Appendix C

Common Rating Errors

	Definition	Example
Leniency Error	Rating the employee higher than performance warrants.	Brandon's performance is acceptable, but he is not a "star" performer. His supervisor rates him as "Exceeds Expectations."
Severity Error	Rating the employee lower than performance warrants.	Emily is a solid performer, although not exceptional. Her supervisor rates her as "Needs Improvement."
Central Tendency Error	Rating employees in the middle even when their performance warrants a higher or lower rating.	Edward's team has some employees who excel at their jobs and some employees who routinely miss deadlines, yet Edward rates all of the employees on his team as "Meets Expectations."
Halo Effect	Allowing the employee's performance on one competency to positively influence the employee's ratings on other competencies.	Sarah performs exceptionally well in the area of customer service, but she makes many mistakes in her written work. Her supervisor gives her ratings of "Exceeds Expectations" on all competencies.
Pitchfork Effect	Allowing the employee's performance on one competency to negatively influence the employee's ratings on other competencies.	Marcus is hard to beat when it comes to accuracy, but he does not work well with others. His supervisor rates him as "Needs Improvement" for all competencies.
Personal Bias	Assigning higher than warranted ratings because an employee has qualities similar to the supervisor.	Gail and Paula went to the same university and majored in the same subject. Gail really likes Paula and always tends to rate her performance higher than Paula deserves.
Recency Bias	Allowing recent events to unduly influence the performance rating.	Eric recently finished a big project ahead of schedule, but due to his failure to plan appropriately, the last four projects were not completed on time. His supervisor gives him a rating of "Meets Expectations."
Length of Service Bias	Allowing an employee's length of service to influence performance ratings.	Gary rates Steven, a ten-year employee, as "Exceeds Expectations" and Carol, a one-year employee, as "Meets Expectations" even though Carol's accuracy rate is better than Steven's.
Rating the Job, Rather than the Employee	Rating the employee higher than deserved because the employee is in a job that seems critical to the operation.	Although in her day-to-day work she makes many errors, Ellen is the only employee in her work unit who can finalize reports on the agency computer system. Ellen's supervisor rates her as "Exceeds Expectations".