



Highlights of [GAO-08-11](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

Given the importance of the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) role in managing the nation's federal workforce, GAO assessed OPM's internal capacity for human capital management. This report—the third in the series—extends prior work and (1) looks at the extent to which OPM has addressed key internal human capital management issues identified by examining employee responses to the 2004 and 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey (FHCS) and (2) has strategies in place to ensure it has the mission critical talent it needs to meet current and future strategic goals. To address our objectives, GAO analyzed 2004 and 2006 FHCS results, summaries of OPM employee focus groups, and analyzed OPM strategic and human capital planning documents.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Director of OPM institute a documented process to ensure an agencywide perspective on workforce and succession efforts, including funding, implementation, and evaluation. In commenting on the report, the Director of OPM agreed with our recommendation, adding that the insights and recommendation provided in the report will be useful in shaping both ongoing and planned human capital initiatives within OPM.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on [GAO-08-11](#). For more information, contact J. Christopher Mihm at (202) 512-6806 or mihmj@gao.gov.

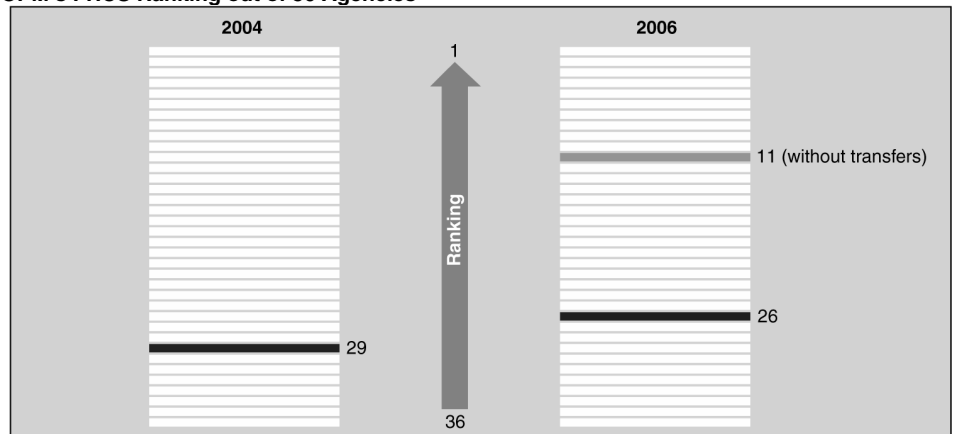
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Opportunities Exist to Build on Recent Progress in Internal Human Capital Capacity

What GAO Found

OPM has taken positive actions to address specific concerns raised by employees and managers in the 2004 and 2006 FHCS responses. OPM conducted employee focus groups to understand factors contributing to the low 2004 survey scores and took actions, such as trying to improve communication throughout the agency. The 2006 survey results showed improvement in the area of leadership, with mixed results in the performance culture and accountability area, and continued concern in the talent management area. Without the responses from the investigative service employees who transferred from the Department of Defense in early 2005, OPM's 2006 FHCS results would have been, in many cases, significantly more positive than in 2004. The perceptions of the investigative service employees, however, will need continued attention.

OPM's FHCS Ranking out of 36 Agencies



Source: GAO presentation of OPM information.

OPM has strategies in place, such as workforce and succession management plans, that are aligned with selected leading practices relevant to the agency's capacity to fulfill its strategic goals. For example, OPM's top leadership is involved in these efforts, and the agency has assessed gaps in numbers and competencies and created gap closure plans for its mission critical and leadership workforce.

OPM lacks, however, a well-documented agencywide evaluation process of some of its workforce planning efforts. In particular, OPM's implementation of division-level training plans could make it difficult for the agency to identify and address reasons for shortfalls in meeting its talent management goals. In a relatively short time, there will also be a Presidential transition, and well-documented processes can help to ensure a seamless transition that builds on the current momentum.