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| 1. **Employee Information** | | | | |
| **Employee’s Name:** | Kevin Topolski | | **Employee ID #:** | 22196 |
| **Review Period:** | Oct 1st, 2023 – Sept 30, 2024 | | **Organization #:** | 5400 |
| 1. **Annual Evaluation Results:** Document performance including both results and behaviors. | | | | |
| *Current fiscal year major objectives agreed upon with line manager* | | *Current fiscal year accomplishments* | | |
| * Co-lead and -develop license-free version of the pipeline preparation cost model as per proposed HyBlend 2 deliverable | | * Directed development of and contributed code to the commercial license-free 2nd version BlendPATH, of which we have published the source code to in FY24 | | |
| * Contribute to 1-2 draft reports and/or journal articles under Hydrogen & Energy Storage Analysis FY24 project portfolio | | * Project management authorship for 2 HyBlend draft reports and contributor authorship for a published Communities LEAP technical report and 2 draft manuscripts | | |
| * Conduct H2 Hub technical assistance project as Principal Investigator for a project team consisting of peer and junior colleagues | | * Supported University of Houston research for a hydrogen-fueled transportation pilot funded by DOE FECM despite delay in Houston’s HyVelocity hub commencement to FY25 | | |
| * Support Hydrogen & Energy Storage Analysis Team Leads in co-managing team resources (FTE & funding) to support group and laboratory-wide initiative achievement and in representing the Laboratory to external agencies | | * Co-managed team allocation and funding under the HyBlend consortium; featured NREL FY24 accomplishments in the PEMP report to HFTO, and HyBlend outcomes to US-German Climate & Energy Partnership and to DOE Joint Strategy Team for H2 | | |
| *Other major accomplishments:*   * Planned and implemented NREL’s techno-economic analysis and general National Laboratory Phase I performance feedback sessions in the HyBlend Phase II kick-off * Promoted HyBlend Consortia, HyBlend Techno-economic Analysis and NREL Hydrogen Systems Analysis research to external groups at 9 other research conferences, workshops and non-public meetings with industry * Led efforts in publishing BlendPATH V1 and ProFAST along with reconciling licensing with closed-source code * Prior fiscal year support in Communities LEAP via hydrogen energy storage techno-economic analysis contributed to project stakeholders being selected for a $96MM award from the US Department of Agriculture | | | | |
| 1. **Line Manager’s Feedback** | | | | |
| Supervisor Feedback:   * Kevin continues to demonstrate strong technical acumen in his research. * His leadership capabilities have strengthened this year given his role in HyBlend and successfully leading the team to completion of BlendPATH, BlendPATH user documentation, and the forthcoming publication. * His technical recommendations in the C-LEAP project are a testament to his strong analytical acumen and attention to detail. * Please continue to track progress and impact of these two initiatives as FY25 progresses. * For FY25, I would like to see Kevin become more confident and comfortable in a leadership role. This involves delegation, managing people both ways (up and down from an organization perspective), proposal and business development, and managing stakeholders.   Peer review, feedback, and suggestions for improvement:   * Kevin has been very respectful of workload and is always happy to pitch in when help is needed. He also takes a professional approach to business development to make sure the project scope is appropriate and thoroughly defined * Kevin is an excellent collaborator. During the project, he showed attention to detail, diligence, and reliability. For example, Kevin went out of his way to help me in a project area that was not his focus, yet his review proved to be critical. Additionally, Kevin is a technical expert on hydrogen blending; he provided guidance to the team on these topics, which propelled the project forward. He effectively communicates and works efficiently. * Kevin could improve his written documents and presentations by writing more in active voice rather than passive voice | | | | |
| 1. **Major Performance Objectives for Next Fiscal Year:** State major objectives for next year. | | | | |
| * Extend BlendPATH model framework to address hydrogen blending in existing natural gas distribution pipeline networks; develop a separate initial framework that assesses the impacts of blending hydrogen into natural gas transmission pipelines to power transmission networks | | | | |
| * Conduct H2 Hub technical assistance project as Principal Investigator for a project team consisting of peer and junior colleagues | | | | |
| * Promote BlendPATH to external organizations (via collaborative efforts, presentations, webinar, NREL webpage, etc.) as to initiate an established user base | | | | |
| * Achieve funding through competitive proposal solicitation as to set up exploratory research for FY26 | | | | |
| 1. **Areas for Growth, Development and Challenge:** List skills, knowledge, or attributes that need to be developed or strengthened. | | | | |
| * Proposal development * Delegation and mentorship * Stakeholder management | | | | |
| 1. **Overall Performance Rating:** | | | | |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Successfully meets or exceeds expectations** |   **Enter the overall performance rating:** |  |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | Type “Yes” in the box to the left if a corrective action plan is required. | | | | | |
| **Performance Rating Definitions:** | | | | |
| **Needs improvement** – Employee does not meet the performance and/or behavior expectations, and/or demonstrates only a minimum level of proficiency in the competencies required in their job on a consistent basis. This rating also applied to an employee who may exhibit workplace behaviors which negatively impact the ability to be effective in their role, although goals may be achieved. Additional skill development, commitment, and/or change in behaviors are necessary. This rating describes the employee who may meet only the very minimum position requirements and/or behaviors and change is necessary. The evaluation should detail the changes necessary for improvement to ensure clear expectations are defined.  **Successfully meets or exceeds expectations** – Employee is currently successful in their role and consistently meets and may frequently exceed the high NREL performance expectations commensurate with their position within the laboratory. The expected behaviors include proficiency regarding judgment, interpersonal and communication skills, and other competencies required in their job. This rating describes the employee whose overall performance is successful and above. Any minor areas where performance gaps exist were counterbalanced by overall successful performance and behavior that consistently met or exceeded expectations. The rating can also apply to employees new in their jobs who may be learning or lack experience but, overall, are successful in their role with no significant gaps in performance or behavior.  **Exceptional** – Employee consistently exceeds the majority of performance expectations and goals, and demonstrates judgment and behaviors commensurate with their position within the laboratory. The expected behaviors include a high level of proficiency regarding judgment, interpersonal and communication skills, and other competencies required in their job. | | | | |

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| **Employee and line manager review the following items together and initial upon review.** | | |
| **Initial each item** |  |
| **KT** | **I have reviewed the** [**Commitment to Safety and Environmental Stewardship**](http://thesource.nrel.gov/esh/commitment.html) **and reviewed my ESH training requirements with my line manager.** |
| **KT** | **I have reviewed my required training plan with my line manager and have submitted necessary changes to** [**institutionaltraining@nrel.gov**](mailto:institutionaltraining@nrel.gov)**.** |
| **KT** | **I have discussed** [**NREL’s Ethics Handbook**](https://highpoint.nrel.gov/sites/iop/Documents/gen/fy21/77850.pdf) **with my line manager and understand my responsibilities in these areas.** |
| **KT** | **I have discussed cybersecurity requirements, including personally identifiable information, and physical security requirements, such as visitor access and control issues, with my line manager and understand my responsibilities in these areas.** |

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| 1. **Employee Comments (Optional)** |
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| 1. **Signatures** |

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| **Employee:** | **Kevin Topolski** |  | **Date:** | **12/11/24** |
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| **Employee’s Line Manager:** | **Mark Chung** |  | **Date:** | **11/25/24** |

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| **Reviewing Manager:** |  |  | **Date:** | **12/16/2024** |