

USDA SENIOR MANAGER GATEKEEPERS



Matthew Johnson

Program Staff Director, USDA

- 51-years-old
- Married, 3 children, 1 grandchild
- Ph.D in Agricultural Economics
- Comfortable using a computer, intermediate Internet user, with a T1 connection at work and dial-up at home
- Uses email extensively; uses the web about 1.5 hours a day for his work

“Can you get me that staff analysis by Tuesday?”

Matthew spends most of his time at work requesting and reviewing research reports, preparing memos and briefings for agency heads, and supervising staff efforts in food safety and inspection.

He had a brief stint at ERS a number of years ago and still maintains personal and professional contacts with a number of staff members who keep him abreast of recent research in his field of interest.

He uses email extensively at work and uses the web on average about an hour a day to do quick fact checking and research and to find out about new developments.

In addition to internally generated information, he uses foodsafety.gov, FSIS, CDC, FDA, APHIS, other Federal websites, university sites, and industry websites. He also visits the ERS site about once a week, but only for a few minutes each time.

He finds he is increasingly relying more on the web to provide him with quick and easy access to timely information. However, he still prefers to print out pages because he finds it hard to keep track of pages he has viewed and to read long documents on his monitor.

From his dialup connection at home, he uses the Internet to check up on recent news events, review his portfolio, plan travel, and order the occasional case of wine.

Key Attributes

- Focused, goal-oriented
- Strong leadership role
- Concerned about maintaining quality across all output of program under direction

Tasks

- Reviews internally generated research and analysis
- Researches and writes memos and speeches for Senior USDA managers
- Prepares reports and briefings
- Responds to inquiries for strategic planning from the Undersecretary's office
- Supervises program staff who collect and analyze field data

Informational Goals

- Narrow subject focus
- Seeks decision level information
- Prefers summaries but also quick access to specific information for fact checking
- Accesses subject matter experts
- Seeks recent developments and publications in areas of interest
- Values timeliness, credibility, accuracy of information

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