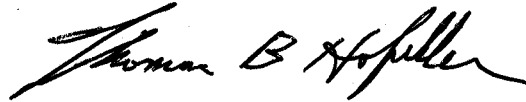


For: All FSA and RMA Federal Managers and Supervisors With Official Supervisory Duties (GS-13 and Above and Farm Loan Managers)

2008 Federal Competency Assessment Tool for Managers (FCAT-M)

Approved by: Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



1 Overview

A Background

The Federal Government continues to make a concerted effort to:

- ensure that its leaders, who are deemed mission critical, have the necessary skills to manage a 21st century workforce
- guarantee our leadership pipelines position us for future success.

OPM is once again providing Federal managers with access to FCAT-M, which:

- is a web-based instrument for assessing the skill levels of managers, supervisors, team leaders, and others in key leadership and performance management competencies
- allows an individual to conduct a self-assessment and receive a subsequent supervisory assessment to determine competency strengths and areas for improvement

Note: The results of the assessments:

- can assist agencies in supporting their leadership competency gap analysis, succession management, and development efforts
- will provide a strategic leadership competency analysis of the skill level of an agency's future and current leadership cadre.
- assesses the proficiency levels of agency leaders against OPM's 34 leadership and performance management competencies

Disposal Date September 1, 2008	Distribution All FSA and RMA Federal Managers and Supervisors with official supervisory duties (GS-13 and above and Farm Loan Managers)
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1 Overview (Continued)

A Background (Continued)

- supports the agencies' human capital efforts in succession management, leadership competency gap closure, leadership development, and recruitment and retention
- is for developmental purposes only, ensuring that FSA and RMA are focusing on the training and development programs necessary to meet its supervisors' needs and agency objectives
- should take no longer than 15 to 20 minutes to register and complete.

USDA, Office of Human Capital Management:

- is making the web-based tool available until August 8, 2008
- has requested that all managers and supervisors voluntarily participate in the initial assessment to meet the requirements set forth by OPM.

B Purpose

This notice:

- provides guidelines and instructions for using FCAT-M
- asks that managers and supervisors comply with the USDA request to participate in the governmentwide leadership development and succession planning initiative.

2 Action

A Manager and Supervisor Responsibilities

All FSA and RMA full-time, permanent, GS, senior level, and SES employees, **except political appointees**, with official supervisory duties should:

- complete the registration and self-assessment of 34 leadership competencies according to the instructions in Exhibit 1
- upon receiving confidential individual results:
 - analyze and identify developmental opportunities
 - discuss with the direct supervisor a mutually agreeable developmental plan.

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2 Action (Continued)

B Managers and Supervisors With Subordinate Supervisors Responsibilities

All FSA and RMA full-time, permanent, GS, senior level, and SES employees, **including political appointees**, with official supervisory duties and who have subordinate supervisors should do the following:

- **immediately** complete the registration process

Note: Managers and supervisors with subordinate supervisors do **not** have to complete the assessment right away, but they must register immediately so that their subordinate supervisors may submit their responses to them.

- upon receiving an e-mail message from **FCAT-M@opm.gov**, follow the instructions to complete a confidential assessment of the subordinate supervisor according to Exhibit 2
- when requested by the subordinate supervisor, discuss a mutually agreeable developmental plan that addresses the gaps in any or all of the 34 competencies.

C FFAS HRD Responsibilities

FFAS HRD is responsible for:

- reviewing the results of FCAT-M and providing analysis and competency gap closure strategies to USDA
- ensuring that USDA-approved competency gap closure strategies are implemented in FFAS.

D Deadline for Completing FCAT-M Assessments

USDA has declared August 8, 2008, as the deadline to participate in FCAT-M.

E Contact Information

Offices shall direct questions about registration or completing the assessment to Joanna Barlow, Program Manager, Human Capital Management, by either of the following:

- e-mail to **joanna.barlow@wdc.usda.gov**
- telephone at 202-401-0225

Instructions for Completing FCAT-M Registration and Self-Assessment

All Federal managers and supervisors, except political appointees, shall complete FCAT-M registration and self-assessment according to the instructions in this table.

Step	Action
1	Access FCAT-M web site at http://216.109.77.22/FCATM and begin the registration process.
2	<p>CLICK “Self-Register for a new FCAT-M Account” and the FCAT-M 2.1 Registration Page will be displayed.</p> <p>Note: The registration process includes 3 steps. Users shall complete all required information in each step.</p>
3	<p>Complete step 1 of the registration according to the following instructions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter the e-mail address, which will be used as the username. • Enter a password (must be at least 8 characters) and then retype the password. • Enter the first name, middle initial, and last name. • Select the work role from the drop-down menu. • Select “Department of Agriculture” from the “Agency/Department” drop-down menu. The screen will refresh. • Enter the access code “usda” to access the list of USDA organizations. • Select “Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services-FAS, FSA, or RMA”, as appropriate, from the “Bureau/Agency” drop-down menu. • Select the occupational series from the “Occupational Group/Family” drop-down menu. • Select pay plan information, such as GS or ES. • Select the grade level or other designation from the “Grade” drop-down menu. • CLICK “Next” at the bottom of the page. Step 2 of the registration will be displayed.
4	<p>Complete step 2 of the registration according to the following instructions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter street address of the official duty station. • Enter city. • Select State from the drop-down menu. • Enter ZIP Code. • Select country from the drop-down menu. • Enter 10-digit telephone number. Enter numbers only, do not use spaces or any other punctuation. • CLICK “Next” at the bottom of the page. Step 3 of the registration will be displayed.

Instructions for Completing FCAT-M Registration and Self-Assessment (Continued)

Step	Action
5	<p>Complete step 3 of registration according to the following instructions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select the highest level of education from the drop-down menu. • Select years of professional service from the drop-down menu following additional instructions on page. <p>Note: When estimating how many years of professional service, include time spent in government, military, and private sector service in a similar role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select years of government service from the drop-down menu following additional instructions on page. <p>Note: When estimating how many total years of government service, include both civilian and military experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select years before projected retirement from the drop-down menu. • CLICK “Next” at the bottom of the page. The FCAT-M Assessment Home Page will be displayed.
6	<p>On the FCAT-M Assessment Home Page, CLICK “Click here to begin your self assessment” to begin the assessment. Each leadership and performance management competency on the assessment is provided with a definition and proficiency (1-5 point) scale. Answer all questions using the 5-point scale, including performance management. Select “0” if the competency is not applicable to the position.</p> <p>Notes: Save the assessment by clicking “Update” on the assessment screen. Users may login at a later time to update the assessment.</p> <p>Do not click “Back” before saving the assessment because all information will be lost.</p>
7	<p>The FCAT-M Assessment Home Page will be redisplayed.</p>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLICK “Request a Supervisor Assessment” and follow the instructions on the page. • Fill in the supervisor’s e-mail address and name fields. <p>Note: Check the “Update Previous Assessment” box to update any previous input.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLICK “Email Request” when finished, and the FCAT-M Assessment Home Page will be redisplayed.
9	<p>Follow these instructions to print the self-assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLICK “Click here to print your assessment report” • from the browser menu, select “File”, then “Print” • CLICK “Back” to return to the FCAT-M Assessment Home Page.
10	<p>After completing the assessment process, click either of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sign Out” in the upper-left corner in the FCAT-M menu box • “Sign Out” in the upper-right corner of the screen to sign out from the FCAT-M assessment.

Instructions for Completing Assessment of Subordinate Supervisors

All Federal managers and supervisors, including political appointees, shall complete the assessment of subordinate supervisors according to the instructions in this table.

Step	Action
1	Federal managers and supervisors will receive an e-mail message from FCAT-M@opm.gov requesting that they complete an evaluation of a subordinate supervisor. Note: Follow the login instructions carefully.
2	CLICK “Go to Competency Assessment Form” on the left under “Options”.
3	Select and complete assessments on both of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current proficiency (what level the employee is currently) • desired proficiency (what levels are required for the position).
4	Each proficiency level includes a definition that can be accessed by clicking the icon next to the proficiency level. Use the descriptions to guide the selection of the proficiency level of the individual. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the competency is not required for the assessed employee’s job, leave the rating as “0” - “Not Needed”. • Once finished assessing current proficiencies, CLICK “Update” at the bottom of the screen. • CLICK “Send Complete Message to Employee” on the left under “Options”. This will inform the assessed employee that their assessment is complete. Note: The employee will not have access to their assessment. However, they are encouraged to discuss their assessment with the employee to ensure understanding of the areas required for development and improvement.
5	To print a copy of the report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLICK “Print Report of your Feedback” • from the browser menu, select “File”, then “Print” • CLICK “Back” at the top right under the red bar.
6	After completing assessment and printing, CLICK “Sign Out” in the left column and close the browser.