For Your Review...



The Interview Itself...

1

The interview will have important implications for your pay and career prospects. It is essential, therefore, that you are prepared to deal with any points with which you disagree.

2

If you have prepared any preparation notes we recommend that you do not hand them over to your Line Manager. Appraisers have been known to use some of the comments out of context as 'evidence' to substantiate their own critical comments.

3

Remember the Bank say that appraisal should be a process of two-way communication. Ensure that you participate in a discussion: put forward your views and ensure that the review meeting is not used as a lecture session.

4

Ensure that you understand what is being said to you and if you are in any doubt as to comments being made or advice being given then seek clarification. If you disagree with anything that has been said about your performance make your views absolutely clear.

5

If you are told that certain aspects of your work have proved unsatisfactory ask for evidence and be prepared to put counter arguments and explain problems you faced in doing your job during the previous 6 months. Insist that these are taken into account. If necessary ask to take away and consider the points put to you before resuming the interview.

Finally, make sure that...

- **you come out of the interview with a plan of action**
- **give management some time to live up to their promises. If no action is forthcoming speak to your line manager pointing out what was agreed. Always honour your commitments**

6

If you are told that aspects of your work need improvements ask what improvements are required, over what period and what training or support will be given to help you.

7

It may be useful to keep a note of what you say at the review meeting and what is said by your Line Manager. This could be important if you decide to appeal against your appraisal.

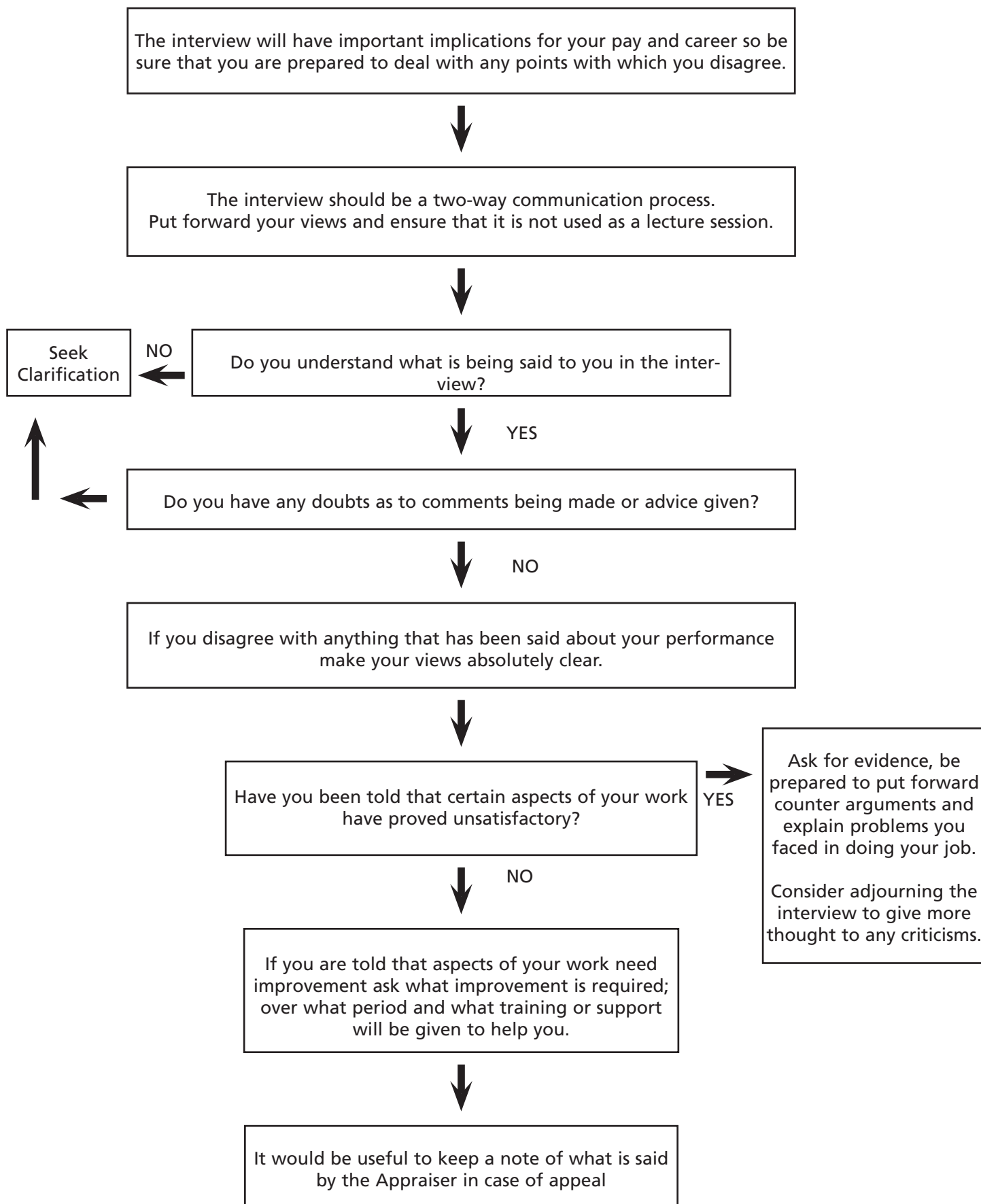
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If any of your Line Manager's comments during the course of the review meeting come as a surprise to you be prepared to ask why these were not raised in earlier meetings.

In general...

- **focus the interview towards the future action and not past mistakes**
- **be honest but do not criticise yourself**
- **agree a practical plan of action at the end**

The Interview Itself...



Rating / Definition...

Rating	Definition
Outstanding	<p>Evidence of outstanding performance against key balanced scorecard objectives and exceeds expectation in others.</p> <p>Performance clearly stands out amongst peer group across the business unit, not just within their local team.</p> <p>Has delivered outstanding contribution in areas beyond objectives identified in scorecard.</p> <p>People in this category achieve outstanding results by consistently demonstrating key competencies, capabilities and behaviours required for the role and are viewed as role models by their peers.</p>
Exceeded Expectations	<p>Evidence of performance that clearly exceeds expectations in key aspects of balanced scorecard and meets expectations in others.</p> <p>Performance would exceed amongst peer group across business unit or function, not just within their local team.</p> <p>Consistently delivers beyond the overall requirement of the balanced scorecard objectives.</p> <p>People in this category exceed overall expectations by consistently demonstrating significant skill in key competencies, capabilities and behaviours required for their role.</p>
Met Expectations	<p>Evidence of performance that meets objectives in key aspects of their balanced scorecard.</p> <p>Performance is relative to peers.</p> <p>People in this category have not only delivered expected results but have also achieved them by demonstrating appropriate competencies, capabilities, commitment and behaviours.</p>
Partially Met Expectations	<p>Evidence of performance has partially meets expectations in key aspects of the balanced scorecard, whilst meeting expectations in other areas.</p> <p>Performance is at all times below that of their peer group.</p> <p>People in this category seek to achieve results demonstrating the right competencies, capabilities, commitment and behaviours but may have development needs in this area.</p> <p>Individuals in this category would in most cases have a coaching plan in place to support performance recovery to expected standards.</p>
Not Met Expectations	<p>Evidence of performance considerably below expectations, key aspects of the balanced scorecard not achieved.</p> <p>Performance is not in line with that of their peers.</p> <p>People in this category do not meet standards expected in relation to competencies, capabilities and behaviours. Line managers will generally have concerns about an individuals commitment and approach to their work.</p> <p>Individuals in this category would in most cases be managed within the Performance Improvement Policy.</p>

Forced Distribution?

There have been suggestions that at least some parts of the Bank, are adopting a forced distribution of appraisal ratings whereby managers are required to rate predetermined proportions of their staff as falling into particular performance categories, irrespective of their actual performance, so as to control pay costs.

While the Bank has denied that there is any policy to force ratings to fit a particular model, that message does not seem to have got through further down the line. All members are entitled to have their contributions assessed individually against the objectives set out in their individual Balanced Scorecards. This should look at whole job performance and not just sales results or other outputs. Ratings should then be applied in relation to that assessment and not against any predetermined distribution.

Any members who feel that they have been rated unfairly should first ask their managers for a full explanation of the reasoning behind their ratings and question any reductions in ratings that were not discussed fully in the period between the interim review and the final appraisal.

Members should contact LTU if they believe that the appraisal process has not been followed correctly and especially if:

- **their ratings are lower than they expected as a result of their interim reviews or if insufficient or incorrect justification for a rating has been provided**
- **they are being marked down due to just one aspect of their Scorecards – especially if they have exceeded expectations in other areas**
- **they feel that their ratings have been reduced to enable their managers to meet any suggested ratings distribution**

Members can contact one of LTU's independent professional full time officials either by calling our 24 Hour Advice Line on 01234 262868 or by email at 24hours@ltu.co.uk.

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