Talking Points – Start to Finish

Start the meeting

Supervisor says:  This meeting is to discuss your current training level and provide data for possible training plans in the future.

Your DACUM paper copy is identical to my computer. We’ll spend an hour or less, going through item, from top to bottom. I’ll mark the rating you give me for your current training level. If you made notes, let’s use them.

If we happen to see a training need differently, we will discuss it. We can add comments on the computer. Your rating will be entered and I won’t change it after our discussion.

My suggestion is that we just get started. This is new for everybody. Does that sound ok?

Begin the assessment

Let’s start at the top. How trained do you believe you are in A-1?
Do you feel
-trained enough? (4 rating)
-need full training? (1)
-need refresher? (2)
-knowledgeable enough to teach others? (4)
(mark “0” for does not apply)

Next, B-1. Please rate your current level of training. (repeat this process until the end of the DACUM) Thank you for assisting with this.

Continue through the DACUM

End the meeting

The department will look at DACUM data to plan for future training. We have to get all the employee ratings from every shop and analyze the results. You’ll hear more as the department moves into planning.

Thanks again for taking the time to do this.
**Purpose:** DACUM supports a uniform approach to assess employees' job training levels and document perceived training needs. Assessment provides a training level profile relevant to individuals, the shop and department, and across Plant. The Discussion Guide, on page 4, is the supervisor's main reference for every assessment to foster a focused and uniform conversation and effectively assess training levels.

**DACUM defined:** DACUM is a high-level outline of "trainable" skills required in a specific job function. “Trainable skills” include both acquired knowledge and acquired ability (‘things I have learned and know’; ‘things I have learned and can do’). In a DACUM assessment meeting, employee and supervisor assign a numerical rating, perceived by the employee, about the current training level achieved. Employee engagement and overall job satisfaction may advance as a result of both the assessment meeting and follow-up. DACUM results also benefit customers and the institution with trained expertise in facilities management.

**Supervisors’ steps to prepare**

1. **Attend a Supervisor Training Session**
   - Review the DACUM assigned to employees who report to you.
   - Complete your own DACUM assessment during training.
   - Complete a DACUM planning sheet for your shop/unit.

2. **Schedule a DACUM assessment with each employee (one hour per employee)**
   - Receive a printed supply of DACUM, one per employee.
   - Provide each employee with their DACUM paper copy and a guide sheet.
   - If you need extra DACUM copies, request these from your TACS rep.

3. **Establish the environment for the meeting**
   - Prevent interruptions (phone off, door closed)
   - Arrange chairs to foster a conversation and data entry into the computer.

4. **Conduct the Meeting, following the talking points in this guide**
   - Review the DACUM. Complete ratings and any notes.
   - Print a copy for the employee. End the meeting with the talking points from this guide.

5. **Follow Up Locally**
   - Review training plans that fall within your control i.e. OJT
   - Make arrangements and complete necessary training within your control. Document.
   - Send training records to the TACS rep for data entry. DACUM automatically updates.

6. **Follow Up Formally**
   - Check periodically at supervisor/department meetings about the status of technical training plans on the topics that are most pressing to business and employee performance.
   - Report back to employees about technical training plans.
   - Support formal training when it is made available to employees.

**Supervisor Role:**

Your job is to keep the DACUM discussion on track and encourage the employee to rate their perceived level of training. To effectively serve:

- Review how DACUM organizes skills into uniform content areas
- In each meeting, refer to the Discussion Guide. Begin at the top of the DACUM and continue through each cell to the end. Make notes to clarify a response or document an idea. Every cell gets a rating.
- **Keep the conversation “assessment” focused.** This is not about performance or motivation. DACUM is a strict focus on the accomplished level of training and future training implications.
- If the employee wanders off topic, calmly acknowledge the comment and re-focus attention to the computer screen. If wandering continues, mention that you have a deadline and would like to discuss other topics later.

**Anticipate and Prepare for Challenges:**

If an employee declines the opportunity to complete a DACUM

- the supervisor will complete the assessment to the best of their ability and note this on the form in the first cell (A-1) notes section.

If you and an employee view a training circumstance quite differently –

- score the assessment according to the employee’s view and make a note of your differences. ‘i.e. training need questioned by supervisor’.
- for example, employee believes full training is required. Supervisor has evidence that the skill is irrelevant to the job or future trends.

If you are unsure how to handle something during a DACUM meeting, use the “bookmark skill”: tell the employee that you will need to visit this later and move on.

- ‘bookmark’s can be used for something to talk about later.
- use ‘bookmark’s when you need more information before you answer.
- The key to ‘bookmarks’ is that you do not drop the ball. Follow up and close the loop with the employee with a clear reference back to the earlier bookmark.

What other challenges do you anticipate? Consider them now and create a constructive response. Seek the advice of others, if helpful.