

## How to evaluate Cecilia's Performance?

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Francisco headed a team of 20 people at the Ministry of Administration. There were five civil servants carrying out careers in the General Career Plan of the Executive Branch (PGPE) on the team, which had gone through a standardized system of performance evaluation. Cecília is one of these employees. She entered the team after working in five different departments of the Ministry, because she did not adapt to any of them. Cecília joined the public service through the quota system for people with disabilities, because she had limited mobility. However, over time, Francisco noticed that she had difficulty performing certain tasks that required firm intellectual effort. He started to suspect that Cecília also had a cognitive hindrance.

Unlike what Cecília said, Francisco found out that her disabilities were a result of cerebral palsy at birth, which left intellectual and physical consequences. Cecília had not revealed this fact to him. When she started working with the team, she stated that her disability was caused by a car accident when she was a child. Nevertheless, Cecilia managed to join the public service in a top level position through a public competition and did well on various tasks. In addition, she was very helpful, dedicated and interested in the work. However, she could not perform certain activities at the same level of complexity as her colleagues who held the same position.

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Cecília was well accepted by Francisco's team and had a good relationship with everyone. However, during times of peak workload, the staff resented having to take on more work to compensate for her different pace of work, while all earned the same salary. The staff did not know that Cecília had had cerebral palsy, but her distinct pace was noticeable to those who worked with her.

Francisco conducted performance evaluations that had no impact on the salary of the employees over the five years in which Cecília worked with them. This is why the leaders and the employees in general did not pay much attention to the evaluation system. After this period, Francisco was informed that the Ministry had changed its evaluation method for PGPE civil servants. The new performance evaluation system began reflecting on employee's compensation. A portion of it started to be based on the performance of each employee. Their goals began to be calculated in general, not taking into account the specific nature of a case like this one. Those who did not achieve these goals would no longer get wage increases, though not very significant ones, and would have any upward progression compromised.

The evaluation form was standardized, with the same evaluation criteria for everyone. It was difficult to evaluate Cecília in the same way as her colleagues in questions like: amount of work (defined as the volume of work produced, taking into account the complexity, learning curve and execution time, without loss of quality) and initiative (ability to visualize situations and act promptly, as well as to present suggestions or ideas aimed at improving the service). Given the new situation, without knowing how to act, Francisco contacted the Human Resources Coordination of the Ministry and asked them how to proceed in such case. Given the level of resilience that Cecilia had reached and the fact that the public administration had created a differentiated (quota) system to accept people with disabilities, how can she not be treated differently throughout her career? At the same time, wouldn't it be unfair to the other employees to say that she performed the same activities as the others, compromising the climate of the team? Would it be dishonest to the administration? Before such a new and specific situation, the HR Coordination did not know how to answer Francisco. They only stated that he had to evaluate her performance and that, at that time, it was not possible to carry out a distinct evaluation.

### Questions for debate

- How should we evaluate people with such distinct abilities? How can we provide an evaluation method that is effective, democratic and that respects the diversity among the employees at the same time?

- How should we work with the inclusion of employees with disabilities and promote a high performance in the other employees?
- Can performance evaluation generate more problems than benefits for a team?
- How should we prepare team coordinators and the human resources office in the ministries to manage crises related to performance evaluations and interpersonal conflicts?

**Material recommended for consultation**

Law No. 8,112/1990, Law No. 11,784/2008, and Art. 37, item VIII, of the Federal Constitution/1988.