CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS COUNCIL

CHCO COUNCIL

Collection of Human Capital Practices




UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Working for America

Chairman's Message

The Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCO) Council is pleased to provide its first Collection of Human Capital Practices for the Federal human resource community.

Over the past several years, through the President's Management Agenda, Federal agencies have made significant improvements in their strategic human capital procedures. As agencies continue to improve their human capital practices, it is critical to share those successes so others may learn from them. The most effective way to collect and showcase agency human capital practices is through the Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCO) Council. Now entering its fifth year, the CHCO Council is the natural catalyst for identifying, compiling, and sharing human capital strategies within the Federal Government.

This document contains several human capital strategies from a number of agencies on topics including performance management, learning and development, closing competency gaps, and telework. Each individual synopsis was submitted by the agency implementing the highlighted strategy. We identified the agency practices through such means as the 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey, our CHCO Council Training Academy sessions, and the Council's subcommittees.

We believe the practices outlined in this collection will facilitate cross agency collaboration, foster strategic partnerships, and promote successful strategies, now and in the future.

Linda M. Springer
Chairman

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I. Human Capital Practices

HUMAN CAPITAL PRACTICES IN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The **CHCO Council's Performance Management Subcommittee** designed a series of questions and compiled responses from CHCO Council agencies that had either the (1) greatest improvements in performance management based on the results of the Federal Human Capital Survey from 2004 and 2006 or (2) highest scores on the results oriented performance culture index of the Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework. Responses to the subcommittee's inquiry are provided below:

Agency: Social Security Administration (SSA)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to your agency's high/improved score on performance management? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify.

Response

- The Commissioner provided full support toward improving the performance management process at SSA.
- The SSA transformed from a Pass/Fail program to the Performance Assessment and Communication System (PACS), a new and multi-tiered performance management program.
- The SSA initiated an extensive training program for supervisors, managers and employees.

Question

What efforts has your agency undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about performance?

Response

Developing a robust training program is the Social Security Administration's primary focus for facilitating communication between supervisors and employees. Prior to implementing PACS in October 2006, SSA conducted intensive, face-to-face training for approximately 9,500 supervisors, managers and team leaders on all aspects of the new appraisal program that included extensive "interpersonal" instruction in the art of communication. This effort was augmented during the first year of implementation with additional classroom and interactive video training, designed to further reinforce SSA's commitment to open and two-way communication between supervisors and employees.

Question

Has your agency undertaken any specific practices or initiatives not already mentioned that contribute to employees' perceptions that your agency makes meaningful distinctions between performance levels, recognizes these differences in meaningful ways, and/or takes steps to deal with poor performers?

Response

Through PACS, SSA updated and enhanced the awards program and performance improvement process. For instance, the awards program was modified to provide more meaningful awards to the Agency's best performers. In addition, SSA streamlined the performance improvement process to allow managers to deal with poor performers in a more timely and effective manner.

Question

How many rating levels does your performance management system include? How long have you been under the present system? If you changed from pass-fail to a multi-level system, did your agency undertake any specific initiatives to assist in the transition?

Response

The PACS includes three appraisal levels for each element and the final summary. SSA implemented PACS on October 1, 2006. The initiatives taken to assist in the transition from a Pass/Fail program to PACS have been described in the previous questions.

Agency: Department of Labor (DOL)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to your agency's high/improved score on performance management? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify.

Response

- First, the Department of Labor linked organizational goals to performance standards for occupations deemed mission critical. The Department also provided detailed instructions/guidance and incorporated linking organizational goals to performance standards in the supervisor's toolkit.
- Next, the Department took steps to change the performance management system across the entire organization. The Department also modified its performance management plan to standardize the rating cycle and summary rating levels, and incorporated linking of organizational goals to performance standards into the Department's policy.
- Finally, the Secretary has emphasized distinguishing differences between performance levels via bonus pools across the board. Successful implementation of these changes was based on having top leadership support in expressing the expectation of managers in the area of performance management.

Question

What efforts has your agency undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about performance?

Response

The DOL updated its "supervisors training" to include a module devoted to communication between managers and employees throughout the performance cycle. A memorandum was issued to Agency Heads expressing the importance of communicating with the employees regarding performance management.

Question

Has your agency undertaken any specific practices or initiatives not already mentioned that contribute to employees' perceptions that your agency makes meaningful distinctions between performance levels, recognizes these differences in meaningful ways, and/or takes steps to deal with poor performers?

Response

The Department issues an Annual Report to employees, which outlines the vision and current status of this initiative. In addition, the Department's Human Capital Strategic Plan also contains strategies for addressing this issue. The Department also modified its policy for issuing a performance improvement plan, so managers could provide an opportunity for employees to improve their performance before their final rating.

Question

How many rating levels does your performance management system include? How long have you been under the present system? If you changed from pass-fail to a multi-level system, did your agency undertake any specific initiatives to assist in the transition?

Response

The DOL employees are under a five-tier rating system, which include: (1) Exemplary; (2) Highly Effective; (3) Effective; (4) Minimally Satisfactory; and (5) Unsatisfactory. The Department began operating under this performance management system in October 2003. To assist with the transition, the DOL took a number of key steps including (1) revising the departmental personnel regulations; (2) training managers/supervisors; and (3) providing guidance on the Department's website. In addition, having top leadership engaged and supportive was critical to the success of this transition.

Agency: Department of Commerce (DOC)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to your agency's high/ improved score on performance management? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify.

Response

- The Department's top management was fully committed to the development, implementation, and improvement of the performance management system. The Deputy Secretary met quarterly with bureau heads to discuss their progress in meeting performance management deadlines. For the last two years, the Deputy Secretary hosted senior executive town hall meetings to ensure the Department's executives were clearly and personally informed of the Department's priority objectives for the year. These meetings facilitated the formulation of strategies that aligned executive, manager, and employee work plans in accordance with Departmental mission goals.

- The Department implemented a comprehensive training initiative designed to provide managers with the necessary tools to develop results-oriented performance plans. All Department managers were required to take either classroom or on-line training.

- The Department implemented reporting and accountability processes to ensure 100 percent compliance with performance management benchmarks.

Question

What efforts has your agency undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about performance?

Response

The DOC's policy on performance management encourages employees to participate in the development of their performance plans. Additionally, the policy requires a minimum of one progress report at the midpoint of the appraisal cycle.

Prior to the Performance Review Board's (PRB) convening to consider 2006 performance, the Department conducted five briefings specifically designed for PRB members and the human resources staff that support the PRB's efforts. However, senior Departmental staff and other human resources staff interested in increasing the base of their subject matter expertise also attended the briefings. The format of the briefings included a seminar/workshop format, with instructional materials and a “question and answer” component. During the briefings, attendees developed an understanding of the rules, policies, procedures and relationships governing the PRBs, including the evaluation of SES performance and associated salary adjustments and bonuses.

In addition, the Department also developed training sessions on performance plan development, alignment, and communication. Performance plan development briefings were conducted for the Department’s most senior executives. Along with executives, the Department’s bureau-level executive resources staff (SES Functional Partnership members) received Departmental training on development of executive performance plans. There was also a hands-on session in developing measures, during which individual and group exercises were conducted.

On an annual basis, detailed end of performance cycle (End-of-Year) process guidance is provided to the Department’s Secretarial Officers and Operating Unit Heads. This is critical as the End-of-Year guidance provides comprehensive information concerning the activities, responsibilities, and requirements concerning documentation of performance results, awards, pay adjustments, and the pay policy for that particular year.

Question

Has your agency undertaken any specific practices or initiatives not already mentioned that contribute to employees’ perceptions that your agency makes meaningful distinctions between performance levels, recognizes these differences in meaningful ways, and/or takes steps to deal with poor performers?

Response

Commerce effectively uses its website as a means to communicate with executives regarding their performance and pay systems. The website contains information that provides a ready reference tool on performance management for its executives, and makes the executive performance management process and its results as transparent as possible. Through this tool, Commerce communicates performance and pay policies and annual results. On the website, employees will find published resources including (1) the SES Performance Management System document; (2) SES Standards of Excellence; (3) SES Performance and Pay Profiles (results) for 2004-2006; (4) Executive Pay Policy Summaries for 2004-2006; and (5) SES Performance End of Year Guidance for 2004-2006.

The Director for Human Resources Management (HRM), Deputy Director for HRM, and the Director, Office of Executive Resources meet with Senior Executive Association (SEA) representatives on a quarterly basis. To solidify this relationship, SES performance management was made a standing SEA meeting agenda item in FY 2006. Topics within this subject area are wide-ranging and include such issues as (1) how the Department's SES pay policy supports recognition of meaningful distinctions in performance based on business results and (2) communicating performance results to the Department's executive cadre. The SEA officers are increasingly designated to serve on PRBs, thus providing them hands-on process experience in executive performance management. These engagements have better enabled the SEA to communicate with their constituency on executive performance management matters and concerns, thus increasing knowledge across the executive population.

In addition, the Department, through a mandatory leadership element, holds managers/supervisors accountable for managing employee performance through continuous feedback and awards, and resolution of performance deficiencies. The Department also requires the development of supplemental standards for each individual performance element, thereby ensuring that each employee is rated against standards developed for that specific element.

Question

How many rating levels does your performance management system include? How long have you been under the present system? If you changed from pass-fail to a multi-level system, did your agency undertake any specific initiatives to assist in the transition?

Response

The Department's Senior Executives are covered by a five-level performance management system, including (1) Outstanding; (2) Commendable; (3) Fully Successful; (4) Minimally Acceptable; and (5) Unsatisfactory. However, it is important to note that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, a performance-based organization within the Department of Commerce, operates a separate and independent five-level system for its executives. During the 2002-2003 performance management cycle, the Economics and Statistics Administration, including the Bureau of the Census and the Bureau of Economic Analysis, operated under a Pass/Fail system. Subsequent to that cycle, it was mandated that the Department's bureaus would operate under a five-level system. Training on the operation of the Department's SES performance management system is provided annually and information on the same is also posted on the Department's website for ready reference.

The Department of Commerce's General Schedule, Wage Marine, and Federal Wage System employees are covered by a five-level system, with the following rating levels: (1) Level 5; (2) Level 4; (3) Level 3; (4) Level 2; and (5) Level 1.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is covered under a separate five-level system, with the following rating levels: (1) Outstanding; (2) Commendable; (3) Fully Successful; (4) Marginal; and (5) Unacceptable.

With the advent of a new performance management system, which was implemented in October 2005, all employees previously under a pass-fail system were briefed and trained on the new policy and procedures. The briefings and training were conducted at the Department and bureau level. A CD-ROM was developed, which explained the multi-level performance management system and the changes in the Department's performance management system process. The CD-ROM was provided to employees and posted on bureau websites.

In addition to the Department's comprehensive performance management website, many bureaus created similar sites to educate their employees on the new system.

Agency: Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to your agency's high/improved score on performance management? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify.

Response

- The NRC believes its agency culture contributes to the relatively high scores. Among other attributes, the agency culture strongly emphasizes leadership development and leadership skills (including soft skills related to communication, recognition, etc.). In addition, the NRC is proud of its employee-friendly policies and procedures. The NRC also provides employees with a clear understanding of the relation between their work and a focused agency mission.
- The NRC's appraisal system has been relatively stable and provides opportunities for generous ratings for high performers. This likely contributes to employees' comfort level with the system.
- Agency leaders take organizational performance and individual performance management seriously and demonstrate commitment to managing performance in a fair and honest manner.

Question

What efforts has your agency undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about performance?

Response

The NRC issued yearly memoranda calling for performance plans, progress reviews and appraisals and tracked their completion. The memoranda provided not only technical guidance on completing plans and appraisals, but also reminders of the importance of key components including, clarifying the alignment between individual and agency performance goals and providing constructive feedback. The agency's leaders often supplement the memoranda with additional communication. For example, the Chairman issued a message to all employees in 2007 emphasizing the importance of progress reviews. In addition, the agency communicates extensively about organizational goals and performance, often using relatively informal approaches. The methods include messages from the Chairman, Executive Director of Operations Updates, employee newsletter articles, and all hands meetings.

The agency provides team leader, supervisory, leadership development and executive development training, which focus on performance management. The NRC also conducts stand-alone classes in performance management and seminars for specific offices on the subject. Agency policies, guidelines, and supervisory toolboxes are available on-line for all employees.

Question

Has your agency undertaken any specific practices or initiatives not already mentioned that contribute to employees' perceptions that your agency makes meaningful distinctions between performance levels, recognizes these differences in meaningful ways, and/or takes steps to deal with poor performers?

Response

The NRC recognizes outstanding contributions through public mechanisms including its employee newsletters. In addition, NRC provides the union with information about employee contributions, which gives them the opportunity to express their views on performance awards. Information about overall results regarding rating levels is available to bargaining unit and executive employees.

In addition to existing supervisory and management training on performance management, the agency enhanced the training sessions for addressing poor performance and increased support for management in dealing with poor performers.

Question

How many rating levels does your performance management system include? How long have you been under the present system? If you changed from pass-fail to a multi-level system, did your agency undertake any specific initiatives to assist in the transition?

Response

The agency uses a five-level performance management system, which has been in place since 1990. The levels include (1) Outstanding; (2) Excellent; (3) Fully Successful; (4) Minimally Successful; and (5) Unacceptable.

Agency: National Science Foundation (NSF)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to your agency's high/improved score on performance management? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify.

Response

- The NSF requires that general workforce performance standards show a linkage to agency mission. Supervisors are required to examine their employee's critical elements and determine how they support the NSF vision, mission, goals or objectives. Elements may also support a Directorate, Division, or Office mission or goals, as long as they cascade from the agency goals. While previous plans were written to describe tasks and responsibilities that support NSF mission, this change made the linkage explicit. Highlighting the link to mission first improves employee performance and then organizational performance.

- Training on the performance management system is provided by the Division of Human Resource Management (HRM) during the New Employee Orientation. In addition, refresher training is required every two years for supervisors and every three years for employees. The new training program is an enhancement, as our previous system only provided formal group training as needed. In addition, informal training and information sharing were decentralized and provided to employees and supervisors within their own organization. The new system ensures that all supervisors and employees are informed about the features of the NSF performance appraisal system and understand where to obtain additional information and guidance.

- Each organization within NSF is required to certify to the Division of Human Resource Management that all general workforce employees have received a mid-year progress review by the end of the sixth month of the performance cycle. At that time, organizations must provide the names of employees who did not receive a progress review and note the reason for the delay. Previously, the program required that mid-year progress reviews be conducted between July and October, but did not require formal notification to (HRM). This practice will ensure that supervisors provide timely feedback to employees and allow sufficient time to improve performance.

Question

What efforts has your agency undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about performance?

Response

The general workforce performance management program requires that plans are to be communicated to employees within 30 days of the beginning of the appraisal period or within 30 days of employee placement in a new position. Instructions for the Performance Appraisal Form direct supervisors to work with employees in developing their performance plans by discussing goals and objectives of the work group and how the employee's work contributes to the planned results. The form, which formally documents the establishment of critical elements and standards, requires the employee's signature, thereby reinforcing specific performance management communication between supervisor and employee.

Question

Has your agency undertaken any specific practices or initiatives not already mentioned that contribute to employees' perceptions that your agency makes meaningful distinctions between performance levels, recognizes these differences in meaningful ways, and/or takes steps to deal with poor performers?

Response

The NSF general workforce performance management system is composed of critical job elements, critical element ratings, a summary rating, and a cash award and/or salary increase derived from the summary rating (quality step increases for General Schedule [GS] employees or salary increases for Excepted Service employees). Performance appraisals allow for the measurement of up to five critical job elements and distinguish five levels of performance from Outstanding to Unacceptable. A summary rating is established according to a simple formula plainly described on the appraisal instruction sheet (e.g., assign a summary rating of Outstanding when 50% of the critical elements are rated Outstanding and no critical element is rated below Very Good). The program offers flexibility in establishing the number of critical elements and provides a means of distinguishing levels of performance. Where appropriate, performance awards and salary increases are processed within one pay period after summary ratings are submitted to HRM. When an employee's summary performance is rated at the Minimally Successful or Unacceptable level, the supervisor is referred to the Division of Human Resource Management for assistance in determining appropriate and specific remedial action.

Question

How many rating levels does your performance management system include? How long have you been under the present system? If you changed from pass-fail to a multi-level system, did your agency undertake any specific initiatives to assist in the transition?

Response

The NSF General Workforce performance appraisal system is composed of five rating levels, which have been in place since December 1986. They include: (1) Outstanding; (2) Very Good; (3) Fully Successful; (4) Minimally Successful; and (5) Unacceptable.

Additional Performance Management Program Information

In addition to the previous information collected by the CHCO Council's Performance Management Subcommittee, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) submitted the following information on their Performance Management Program for inclusion.

Mission

The mission of the Department of Homeland Security is to lead the unified national effort to secure America; prevent and deter terrorist attacks and protect against and respond to threats and hazards to the nation; ensure safe and secure borders, welcome lawful immigrants and visitors, and promote the free-flow of commerce.

Background

The Department of Homeland Security's Performance Management (PM) Program was implemented October 2005, pursuant to 5 CFR Part 9701, Subpart D, "Performance Management." As described below, the Program was piloted in FY 2006 to supervisors, managers, and non-bargaining unit employees in the DHS headquarters organization and subsequently extended to supervisors and managers of other DHS Components. The Program is being extended to all non-bargaining unit DHS employees.

Describe how the practice is innovative and exemplary and how it differs from what was done in the past:

Highlights of the Performance Management Program

The DHS Performance Management Program adopts an approach to employee performance appraisal that incorporates the best features used in both the public and private sectors. This approach:

- Is results-oriented
- Is competency-based
- Is supported by a paperless, automated system that facilitates performance plan development, performance monitoring during rating cycles, and performance rating at the end of the cycle
- Results in meaningful distinctions in performance levels
- Enables substantive employee involvement

Results-Oriented

The Program calls for performance goals, which now account for 60% of an employee's overall rating, to be developed at the beginning of each 12-month rating cycle. It also ensures those goals are directed to achieving results that contribute to the strategic goals and mission requirements of the Department.

The validity and utility of individual results-oriented performance goals are assured by involving employees in initial development of their goals and performance standards against which their performance will be measured; and by requiring continuous dialogue between supervisors and employees throughout the rating cycle.

Competency-Based

Another significant feature of the Department's Performance Management Program is the competency-based framework. The Department undertook extensive efforts to identify and validate core performance competencies (i.e., measurable or observable knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics required by a position) that apply broadly to many, if not all, of the positions at DHS.

In addition to the competency of "Achieving Results," which serves as the basis for the results-oriented nature of the Program described above, the additional competencies, which account for the remaining 40% of an employee's overall rating, are: technical proficiency; customer service; teamwork/cooperation; communications; representing the agency; and (for supervisors and managers only) leadership and assigning, monitoring and evaluating work.

ePerformance Tool

The Department's Performance Management Program is supported by an automated, web-based application that facilitates administration of the Program by creating the "document of record" and generating both recurring and special reports.

The ePerformance Tool brings many innovative features to the Program:

- Assurance that rating officials operate in accordance with DHS Performance Management policy.
- Ability to monitor required actions in real time.
- Automated calculation of ratings and electronic routing of ratings to employees, rating officials, reviewing officials, and the human resources office.
- On-demand access to key information with the capability for generation of recurring and special reports.

Program Administration

The following illustrate the considerable extent of the efforts expended to implement the Performance Management Program and to develop a performance-based culture within the Department thus far:

- Required all rating officials (14,500+ over a two-year period) to attend Performance Leadership Training, which included an in-depth exposition of the results-oriented philosophy behind the Department's program and detailed instructions on how to establish goals.
- Made a *Goal Cascading Workshop* (over 50 sessions) available, which provided detailed instructions on setting organizational goals that flow down from one level to another. Also, provided instructions on how to link individual performance goals to organizational goals.
- Trained supervisors and human resources specialists on the policies and procedures of the implementing directive and on the administration of the ePerformance Tool.
- Trained HR specialists throughout the Department on their new role as consultants/strategic partners in administering the new Performance Management Program.
- Established a Performance Management Website that includes "Job Aids" for all aspects of performance management, desk Guides, employee Guides, and information and services on the Department's Performance Management program.

How the Program Differs from what Existed in the Past

The Performance Management Program offers several significant improvements over past operations:

- Previously, appraisal systems and individual plans focused on measuring adherence to processes and performance of activities. Now the focus is on concrete results.
- In the past, appraisal systems tended to measure activities undertaken by individual employees. Today, the Program is competency-based, using a set of core competencies that are common to all occupational fields across the Department, which measure the most important work behaviors of the DHS workforce.

- The Program now requires supervisors to consider the performance of their work units as a whole when completing individual performance ratings and resolve any inconsistencies between the two.

- The ePerformance Tool also allows the Department to oversee, manage, and evaluate the administration of the Performance Management Program centrally, in real time. The reports generated enable program administrators to identify and analyze trends and potential problems.

Describe how the practice has been adopted, expanded, or adapted for use in other parts of the Agency

During the 2002 - 2005 timeframe, the new Program incorporated the latest Performance Management practices and ensured that all interested parties had substantive input into the design of the Program. Once the Program's policies and procedures were developed, the Program was rolled out to organizational entities within the Department in a phased approach:

- Supervisors, managers, and non-bargaining unit employees in DHS Headquarters were covered in October 2005.

- Supervisors and managers in the U.S. Coast Guard, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Customs and Border Protection, and Citizenship and Immigration Services were put under the Program in 2006.

- Coverage was extended to supervisors and managers of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and to all employees of the Secret Service in 2007. Coverage to non-screener Transportation Security Administration employees is scheduled for 2008.

- The Department is developing plans for extending the Performance Management Program to bargaining unit employees in accordance with the labor-management relations provisions of 5 USC Chapter 71.

- In addition, the Department has undertaken two other significant initiatives to improve the administration of the Program, including (1) the ePerformance Tool has been streamlined to make it more "user friendly" and (2) a comprehensive audit of performance goals was completed. As a result of these efforts, the procedures associated with both the ePerformance Tool and goal development training have been simplified.

Describe, as Quantitatively as Possible, the Results of the Program

Currently, there are over 21,000 supervisors and managers and over 100,000 non-manager, non-bargaining unit employees at DHS. Of this number, over 73,000 are actively participating in this single, unified Department-wide Program. This represents 41% of the total DHS population.

Additionally, over 13,000 non-manager, bargaining unit employees from CIS and ICE are currently participating in the program, bringing the total to over 86,000. This figure represents 48% of the total DHS population. Two complete rating cycles have been completed in HQ and several Components.

HUMAN CAPITAL PRACTICES IN LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The **CHCO Council's Learning and Development Subcommittee** sent an inquiry to selected agencies about best practices that contributed to the agency's relatively high or improved Federal Human Capital Survey score in the area of learning and development. Responses to that inquiry are provided below:

Agency: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to your agency's high/improved score on the learning and development questions in the 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify?

Response

Generally, there are several factors that promote training and development within NASA. Each contributes to the other and all support the overall health of the function within the agency.

- **An academic culture:** The Agency's executives, managers, and supervisors understand and value education, knowledge sharing, and improvement. As a scientific agency, learning is a way of life within the organization.
- **Leadership support:** This is a corollary to the first, but also larger in scope. The Agency supports best in class leadership development activity—well beyond what an agency of this size would normally justify. It is forward thinking for the agency to ensure that it has bench strength for the future. This is also true within the technical training community. Under the Office of the Chief Engineer, NASA's Academy for Program/Project and Engineering Leadership (APPEL) provides systems engineering and program/project management training for a large segment of the technical workforce within the agency. Its core and electives curricula are designed to support NASA's mission and technical concerns. The training staff is also responsive to shifts in organizational focus and curricula are changed accordingly, usually before the next course iteration.

- **Training budget:** Generally, NASA has funded training beyond "adequate" levels. Our annual training budget mirrors benchmarked measures considered best practices. Also, our training budget usually exceeds the majority of other Federal agencies. Thus NASA has the resources to support the desire of having best in class training and development programs.

Question

What efforts have your agency undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about learning and development?

Response

The Agency has several mechanisms in place that foster collaboration between employees and supervisors around learning and development.

- The new performance management system, covering all general schedule employees, has training and development planning built into the model in support of annual performance objectives. In addition, we provide training to supervisors and employees to facilitate these discussions.

- The three formal leadership development programs all have required feedback mechanisms for participants and supervisors, as well as higher level managers in the organization. This includes recommendations on developmental next steps.

- The Agency is currently automating its individual development plan (IDP) as an online tool within the learning management system. Though not specifically "required", completion of the IDP is expected.

- The Agency has a network of training officers, who meet regularly to discuss agency wide and center specific initiatives. This interchange enables information sharing between supervisors and managers at the Headquarter and center levels.

- Also, several NASA centers operate with Human Resource Development Representatives (HRDRs). These representatives are assigned to each organization, serving as a bridge to connect employee development goals and objectives with organization needs. The HRDRs play a critical role as they help with organization development, as well as with individual development and career planning.

Question

What strategies does your agency utilize to measure the effectiveness of training?

Response

The Agency evaluates every course to get a real-time understanding of the employee's ability to learn from the training. For long-term development programs, NASA tracks the employees' success within their home center by examining indicators – including promotions – expansion in scope of work, and whether or not they were able to apply the learning gained at a NASA course or program.

The Agency also focuses on ways training impacts mission success. In general, NASA uses a variety of methods such as (1) quantitative and qualitative data that focus on longitudinal analysis and (2) social science techniques and processes that ensure the data is both valid and reliable. NASA uses an outside contractor to analyze the data in order to eliminate internal bias.

Currently, NASA is working to procure an automated tool that will measure metrics for Agency leadership courses.

Question

How does your agency incorporate distance learning into your training environment? Please provide some examples explaining how its application and usage have enhanced your learning and development program.

Response

The Agency provides distance learning opportunities to the workforce in a variety of ways. It is about 18 months into implementation of a new learning management system. The content of this system covers a wide variety of topics and is tied to the competency management system. This resource maximizes NASA's ability to provide training and development options for skills enhancement and competency gap closure. The Agency utilizes e-learning both as stand alone training and as part of blended learning. It supplements classroom learning and other traditional methods for re-enforcing previous training, improving job skills and preparing employees for certifications.

The Agency implemented an automated IDP as part of the learning management system in October 2007. In addition, the Agency will utilize video teleconferencing and WebEx for education and development programs. WebEx is used in the field and allows employees to enroll in university courses, at such institutions as the University of Southern California and California Institute of Technology.

Question

Has your agency undertaken any specific practices or initiatives not already mentioned that contribute to meaningful learning and development experiences/ opportunities for employees at all levels of the organization?

Response

The Agency has a strategy for leadership development that spans multiple levels and serves as a "life cycle" model for leadership development. It has established an internal development program for GS-11 and 12 employees, aimed at targeting this key leadership pipeline. The program, entitled Foundations of Influence, Relationships, Success, and Teamwork (FIRST) provides employees with the opportunity to develop and enhance critical interpersonal skills necessary for successful management. The program also provides participants with a strategic understanding of the role of NASA Headquarters, which helps them connect center activities with the mission of the agency. The Agency also has a mid-career program, targeted to GS 13-15, which further emphasizes the development of vital leadership skills. Like many federal agencies, NASA also has a very active SES Candidate Development Program.

In addition, NASA maintains very active mentoring and coaching programs. For instance, NASA has a two tiered coaching program for senior leaders to have professional coaches. The agency also has employees, with coaching certifications, who serve as coaches for other supervisors and employees. The Agency's mentors and protégés are selected internally through an application process and undergo significant training. Both of these programs have grown significantly in the past several years.

Agency: Department of Treasury
OFFICE OF CONTROLLER OF CURRENCY (OCC)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to OCC's high/improved score on learning and development questions in the 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify?

Response

- **Emphasis on employee development:** While this is true for all OCC employees, it is particularly true for the bank examiner population, which constitutes the majority of the OCC staff. The OCC has a structured training program for new examiner hires. Training teams and experienced examiners facilitate knowledge sharing and collaborative learning for new employees in the examiner occupation. In addition, OCC has training for experienced examiners, which is concentrated on developing specialized technical skills, including professional industry certifications (i.e. certified pubic accountants and charted financial analysts).

- **Availability of training information:** Information about training is readily available electronically and through other communication mechanisms. The OCC's external training program provides funding for training to meet the developmental needs for employees at all levels. Employees can either express interest or register for training courses through the OCC's various on-line systems, including the agency's learning management system, external training request system, and the developmental opportunities system. Outreach meetings and briefings conducted by the training department's leadership and managers continually highlight available training options. Staff conferences, with themes centered on 'investing in people,' were held in 2006 and reached nearly all of OCC's 3,000 employees. Training and other learning initiatives were conference agenda topics.

- **Use of technology in the work environment:** Use of technology in the work environment is an important factor. The OCC has incorporated the use of technology in every day work tasks, including the intranet, electronic databases, and tools for examiner, blackberries, etc.

Question

What efforts have OCC undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about learning and development?

Response

The OCC's performance management policy provides the primary framework for managers and employees to have an ongoing dialogue about job performance and developmental needs. Continuous learning and development are integral components of OCC's performance management program. Therefore, employees are encouraged to prepare a development plan. As stated in the policy, during interim and annual reviews, managers and employees should discuss developmental needs, goals, and opportunities.

Also, OCC launched a revised leadership development program for current managers to assist them in gaining and enhancing management, communication and leadership skills. In 2005, as part of the leadership development program, OCC launched a coaching program for executives and managers seeking another avenue for personal development. Topics covered in this program included enhancing relationships, improving communication skills, and developing trust with staff.

Question

What strategies does OCC utilize to measure the effectiveness of training?

Response

The OCC adopted a "performance-based" Instructional Systems Design (ISD) approach to develop/provide training, which encompasses its evaluation process. After receiving a "request for training," OCC assesses the form to determine if training is justified (since it is the most expensive method to improve performance). As a way to measure the gap between the "current" and "desired" performance, OCC determines the methods necessary to improve performance (e.g., training, provide information, etc.), and means to evaluate training's effectiveness.

In OCC's "performance based" approach, on-the-job performance is always the target when training is part of the solution to a gap in performance. Training objectives are derived from an analysis of on-the-job performance and describe the intended results of instruction. Evaluation measures of participant learning in the class (traditionally Kirkpatrick's "Level II" evaluation) are identical to the instructional objectives (which, as mentioned, reflect the on-the-job performance expected of participants).

This "dove tail" approach using on-the-job performance as the focal point of instruction continues when the course is designed and developed. Instruction includes only what is needed to accomplish the objectives and skill practice exercises (traditionally Kirkpatrick's "Level II" evaluation) are used to confirm mastery, diagnose difficulties, and as opportunities to improve the participants' confidence. On reaching mastery, training participants are recognized for achieving the instructional objectives (derived from expected on-the-job performance).

The OCC routinely conducts pilots of each course as a beta test to evaluate the effectiveness of training on the participant's achievement of course objectives. It also routinely monitors the participant's end-of-course evaluations (traditionally Kirkpatrick's "Level I" evaluation) to detect trends for course improvement.

The OCC acknowledges that training by itself cannot change on-the-job performance, no matter how well the instruction is designed. Therefore, in order for training to have impact on work performance, the employee must also be given the opportunity to apply what is learned in training in a supportive environment. To this end, managers play a critical role in ensuring that training goals are met and performance is improved.

With OCC's training focus of on-the-job performance, efforts to evaluate participants' transfer of learning (traditionally through Kirkpatrick's "Level III" evaluation) are easier to track. Such formal studies will be conducted annually and focus on new or newly revised courses designed in the "performance-based" methodology.

Question

How does OCC incorporate distance learning into your training environment? Please provide some examples explaining how its application and usage have enhanced your learning and development program.

Response

Recognizing that classroom training is the most expensive method to improve employee performance, OCC reviews employee requests for classroom training carefully and seeks ways to improve employee performance in the most economical manner. The OCC believes that classroom training should only be used for (1) highly complex skills needing expert monitoring; (2) areas where participants need to apply learning through a case study/work sample approach; or (3) when participants' interpersonal/communication skills need to be observed first hand. Beyond these conditions, OCC utilizes eLearning (distance learning) through CBT/Web-based training and synchronous instruction. The OCC experienced its greatest success through a 'blended learning' approach, where various modes of instruction are combined to achieve the targeted outcomes. For example, in one of OCC's technical courses that spans several days, participants complete portions of a CBI program where they learn needed skills/knowledge. After this portion of the training, the employees participate in various activities including synchronous telephonic instruction to obtain feedback and group discussion with peers and seasoned examiners.

The OCC's distance learning efforts will grow with an ever evolving IT infrastructure and new technologically-equipped classrooms. In addition to enhancing formal eLearning activities, OCC will emphasize "informal learning" to improve work performance by developing ways for employees to learn in real time. This emphasis expands the training organization's role to enable the agency to capitalize on the vast informal learning opportunities that are available through collaborative work methodologies and tools now available through "Web 2.0." This new focus integrates formal and informal training into the employee development process.

Agency: Department of Treasury
TREASURY INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR TAX ADMINISTRATION (TIGTA)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to TIGTA's high/improved score on the learning and development questions in the 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify?

Response

- **Access to e-Learning:** The TIGTA increased the number of employees with access to e-learning tools. In addition, many employees were given the opportunity to attend leadership and development classes offered by the Internal Revenue Service.

- **More Focused Approach:** The TIGTA's Office of Audit took a more focused approach to learning and development. For example, the office posted required skills and competencies for positions, so each employee could identify their own training needs. To expand their experiences and knowledge base, audit employees were also given the opportunity to participate in detailed assignments to higher graded positions and assigned to other offices as well.

- **Training Opportunities:** The TIGTA employees also participated in other training opportunities through Continuing Professional Education Seminars and vendor provided courses.

Question

What efforts has TIGTA undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about learning and development?

Response

The TIGTA managers must discuss employee development with each individual at least twice annually, during mid-year and annual appraisal meetings. These discussions reinforce that employee development is a shared responsibility between managers and employees. In addition, managers and employees are encouraged to review employee-training records and develop individual development plans at the beginning of each rating period.

The Office of Audit also developed a competency matrix for each grade level, so auditors understand what skills are required to move to the next grade level. Supervisors and employees can use the matrix to identify training needs of employees.

Question

What strategies does TIGTA utilize to measure the effectiveness of training?

Response

The TIGTA encourages supervisors to discuss course objectives with employees after course completion. The Office of Audit also utilizes an on-line course evaluation requesting the employee evaluate the relevance of the course to his/her duties, usefulness of reference material, and overall course rating.

Question

How does TIGTA incorporate distance learning into your training environment? Please provide some examples explaining how its application and usage have enhanced your learning and development program.

Response

Distance learning has become a major part of TIGTA's training environment. During FY 2008, TIGTA plans to make commercial Learning Management Systems (LMS) and Corporate Professional Development content available to all its employees, through an OMB certified Training Service Provider. With access to LMS, TIGTA's auditors can enroll in courses that meet their certification requirements. Also, TIGTA will be able to provide additional training through distance learning in the areas of leadership, information technology, accounting and finance, and technical skills to serve the training needs of all TIGTA employees. Due to increased budget constraints, distance learning will give all TIGTA employees an opportunity to satisfy their training needs, without the additional cost of travel and vendor training.

Agency: Department of Treasury
TAX AND TRADE BUREAU (TTB)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to the Tax and Trade Bureau's (TTB) high/improved score on the learning and development questions in the 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify?

Response

- The Training and Professional Development (TPD) Office established a team approach to facilitate and deliver its training programs. For example, the Office formed a collaborative partnership with the employees, supervisors, training coordinators, and management to continually build and foster an environment that enhances the bureau's training program. They worked with TTB employees, as well as executive staff, to establish clearly defined policies and procedures by which training was developed, delivered, and evaluated. The mission statement, responsibilities, training model, and procedures were identified and communicated throughout the organization.

- The *Homeland Security Act of 2002* established the Tax and Trade Bureau, formerly Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), within the Department of Treasury. From the outset, TTB was fortunate to have the proper administrative support and financial funding from top to bottom of the organization, including Treasury, TTB Executive Offices, and down to the front-line supervisors.

- The TPD Office utilized Subject Matter Experts (SME), who were responsible for specific industry occupational development and to ensure that employees received the specific technical skills necessary to perform their jobs. The SME's were comprised of Industry Analysts, National Revenue Center (NRC) Specialists, Senior Executives, Supervisors, etc. They were responsible for analyzing the need for commodity subject courses, compiling training materials, delivering or instructing the training, identifying technical competencies, and advising TPD on all training issues.

Question

What efforts has TTB undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about learning and development?

Response

The primary initiative that TTB undertook to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees regarding learning and development involved the annual Training Roll Call. The Training Roll Call is the process that provides the methodology for the development of TTB's annual training budget. The Training and Professional Development Office begins the process by sending an email and an excel spreadsheet to each Division Director. The email instructions direct each division to disseminate the message to the front-line supervisors within their organization. The front-line managers are then directed to solicit training needs from the individual employees and then to prioritize each training session listed.

This information is then routed back up through the organization to the Division Director level and summarized. Once all of the training requests from each Division Director are received, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and the Director of the Training and Professional Development Office decide which sessions will be included in the new year's training budget based on financial resources and the bureau needs.

This process is still being utilized to budget for current year training needs. The system is resourceful because it facilitates communication and collaboration related to learning and development between executives, supervisors, and employees. Also, this process ensures that the budget contains sufficient training dollars for all levels within the bureau.

Question

What strategies does TTB utilize to measure the effectiveness of training?

Response

In 2006, the Training and Professional Development Office utilized an "Overall Evaluation Survey" for each and every training session that was developed and delivered internally within TTB. This formal assessment evaluated the overall course, including the identification of strengths and weaknesses in development and delivery. In addition, the Training and Professional Development Office worked closely with the Bureau of Public Debt (BPD) and their Employee Development System (EDS). It was the practice of BPD to email an evaluation to all TTB employees who attended training that was provided by an outside contractor.

The TPD Office summarized all evaluations for the internal and external training and used this information to determine which courses and training vendors were better than others. This data was considered in deciding which sessions to offer in the following years.

The Training and Professional Development Office established an overall average performance target for itself of 3.5 out of a possible 5.0 to measure customer satisfaction. This served as an indicator as to whether the Training and Professional Development Office was on target in fulfilling its mission.

Question

How does TTB incorporate distance learning into your training environment? Please provide some examples explaining how its application and usage have enhanced your learning and development program.

Response

The Training and Professional Development Office established an intranet training web site in 2006 that is now fully operational. This site includes training information on all mandatory training, web-based training, directives, training policies and procedures, training forms and templates, individual development plans, training announcements, links to other training information, etc. The National Revenue Center (NRC), the TPD Office, and an outside contractor designed and developed web-based training entitled "Integrated Revenue Information System" for all TTB employees. This system is a database that provides a means for users to track industry members operational reports, bonds, trade names, key party/business information, and allows users to view up-to-date industry member information. This web-based training can be accessed from anywhere at any time. This training has advanced the mission of the NRC by dramatically increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of its staff to record, track, and monitor information on business registrations, permits, renewals, operational data and taxes for organizations in the alcohol and tobacco industries.

The TPD Office experimented with using a commercial E-Learning System. Web-based training sessions were offered to TTB employees for a six-month period at no cost to the bureau, as a result of TPD negotiated efforts. This provided TTB employees access to approximately a thousand e-learning training sessions in every professional and clerical field of study. All sessions could be completed online at any time.

Question

Has TTB undertaken any specific practices or initiatives not already mentioned that contribute to meaningful learning and development experience s/opportunities for employees at all levels of the organization?

Response

Currently, TPD and all Treasury bureaus are required to migrate onto a new LMS. As part of this migration, TTB has elected to subscribe to a commercial e-Learning System, through an OMB certified Training Service Provider. With this subscription for every TTB employee, the bureau has access to over two thousand online web-based training sessions, whereby employees can learn at their own pace. Also, the commercial system has a feature, which will provide exceptional research capabilities. This will also enable our professional auditors, investigators, etc. to maintain their certifications by obtaining continuing professional education (CPE) credits. This will also save training and travel dollars by completing the training online. The commercial e-Learning system will contribute meaningful learning and development experiences and opportunities for all levels of the organization.

Last year TPD initiated development of an Emerging Leaders Program. The purpose was to establish a foundation for organizational excellence through the development of a well-trained and educated workforce. This program consists of short term executive, management, leadership, and supervisory programs to prepare employees for the next level in their career progression and professional development and create a cadre of employees prepared to compete for higher level positions.

Agency: Department of Commerce

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to your agency's high/improved score on the learning and development questions in the 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify?

Response

- **Departmental Leadership Development Programs –** The Department's Leadership Development Programs, in their third year, have raised the visibility of learning opportunities to all employees. The various learning components (i.e. developmental assignments, core learning, executive mentors, and action learning projects) have touched many employees and raised the total awareness of our leadership programs.

- **New Commerce Learning Center –** The emergence of the new Commerce Learning Center has increased the visibility of the Department's commitment to creating a learning environment for all employees.

- **The Departmental Training Officer's Council –** Commerce also has a Training Officer's Council, which is a collaborative community of practice that communicated the Department's desire to create a learning organization for all employees.

Question

What efforts have your agency undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about learning and development?

Response

In Fiscal Year 2007, Commerce undertook the monumental task of migrating the entire Department to a new Learning Management System (LMS), through an OMB certified Training Service Provider. This migration was the result of a carefully crafted strategy to include the whole Department in an innovative tool that delivers mainstream learning to a geographically dispersed workforce. Furthermore, the newly formed Governance Board and six teams played key roles in this migration and have already achieved success sooner than anticipated. For example, in the first three months operation, the Commerce Learning Center system was accessed over 200,000 times and over 18,000 courses were completed. The Commerce Learning Center was never meant to replace classroom learning. Instead, it was intended to compliment the traditional classroom learning environment as a formidable mainstream educational delivery venue.

In addition, the Department's Training Officers Council, which engages each of Commerce's 13 Bureaus, evolved into a community of practice and has therefore been instrumental in bringing the learning discussion to the forefront. In short, the Council's impact is due to the collaborative manner in which it manages and discusses the Department's learning and development issues and policies.

Question

What strategies does your agency utilize to measure the effectiveness of training?

Response

The Department uses a 6-point Likert Scale to assess all classroom training events. The purpose of the 6-point scale is to prevent course participants from choosing a neutral value for assessment purposes. Commerce also conducts two evaluations on Departmental Leadership Development programs. For the mid-program evaluation, Commerce conducts a survey of the participants. While for the end-of-program evaluation, the Department conducts a rigorous assessment that includes both quantitative and qualitative data, which is then triangulated for the purpose of increasing validity. Although the Kirkpatrick standard typically applies only to courses, the Department adapted it to guide the evaluation of our flagship programs. Commerce conducts a survey of the program participants, their first level supervisors, and second level supervisors. Commerce then conducts focus groups with the program participants. Finally, the Department conducts interviews using a purposeful sampling methodology. The combined results provide valid data that has been triangulated through three methodologies.

Question

How does your agency incorporate distance learning into your training environment? Please provide some examples explaining how its application and usage have enhanced your learning and development program.

Response

The Department recognizes that distance learning or online learning has now become a mainstream delivery system. Each of the flagship Departmental Leadership Development programs includes an educational component, with two or three online courses that must be taken through the Commerce Learning Center (Commerce's version of LMS).

As the Department migrated to a new LMS vendor in the Spring of 2007, the Bureau Human Resource Directors felt it was very important to develop a change management strategy in order to move the Department's culture to more readily accept distance learning/online courses. This strategy has worked very well. As noted earlier, during the period from June 1, 2007 through September 2007, Commerce employees have logged into our Commerce Learning Center over 200,000 times and completed over 18,000 courses.

Question

Has your agency undertaken any specific practices or initiatives not already mentioned that contribute to meaningful learning and development experiences/ opportunities for employees at all levels of the organization?

Response

The Department of Commerce has redesigned its pilot Career Assistance Program into what is now called *Careers in Motion* program, which is a critical tool for our Succession Planning Strategy. The purpose of the program is to assist employees to better plan their careers, while navigating their way through the occupational series within the Department. The program offers multiple and diverse courses, on subjects including *How to Prepare a Résumé* and *How to Take a Behavioral-Based Interview*. In addition, the Department provides career counseling to employees through certified career counselors. The Department is also launching an ambitious Department-wide mentoring program, which will be open to all employees. Learning does not just take place through formal "brick and mortar" courses or through "click and mortar" courses, but through various types of learning and development interventions. Therefore, the mentoring program is one more learning and development strategy to impact all employees.

Agency: Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)

Question

What three practices or factors do you believe most contributed to your agency's high/improved score on the learning and development questions in the 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey? Please provide one or two sentences describing each of the three top initiatives, processes, training, organizational culture, leadership, or other factors you identify?

Response

- **High-level Management Support –** The NRC's Strategic Plan outlines a dynamic program of training, development, knowledge transfer, and formal leadership development programs as the means for achieving the human capital strategies. The agency developed and ensured that it's Training and Development Strategic Plan is aligned with the overarching NRC Strategic Plan. The agency's management is dedicated to maintaining the agency's technical and leadership excellence now and in the future, through a strategic approach to training and development. The NRC Executive Resources Board and Human Capital Council oversee and provide guidance and direction for the agency's training and development activities.

- **Comprehensive Formal Training, Development, and Qualification Programs –** The NRC achieves a high-quality, diverse work force by recruiting individuals with detailed knowledge and specialized skills in a variety of disciplines. For example, the agency provides programs to orient and engage these individuals in NRC's mission. NRC also offers a comprehensive new employee orientation program, a Nuclear Safety Professional Development Program, and office-sponsored formal training and qualification programs to ensure that employees collectively have the knowledge and skills to achieve NRC's mission and goals. Individual development plans are utilized to address developmental needs unique to the individual employee. Management development plans are required for SES managers.

  In addition to the recruitment program, staffing challenges are addressed through structured developmental and educational programs. Some of the more predominant programs include: the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program; Supervisory Development Program; Leadership Potential Program; Team Leader Development Program; Graduate Fellowship Program; Congressional Fellowship Program; Cooperative Education Program; and the Undergraduate Scholarship Program.

- **State-of-the-Art Training Facilities and Staff –** The NRC maintains two state-of-the-art training facilities: the Professional Development Center (PDC) in Bethesda, MD and the Technical Training Center (TTC) in Chattanooga, TN. Most training courses in management and leadership, program development, computer and business skills are conducted at the Professional Development Center. The Technical Training Center provides the staff with the in-depth technical knowledge needed for inspection and other regulatory functions. The technical training curriculum consists of courses in reactor technology, engineering support, radiation protection, safeguards, fuel cycle technology, probabilistic risk assessment, and regulatory skills. The NRC training is conducted by a combination of in-house and contract instructors and instructional design staff with the highest quality expertise available for the span of subject matter.

Question

What efforts have your agency undertaken to facilitate communication between supervisors and employees about learning and development?

Response

The NRC developed and published an NRC Training and Development Strategic Plan, which states:

> "Employees and supervisors share the responsibility to ensure that staff members have the knowledge, skills, and competencies to effectively perform their job functions. Offices and regions support this effort by defining knowledge, skills, and competencies for job functions, identifying training needs, establishing and maintaining qualification programs, and ensuring that staff members are adequately trained and qualified to perform their assigned duties."

The Office of Human Resources (HR) maintains a training and development website that includes the course catalog, means for registration, training organization and policies, and other training-related information. The HR publishes a Leadership Development Catalog and is revising the Guide to Individual Development Planning. These are utilized by agency managers for coaching and mentoring subordinate leaders and staff. Advisors/mentors are a fundamental part of the professional and leadership development programs mentioned above.

Question

What strategies does your agency utilize to measure the effectiveness of training?

Response

- Employee, management, and sponsoring office feedback
- Testing in technical training courses
- Management oversight
- Periodic needs assessment and benchmarking
- Survey results (i.e., Human Capital Survey, OIG Safety Culture and Climate Survey, etc.).

Question

How does your agency incorporate distance learning into your training environment? Please provide some examples explaining how its application and usage have enhanced your learning and development program.

Response

The Agency currently has over 30 web-based courses specific to NRC topics. Staff also attends commercially developed web-based courses. The NRC uses video teleconferencing and Webex to conduct training for its four regional offices. These reduce time for training and travel costs.

Question

Has your agency undertaken any specific practices or initiatives not already mentioned that contribute to meaningful learning and development experiences/opportunities for employees at all levels of the organization?

Response

Knowledge Management (KM) Program

The NRC anticipates that a significant portion of the agency's senior workforce is likely to retire in the next 5 to 10 years. This knowledge loss represents a significant concern to meeting the strategic goals that depend on adequate human capital. In anticipation of these challenges, the NRC launched an agency-wide KM program to support more effective approaches to knowledge collection, transfer, and use. The NRC created a KM Steering Committee composed of managers and staff and chaired by senior leadership. A PhD level full-time KM expert has been hired from industry to guide program development and implementation. A "KM Dashboard" has been designed to facilitate knowledge sharing about successful KM activities across the agency. The NRC is building "communities of practice" to enable staff with expertise to interact, share knowledge, and develop new workflow. The NRC has built a Strategic Workforce Planning platform to identify and close critical skills gaps. The agency's goal is to create a culture and climate that is second-to-none in the Federal government, encouraging people to stay longer and participate in expertise exchange activities.

Additional Learning and Development Program Information

In addition to the previous information collected by the CHCO Council's Learning and Development Subcommittee, four other agencies provided information to include in the collection: Department of Homeland Security, Defense Acquisition University, Social Security Administration, and Department of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Services.

Agency: Department of Homeland Security

Background

In approximately one year, the DHS Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO), through the Chief Learning Officer (CLO) made significant quantitative gains in the establishment of enterprise-wide learning and development. The CLO, in collaboration with colleagues throughout the Department, developed a Learning and Development strategy that established the Department-wide DHS University System. The DHS University System is comprised of four "pillars" that together support a comprehensive and networked approach to developing Department employees at all levels. The pillars are: the Leadership Institute, the Preparedness Center, the Homeland Security Academy, and the Center for Academic and Interagency Programs. The DHS University System offers a wide array of opportunities, ranging from short courses and curricula delivered via distributed-learning to rotational assignments and in-residence degree-granting graduate programs.

Each pillar of the DHS University System consists of both new and established programs, courses, and partnerships. Within the Leadership Institute, the CLO established the Department's first Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SES CDP) for prospective Senior Executive Service candidates and an Executive Leadership Program for senior executives and GS-15s. The Leadership Institute also houses the Department's first enterprise-wide DHS Fellows Program for employees at the GS-14 and 15 levels and exceptional employees at the GS-13 level. Other new programs include the Multi-tier Leadership Development Program and the courses in Program Management Certification.

The Preparedness Center consists of new programs and courses that build awareness of the protection and response capabilities in a multi-threat/all-hazards environment. The DHS 101 Organizational Overview Online Program that is under development will supplement the current in-residence course. The new, multi-media, interactive, online course will increase exponentially the number of employees who can receive standardized, broad-based organizational knowledge about DHS since it will be accessible to all employees through DHS Online. The National Planning and Execution System Course, as well as the Strategic Studies Program are also new initiatives within the Preparedness Center that rely on partnerships with DHS's operational Components and the National Defense University respectively.

The Homeland Security Academy provides DHS employees the opportunity for graduate-level homeland security courses on both coasts. In Shepherdstown, West Virginia an 18-month-long program combines in-residence instruction with online learning to prepare leaders to develop policies, strategies and programs to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks and other disasters. In Monterey, California, the Office of Grant Programs (FEMA/GP) administers a three-class program for state and local participants. Combining East Coast and West Coast operations, the Academy will matriculate 200 students annually.

The Center for Academic & Interagency Programs employs partnerships and current best practices to provide DHS employees with the highest quality training, education and professional development opportunities. One such partnership has been with the National Defense University (NDU). During the 2007 academic year, DHS representation at NDU increased five-fold, from three to 15 DHS employees. The US Coast Guard has additional representation at NDU. This dramatic increase in DHS students has been accompanied by a similar increase in the number of DHS Faculty Chair positions at NDU.

The pillars of the DHS University System are enabled by an enterprise-wide learning management system (LMS), DHScovery. Roll-out to the components began in 2007 and will complete in 2009. The Department's LMS is provided by an OMB certified e-Training Service Provider. The DHS University System course offerings are announced to DHS and other Federal employees via several venues: the DHS OCHCO learning and development website, DHScovery, components' LMSs, and via targeted communications for specific audiences. DHScovery will serve as a web-based "one-stop shop" for guiding, accessing, monitoring and reporting Department employee training, and educational and developmental opportunities. It provides a full suite of automated tools to link and manage facilities, resources, courses and instructors in support of learning and development initiatives.

DHScovery provides DHS employees, managers and training professionals access to leadership and professional development courses and enables them to plan and manage their personal career development, to maintain their individual training records and to view their learning history. DHScovery also allows users to view and produce reports, including certificates of completion, and to submit training requests via an automated form. Another benefit of this new LMS is that it can be used to catalogue employee courses and to map them to occupational and organizational competencies, career paths, and individual and organizational learning.

Ultimately, the result of the DHS University System is to greatly increase the number of learning and development opportunities – particularly those focused on leadership, preparedness, and homeland security – available to DHS employees at all levels. The University System fosters the creation of a single, unified "Team DHS" culture by providing employees access to foundational learning and development opportunities that better prepare them to meet homeland security challenges and to secure the nation.

Describe how the practice is innovative and exemplary and how it differs from what was done in the past:

While several DHS directorates and components have well established and proven mission-specific learning and development programs, until the establishment of the position of Chief Learning Officer within the OCHCO in the Fall of 2006, there had been no unified effort to design, develop and deploy a DHS enterprise-wide learning and development strategy.

The CLO oversees the implementation of the DHS University System – a strong and unified homeland security education and professional development program. The DHS University System builds core organizational capabilities in the areas of leadership, preparedness, and homeland security by providing all employees access to foundational learning and development opportunities to complement component-specific technical training and education.

Ultimately, implementation of the DHS University System will foster a single, unified Department and help create a "Team DHS" culture. It will maximize efficiencies and minimize costs through the use of best practices and blended learning strategies and by employing existing Department and interagency programs and courses. It will enhance delivery, recording, measuring, monitoring, and reporting of training and education-related activity across components. This endeavor supports many of the Department's strategic priorities.

Describe how the practice has been adopted, expanded, or adapted for use in other parts of the agency.

The establishment of the DHS University System is a partnership among components and offices that benefits the entire Department and supports the DHS mission of leading a unified national effort to secure America. The DHS University System builds on existing Department and interagency programs and courses and develops new courses or programs to fill training and education gaps for enterprise-wide requirements.

Describe the practice – it can be any one of a number of elements making up an agency's program under a government-wide initiative, and it can originate anywhere in the agency.

Through the OCHCO and under the guidance of the CLO, the Department of Homeland Security is continuing to build the DHS University System. The DHS University System supports program-specific skill development while fostering a core set of competencies for homeland security professionals, managers and leaders. The development of these core competencies will prepare employees to meet the Nation's homeland security challenges, manage its programs effectively, and demonstrate strong leadership. Given that the Department's ability to fulfill its mission depends on the knowledge, experience, skills and commitment of DHS employees, managers and leaders, the DHS University System is a critical component of the Department's Human Capital Strategic Plan.

The implementation of the DHS University System will, where appropriate, help standardize the Department's training, education and development opportunities and cultivate unity and interoperability, while creating economies of scale. It will also support the Department in identifying and targeting the requisite competencies common to all DHS employees.

Agency: Defense Acquisition University

The Defense Acquisition University's (DAU) Director of Performance and Resource Management made a presentation to the CHCO Council's Learning and Development Subcommittee, which showcased its methodology for measuring the effectiveness of its training and learning activities with the Armed Forces. The following information summarizes the presentation.

Mission

The mission of DAU is to provide practitioner training career management and services to enable the Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics community to make smart business decisions and deliver timely and affordable capabilities to the warfighter.

Background

The Defense Acquisition University is located with the U.S. Department of Defense and is overseen by the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisitions, Technology, and Logistics. It specifically handles classroom training, career assistance, and e-Learning. The DAU is the winner of countless awards, including recognition as Chief Learning Officer in the 2004 and 2006 Learning in Practice Awards and ranking as #1 in the Top 10 in Excellence in Leadership Development by Executive Excellence Publishing in 2005 and 2006. The DAU has been accredited since February 2003 by the Council of Occupational Education.

The DAU serves five regions throughout the United States, with six campuses where military (chiefly Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force) and civilian DoD officials can take classroom and coursework training. In an average year, DAU can reach up to 135,000 DoD employees either through on-site training or e-Learning. The DAU's key focuses were broken along four main areas: Training Courses, Performance Support, Continuous Learning, and Knowledge Sharing.

The premise of DAU's belief is that the best way to measure the effectiveness of training is to reverse the 80-20 analysis to data collection trend. Historically, the paradigm provided that 80% of evaluation time was spent on collection of data while 20% was dedicated to the analysis of data. The new trend would dedicate 80% spent on analysis, while 20% was spent on data collection. The logic of this shift in paradigm is that if more time is focused on studying the data, then more usable information can be drawn from the data.

Summary/Evaluation Findings

Interviews and exit surveys were conducted during FY05 and FY06 on all DAU products and services. Based on this information, DAU realized a drop in Level 3 and Level 4 data in their average scores (in accordance with the Kirkpatrick Model). In response, managers began to work on the Student Focus Interview, the Customer Focus Interview, the Stakeholder Focus Interview, the WEBCAST Survey, Equivalencies, and Functional Groups. Training data must be connected with all other data to help better understand the issue.

Senior Leadership was involved at all levels of the review process. Leadership Metrics and Curriculum Reviews were measured monthly, while Presidential Management Agenda Yellow / Red Broadcasts on all courses were reported on a bimonthly basis. They concluded that the learning review must go forth on all levels of the organization.

Personal job impact on an individual employee is one of the key considerations to take into effect during curriculum revisions. When asked to take a course, employees wonder, "What's in it for me?" This puts extra pressure on those designing curricula to focus on strategic, career shaping, and business culture changing dynamics.

When course managers are evaluated, it is best to compare scores among peers, among specific course offerings, and by the category of course taught. This helps in determining which trainers are stronger than others. This method can also be used to help determine the degree of difficulty of some course materials, by having different trainers teach the course. If course scores fail to fluctuate, it is a sign of difficult material. If scores differ, it is most likely the trainer teaching the course.

The solution to everything in training is often not new technology, but often times an old organization and bureaucracy. All the latest technological gadgets in the world won't help training efforts – and evaluation of said training – if the organization is not willing to change with it. The argument for this solution is laid out in the following equation:

NT + OO = COO

(New Technology plus Old Organization equals Costly Old Organization)

Agency: Social Security Administration

On March 13, 2007, Dr. Reginald Wells, Chief Human Capital Officer for the Social Security Administration and a member of his staff, Mr. Wayne Harmon, Associate Commissioner for Training for Social Security provided an overview of their agency's Distance Learning program. The following information summarizes their presentation.

Mission

The mission of the Social Security Administration (SSA) is to advance the economic security of the nation's people through compassionate and vigilant leadership in shaping and managing America's Social Security programs. The SSA's emphasis on Service, Stewardship, Solvency, and Staff is reflected in the Agency's goals and objectives.

Background

In 1996, the SSA developed the Interactive Video Tele-Training Network (IVT). The IVT is a satellite-based one-way video, two-way audio distance learning system. It features instructor-led training that can be downloaded to SSA sites nationwide.

The IVT uses satellite studios to help broadcast training courses across the United States. There are seven studios, of which three are located at its headquarters in Baltimore, MD. Other locations include Seattle, WA; Kansas City, MO; Dallas, TX; and Atlanta, GA. This network, called the Interstate Tele-Training Network reaches approximately 99.7% of SSA employees. It allows for cross-country training at SSA's 1,620 facilities, with its 65,000 employees.

The SSA believes the need for satellite training is ever-growing. The workforce of the Federal Government is in constant need of frequent training in new techniques; is geographically dispersed; and training budgets and resources are continually decreasing.

The benefits of distance learning are numerous. It improves timeliness and consistency of instruction. It offers the immediate dissemination of information across an organization. It helps eliminate the duplication of effort between training offices at an agency's headquarters and in the field. Distance learning has a proven record of cost effectiveness may be best used as an unseen morale boost for the agency, since less time away from the home traveling for mandatory training can help improve the balance between work and family life.

Summary

Satellite training does offer its own share of challenges. Among those realized by SSA was course content, course presentation, equipment in use, interactivity between users, and the lack of the ability to mentor those being trained.

Eventually, distance learning with the SSA will be completely done by "Video on Demand" or VOD, which is a centralized system of distribution and viewing of digital video. All content is provided by SSA's training staff. Programs can be assessed by multiple users at the same time and can be conveniently done by both employee and employer.

As of late January 2007, the VOD National Library had 137 video lessons. In calendar year 2006, 208,573 lessons were accessed across the Federal Government. As of February 2007, approximately 84,500 lessons were accessed electronically.

Agency: Department of Interior

During the June 14, 2007, CHCO Council Training Academy, a representative from the Department of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service presented information on the National Conservation Training Center which measures the impact of the Stepping Up To Leadership program. The following information summarizes the presentation.

Mission

The Mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian Tribes and our commitments to island communities.

Background

Much has been written about the challenge of evaluating leadership programs and much has been written about the 'need' to have concrete data that supports the spending of precious funding on leadership programs. In response to these concerns, in 2004, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), a bureau of the Department of Interior, entered into a partnership with a doctoral candidate to evaluate their mid-grade leadership development program. Their leadership program is called Stepping Up To Leadership (SUTL) and is designed for mid-grade employees, GS-11 to GS-12. The program is conducted at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown, WV. Two cohorts of 24 per year are competitively selected for this six month training program. The training consists of two weeks at NCTC, followed by a structured team project, a shadow assignment, and a final week at NCTC.

In 2004, this Return on Investment (ROI) study was conducted with the assistance of doctoral candidate Karen Willis. Dr. Willis developed the evaluation instruments for this effort as her dissertation in Organizational Leadership. Two cohorts and their supervisors provided the data for this study. Having successfully defended her dissertation, Dr. Karen Willis now specializes in Leadership Program ROI. She presented this case study at ASTD's 2005 International Conference and Exposition.

The study evaluated the leadership program in five different ways, adapting from the models developed by Dr. Donald Kirkpatrick and Dr. Jack Phillips. The five levels of evaluation are Reaction, Learning, Behavior, Results, and Return on Investment. A short summary of the findings at each level is provided.

Level 1: REACTION

Average Response

1. Strongly disagree. 2. Mildly disagree. 3. Neutral 4. Mildly agree. 5. Strongly agree

Questionnaire Statement	Response Options
1. The material covered in the program met my needs as I prepare for a leadership position in the USFWS.	4.38
2. The material covered in the program was consistent with the program objectives.	4.63
3. The program content was relevant to the role of leaders in the USFWS.	4.67
4. The program was appropriately geared to my level as a GS 11 or 12.	4.67
5. The program schedule was appropriate.	4.29
6. The NCTC facilities were comfortable.	4.92
7. The instructor was well prepared.	4.46
8. The instructor was an effective communicator.	4.5
9. The instructor presented the program information in an interesting manner.	4.79
10. The program materials and audio visual aids were effective.	4.75
11. The USFWS will benefit from my participation in this program.	4.83
12. Overall, the program was well organized, sequenced, and coordinated.	4.38

Level 2: LEARNING

Learning was measured by Pre and Post tests that were based on the course objectives. The average increase in knowledge was 22%. The results on this level of evaluation were limited because the post test had to be delivered at the end of the first two weeks due to time constraints, well before the course was completed.

Level 3: BEHAVIOR

Leadership Competency	Improvement
Strategic Planning	43%
Leadership Development Practices	68%
Teamwork Skills	65%
Influence/Persuasion Skills	63%
Work/Life Balance	53%
Scale 1=Strongly Disagree 3=Neutral 5=Strongly Agree	
Increased KSAs enable me to apply leadership at my job	4.5
Supportive work environment enables me to apply leadership	3.9
Support of my supervisor enables me to apply leadership	3.9

Level 4: RESULTS

How has SUTL prepared you for leadership?	
It has had no **affect**	1
I feel **confident** to apply for a leadership position in FWS	2
I **intend to apply** for a leadership position in the FWS	17
I **have applied** for a leadership position in the FWS	10
I **have accepted** a leadership position in the FWS	7
In January, 2004, the SUTL staff conducted a very short email survey to confirm how many of these 48 SUTL students have been promoted. The January 2004 data showed 15 of the 48 were promoted or 31%.	

Level 5: RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

Return on Investment was calculated using Jack Phillips' model. All the data was screened carefully and all costs were taken into account. The ROI formula is:

ROI = BENEFITS – COSTS / COSTS X 100.

The return per class, calculated conservatively, was $1,158,283 and the cost per class was $118,010 + salaries and travel. Using the formula, the conservative **ROI obtained by the FWS was 302%**. In other words, for every dollar spent on this program, the FWS got that dollar back, plus three more dollars. The students self-reported these benefits, but an entirely separate survey of their supervisors confirmed the benefits. For every $1.10 reported as a benefit by a graduate, their supervisors reported $1.00 as a benefit.

Highest Return on 27 OPM/FWS Competencies (per class)

- Teambuilding $284,058
- Influencing/Negotiating. $223,628
- Strategic Thinking. $189,336
- Continuous Learning $106,770
- Political Savvy. $83,521
- External Awareness $78,250
- Resilience-Work/Life $64,817
- Interpersonal Skills $55,398

Supervisor Comments

- The USFWS has reduced risk from legal challenges for non-compliance
- The USFWS benefits as problem solving and collaborative decision-making is improved thus more buy-in is achieved from multiple parties.
- The USFWS can accomplish objectives 25% more efficiently for a cost savings of $10,365/year.
- By writing a strategic plan, she salvaged a vital resource-based work element that was on the verge of being lost by the Service…saving $700,000.
- The SUTL has improved self confidence. Decisiveness has resulted in time saving.
- Over the course of the past year, estimate 200 hours saved due to increased efficiencies.

Summary

- Return on Investment is 'hard'. The USFWS estimates that it took 3.5 FTE to complete this study.
- Return on Investment is 'worth it'. The USFWS senior leadership were impressed with the results and continue to provide financial support for leadership training despite budgetary challenges. The "Halo" effect continues.
- The other 4 levels of evaluation are at 'least' as important as ROI for improving the instruction and ensuring 'results.'
- The USGAO recommendations for training evaluation percentages are reasonable, but require persistence to attain. The USGAO recommends Level 1—100%, Level 2—60%, Level 3—30%, Level 4—10%, and Level 5—5%.

II. Selected Human Capital Program Presentations

TELEWORK PROGRAMS

During the February 8, 2007, CHCO Council Training Academy Session, representatives from the U.S. International Trade Commission and the Defense Information Systems Agency shared their telework experiences with the attendees. This section of the Collection of Human Capital Practices summarizes those presentations.

Agency: United States International Trade Commission

Mission

The mission of the United States International Trade Commission (Commission) is to (1) administer U.S. trade remedy laws within its mandate in a fair and objective manner; (2) provide the President, United States Trade Representative, and Congress with independent, quality analysis, information, and support on matters of tariffs and international trade and competitiveness; and (3) maintain the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States. In so doing, the Commission serves the public by implementing U.S. law and contributing to the development of sound and informed U.S. trade policy.

Background/General Program Description

The International Trade Commission's telecommuting program has been in effect since a pilot program was launched in 1999. Telecommuting at ITC was designed as a zero cost program as the participants are responsible for supplying their own equipment. Employees who are teleworking are able to log into the Commission's network from remote locations.

Since its inception, the success of the Commission's telework program is based on two factors. First, the Commission set, and met, low cost thresholds. Second, the Commission developed the policy in partnership with the employee union and made telecommuting available to all employees, including managers.

The principal telecommuting challenges now facing the Commission include increased security concerns and higher standards for Personally Identifiable Information. Therefore, as a lesson learned, the Commission recommends that agencies develop a secure system for teleworkers rather than improving security of a legacy system.

Listed below is a summary timeline and list of accomplishments for the Commission's telecommuting program.

Program Summary/Accomplishments

- **Program development – Union and management developed the program in partnership**
  - Pilot program in 1999-2000
  - Permanent program – input sought from all staff
    - Concern about fixed telecommuting days
    - Concern about insuring productivity
  - Benefit: increased productivity when it was time to draft reports/memos
  - Broad availability –
    - Everyone eligible, participation varies
    - COOP plan, snow days
  - Ease of use for managers and staff
  - Insure initial success, don't over reach as we need management support
- **Managers wanted:**
  - No expense program – no equipment
  - No cost savings expected – "hoteling" or other space saving
  - Accountability of staff for productive use of time
  - Clear guidance on eligibility and appropriate use
  - Realistic staff expectations
  - Four consecutive days maximum, come in once weekly so staff do not lose touch with the office
  - No overtime
  - Summary reports

- **Unique characteristics/issues for USITC telecommuting program**
  - BPI and NSI problem
  - Collaborative team-based assignment problem
  - Flexible timing, not set days
  - Project-based scenarios

- **The Telecommuting program**
  - Agreements
    - One time sign up with and specific requests each time you telecommute
    - Two types of agreements
      - Project based – most common
      - Special circumstances – family friendly
  - Qualifications
    - Threshold requirements for agreement approval
    - Discretionary factors
    - Management decision, not an employee right
  - Experience to date
    - No performance or conduct issues arising out of telecommuting program
    - No grievance or informal complaints as a result of management action in implementing telecommuting program
    - Participation rates
      - Approximately 250 agreements out of 350 permanent staff on board
      - Approximately 10,000 work hours in 2006

- **Development of the automated system**
  - Used paper forms in 2001-2002
    - Cumbersome recordkeeping
    - Reporting was difficult
  - Benefits of automated system
    - Automated reporting
    - Distribute copies to timekeepers
    - Provide comments to communicate specifics to supervisors
  - The automated application system cost about $20K to develop

Agency: Defense Information Systems Agency

Mission

The Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) is responsible for planning, engineering, acquiring, fielding, and supporting global net-centric solutions to serve the needs of the President, Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, and other Department of Defense (DoD) components, under all conditions of peace and war.

Background/General Program Description

The DISA, an agency located in Northern Virginia (VA) was notified that under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations, it would be relocating over 4,000 employees to Fort Meade, Maryland (about 26 miles north). Seventy-five percent of the affected population lives in Northern VA and many already had a daily commute extending over an hour. As part of the overall Human Resource (HR) BRAC strategy, DISA decided to use the recently expanded Telework program as a cornerstone for the agency's recruitment and retention effort. Currently, there are over 2,500 DISA positions eligible for regular and recurring telework

The Agency's telework program provided a solid tool to use in its recruitment and retention strategy of selecting and maintaining the very best workforce possible to support the warfighter. The Agency believes that teleworking, if done correctly, will improve employee satisfaction and most importantly, employee productivity.

The program was expanded to allow a maximum participation of two days per 10 day pay period in December 2005. The Agency's HR Director wanted to simplify the application process for approving telework for employees by eliminating the cumbersome paper process. An innovative web-based application was developed to support this initiative, which allows employees to register for the telework program and select the ad-hoc or regular and recurring days they would like to work remotely. Managers are notified of pending applications and can login into this application to approve, disapprove, or modify their subordinates' registration requests. Additionally, managers can run reports, which provide much needed data to assist in the Agency's effort to make its telework program the best in the Federal government.

This automated application tool is a wonderful example of an Agency looking at ways to improve processes, identifying the requirement, and developing the solution. Not only was the project completed in less than 60 days, but the only cost to the organization was the labor of its developers. Additional refinements to the application have occurred since its implementation. The application now serves as the sole source for validating eligibility for DISA's high speed internet reimbursement program. The hours recorded by employees for teleworking in the time and attendance system are also available through the tool.

Program Summary/Accomplishments

One of the keys to the successful expansion of the program was the decision to revalidate the positions eligible for teleworking. Using a new approach, starting with all positions eligible, the number validated as eligible for telework sky rocketed from approximately 500 to over 2500. Since the change in policy, the number of participating regular and recurring teleworkers increased ten-fold. The DISA is also finding that this number continues to grow. There was also a change in acquisition policy regarding computer life cycle replacement. The DISA now uses a 90 percent laptop to 10 percent PC ratio for all employees, thereby making the telework process much easier.

In addition, DISA chartered and charged a “SWAT” team with researching best practices at other organizations. Within 90 days the team also determined what equipment was needed and developed training needs for management and the workforce. A senior HR manger and a senior IT manager were selected to co-chair the SWAT team, blending the two critically needed functions together during the entire process, reducing potential problems or roadblocks.

The SWAT team briefed the DISA HR Director on a monthly basis, building the initial framework for the program. The DISA HR Director served as the champion for the initiative, soliciting funds needed for equipment and knocking down barriers as they arose, always supplied with needed information and material by the SWAT team. Training was developed and provided to management at all levels, as well as the workforce. The SWAT team made recommendations on the standard equipment needed for an employee to telework and how to continue to protect the network while teleworking. Within the 90 days limit, the co-chairs briefed the DISA Director and gained approval for the program.

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PLANNING

In FY 2007, the CHCO Council's Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee focused a lot of attention on the Federal Government's pandemic influenza preparedness. As a member of the Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee, the Department of Labor submitted the following information outlining their pandemic influenza planning strategy.

Agency: Department of Labor

Mission

The mission of the Department of Labor (DOL) is to "foster and promote the welfare of U.S. job seekers, wage earners, and retirees by improving working conditions, advancing opportunities for profitable employment, protecting retirement and health care benefits, helping employers find workers, strengthening free collective bargaining, and tracking changes in employment, prices, and other national economic measurements." This mission is inextricably intertwined with the economics of pandemic influenza.

Background

If a pandemic influenza is severe, the economic impact is likely to be significant[1].

- Economic disruptions on the supply side would come directly from high absenteeism.
- There also may be disruptions to transportation, trade, payment systems, and major utilities, exposing some financially vulnerable enterprises to the risk of bankruptcy, which could further exacerbate the economic impact.
- Demand could contract sharply, with consumer spending falling and investment being put on hold.

Thus, nothing could be simpler: Pandemic influenza preparedness is important to the Department of Labor (DOL) and the stakeholders it serves.

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[1] *International Monetary Fund Report: The Global Economic and Financial Impact of an Avian Flu Pandemic and the Role of the IMF, February 28, 2006.*

Program Summary

Since it first started planning for a pandemic influenza in 2005, DOL has taken a multifaceted approach that includes:

- Program Management
- Planning Priorities
- Communications Priorities
- Awareness, Training, Testing, and Exercises
- Telework Preparedness, Testing, and Exercises

A. Program Management

The HRC/Office of Worklife and Benefits Programs oversees pandemic influenza planning at DOL. It developed and maintains two complementary planning groups. The Pandemic Influenza Planning Group is comprised of agency panflu representatives, who meet monthly to discuss upcoming issues, exchange ideas, and report progress of ongoing initiatives. There is a smaller group of senior subject matter experts, who meet on an ad hoc basis to develop and prioritize planning initiatives.

B. Planning Priorities

The current DOL Pandemic Influenza Plan, signed in June 2006 by the Secretary of Labor is under revision, using the FEMA pandemic influenza plan template, which can be found at *www.fema.gov/txt/government/coop/influenza_coop_annex.txt*. The revision focuses on goals laid out in the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza and includes the latest Federal guidelines. The template makes the plan more auditable, internally and externally.

In a significant development, DOL agencies recently completed separate and distinct initial pandemic influenza implementation plans in September 2007. Plans include:

- Detailed prioritized functions and tasks
- Standard operating procedures
- Required personnel, equipment, and IT assets
- Contact and training data
- Vital records listings
- Other key data

C. Communications Priorities

The Department places a premium on pandemic influenza communications with a wide range of stakeholders. All DOL pandemic influenza preparedness information is posted on LaborNet, the Department's intranet, including plans, all hands briefings, pamphlets, and links to relevant sites (*www.pandemicflu.gov*, OPM, HHS/CDC, WHO, *www.ready.gov*; etc.).

An alert and notification service ensures efficient emergency communications with contingency staff. The service continues to step through all the contact data available for the staff member until contact is made and confirmed.

The Department also established a Hotline for all employees to report their status, whereabouts, and contact data in an emergency. Activated in emergencies only, this line supplements call trees developed and maintained by managers. Status reporting roll-up is provided to DOL's Human Resources Center, which tracks and reports data to DOL agencies, OPM, White House, etc.

The Department is also committed to outreach within the Federal community. Representatives from DOL have briefed several departments and agencies in 2006 and 2007 at their request concerning DOL's pandemic influenza readiness program.

D. Awareness, Training, Testing, and Exercises

Several all hands pandemic influenza awareness briefings were given to employees in the National Office (comprised of personnel assigned within the National Capital Region) in 2006 by the Director, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and a senior Occupational Safety and Health Administration physician. In addition, a pandemic influenza awareness briefing was delivered to Assistant Secretaries by a White House physician and member of the White House Homeland Security Council in 2007.

The Department used National Preparedness Month to foster awareness of pandemic influenza and community mitigation measures by engaging the District of Columbia Department of Health Bioterrorism Coordinator to address all personnel in preparing for and responding to an influenza pandemic. The Department also developed and distributed informational pamphlets for employees and families and offered giveaways with respiratory hygiene and community mitigation measures slogans.

Lastly, the Department held two first-ever landmark exercises in October 2007: An executive pandemic influenza table top exercise (TTX) and its first large scale, multi-day telework exercise (see paragraph E below). The executive TTX was led by the Acting Deputy Secretary, a signal of its significance within the organization, and was attended by Assistant Secretaries or their designees plus one. Key issues identified by participants included:

- Communications: internal, external, the need for one DOL voice,
- Mitigation strategies and how they dovetail with telework,
- Functions for agency staffs need to be prioritized to determine which, if any, can be deferred if the pandemic is severe and lingering.

E. Telework Preparedness, Testing, and Exercises

The DOL held a Pandemic Influenza Preparation and Response Plan Exercise Design Workshop to prepare Agency Telework Exercise Design Teams for DOL telework exercise implementation. Participants were provided with comprehensive tools and direction for successful telework exercise implementation, including exercise design strategy guidance; the telework exercise design process; and an exercise design toolbox developed in-house. This preparation is key to the proper conduct of the monthly telework tests carried out by DOL agencies, both in the National Office and in the regions.

The Department then conducted a multi-day telework exercise within the Department's Dallas region over two days involving 114 participants representing 16 (of 22) DOL agencies. Initial observations are that basic connectivity is occasionally a challenge and equipment and services still needed include DOL laptops, high speed connections, and the capability to print at home.

Future Program Initiatives

The DOL is proactive in addressing every aspect of pandemic influenza readiness, but a number of important initiatives define the agenda going forward. Agency plans must now be further refined with respect to developing greater specificity in SOPs, to include the details of social distancing implementation in support of employees who must perform their duties in the workplace. In addition, plans for telework communications must be refined to complement more challenging and comprehensive telework testing and exercises across the agency.

At the departmental level, a graduated exercise plan that builds preparedness in progressively more sophisticated and realistic stages soon will be under development and regional pandemic influenza awareness planning and training is scheduled for early 2008. As importantly, the Department is moving toward assessing contractor support needed during a pandemic and making sure contract language facilitates that support.

Best Practices

The Department's extensive involvement in pandemic planning has given it insight into several best practices that smooth the process and make it more effective. First, it is important to involve all agencies (or bureaus, offices, or whatever the component parts of a federal department or agency are) as a group in formal planning as a matter of routine. Group meetings encourage information sharing, mutual encouragement, and healthy competition.

Second, planning should be followed immediately with relevant tests and exercises. Plans do not improve with age and inactivity; thus, plans must be validated as soon as possible after they are written.

Third, department-level strategic pandemic influenza plans with agency/office/bureau-level implementation plans must be coordinated, since high level plans are insufficiently detailed to guide real work in a real crisis.

Fourth, take every opportunity to raise awareness of pandemic influenza and community mitigation measures at all levels. All personnel, including both employees and contractors, should be aware of their duties during a pandemic.

Fifth, teleworkers should be equipped, trained, tested, and exercised regularly. Experience dictates that people who have never teleworked before will not be successful in spooling up quickly during an emergency.

Sixth, ensure executives and managers, as well as employees, practice telework. Its effectiveness will be compromised if leadership views telework as appropriate only for rank and file employees. As an added benefit, senior personnel learn through practice to operate comfortably in a virtual environment.

The Department of Labor views the pandemic influenza planning process as cyclical. Plans are developed, tested, revised, and retested. Exercises become more challenging and sophisticated as awareness and expertise grows. Outreach to other federal entities is routinely sought for guidance and to compare initiatives and results.

The Department's efforts have yielded not only an increasingly robust response to a future influenza pandemic, but also significantly greater readiness to respond effectively in an all-hazards environment.

TRANSITION PLANNING

The Department of Homeland Security provided the following information on its efforts to prepare for a change in administration.

Agency: Department of Homeland Security

The Department of Homeland Security is engaged in activities at five levels to ensure operational continuity of homeland security responsibilities in view of the January 2009 administration change.

I. Order of Succession

Two documents solidify the Order of Succession and Delegation of Authority within DHS.

A. White House Executive Order 13286 amended August 13, 2007 outlined the order of succession for the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

B. On October 25, 2007, Secretary Michael Chertoff issued a DHS Delegation that established forward the order of succession and delegation of authority for all components of DHS.

II. DHS Succession Planning

This prong of the DHS Administration Transition Planning effort includes two parts: a study by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) on senior staffing at DHS and internal succession planning for critical positions within DHS. This latter part is widely applicable across the Federal Government and, therefore, will be addressed in greater detail.

Critical Position Succession Planning – For this initiative, DHS defined a critical position as one that has an outsize impact on day-to-day accomplishment of the DHS mission.

Criteria:

- Position involves leadership of a program area that is of significant importance to the Department's ability to accomplish its mission.
- Position is responsible for major operational areas and a short-term vacancy would adversely affect the ability of the Department to accomplish its mission.

Further guidance: This initiative does not limit succession planning to Critical Positions within the SES. Instead, through this approach, DHS will identify positions deemed critical for the overall success of a significant DHS program or operational area.

A. Intended Results

- Identification of critical positions; assessment of succession risk
- For political appointees, identification of interim acting career executives
- Development plans for emerging leaders

B. Participants

- DHS Under Secretary for Management and Chief Human Capital Officer – Champions
- Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) – Process and Tools creation, Facilitation
- DHS Components – Subject Matter Experts with respect to critical positions, competencies needed, and candidate sourcing

C. Process and Tools

The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer identified the information relevant to succession planning for critical positions and developed a template to capture the information. The template was converted to an Excel Form with drop-down selection boxes to improve consistency of responses and to ease input. The Critical Position Succession Planning Profile and associated instructions can be found in Appendix 4. The profile form and instructions were distributed to all components by the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer in the July 2007 timeframe. The OCHCO identified or asked components to identify a point of contact for critical position succession planning efforts.

The Department placed initial emphasis for identifying critical positions on its seven operating components: Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Customs and Border Protection, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Secret Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Coast Guard. By year end 2007, over 450 critical positions had been identified across all DHS operating and supporting components.

The Critical Position Succession Planning exercise has focused executive leadership attention on the importance of succession planning for critical positions and provides tools for comprehensive yet efficient analysis.

III. Cross Government Collaboration

The goals of this area of the Presidential Administration Transition approach are: (1) build relationships, protocols, and interfaces among Departments of Homeland Security, Defense, Justice, Commerce, State and state, local and tribal governments, and (2) develop homeland security curricula for career senior officials and incoming appointees. DHS leadership including the Under Secretary for Management and the Chief Human Capital Officer are champions of this initiative. The Department is also engaging an external stakeholder, the Council for Excellence in Government, in this activity.

IV. Best Practices

Working with DHS leadership, the Homeland Security Advisory Council established the Administration Transition Task Force to prepare a report recommending best practices relevant to the transition of homeland security responsibilities at the time of the 2009 presidential administration change. The report will incorporate lessons learned from state and local governments, as well as the private sector.

V. Administrative Transition Guidance

The Department will also develop Administrative Transition Guidance complete with briefing materials and information on other matters – e.g., security, records management, property, contracts, personnel benefits, and IT access – applicable at the time of a change in administration.

III. Appendices

APPENDIX 1: MISSION OF THE COUNCIL

The CHCO Council was created as part of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, to advise and coordinate the activities of the agencies on matters such as:

- Modernizing human resources systems
- Improving quality of human resources information
- Legislation affecting human resources operations and organizations

The Council is composed of the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), who serves as chairman; the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), who acts as vice chairman; the CHCOs of the 15 Executive departments; and the CHCOs of additional agencies and the Small Agency Council, as designated by the OPM Director.

APPENDIX II: STRUCTURE AND MISSION OF THE SUBCOMMITTEES

Emergency Preparedness

The mission of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness is to assist OPM in establishing policies and procedures that enable Federal agencies to continue their operations, while safeguarding their employees. In times of crisis, it is imperative that the Federal Government continues to effectively execute its mission, while responding to the crisis and leading the effort to restore normal operations. Inherent in this responsibility is assuring the safety and well being of its employees, who are both a valued resource and key to the important day-to-day governmental operations.

Hiring and Succession Planning

The mission of the Subcommittee on Hiring and Succession Planning is to support innovative marketing and recruitment strategies, a simplified and streamlined hiring process, and a structured succession planning effort necessary to obtain and develop the diverse talent needed to meet the complex mission requirements of the 21st Century Federal workforce.

Human Capital Workforce

The Federal human capital workforce is transforming from a transaction-based environment to a more strategic and consultative role. The mission of the Subcommittee on Human Capital Workforce is to help ensure a successful transition by reviewing, developing and recommending strategies and a framework to promote and foster this evolution.

HR Line of Business

The mission of the Subcommittee on Human Resource Line of Business (HRLoB) is to support Government-wide efforts to ensure that the HRLoB meets the needs of agencies in their strategic management of human capital. In addition, the subcommittee will provide high-level policy guidance and support to OPM and various Government-wide groups working on important HRLoB initiatives.

Learning and Development

The mission of the Subcommittee on Learning and Development is to help create a culture of continuous learning and employee development that will facilitate performance improvements that spread throughout the Federal Government. To enhance and improve organizational performance, the Subcommittee on Learning and Development will examine, explore, and propose new and existing learning and development programs.

Performance Management

The mission of the Subcommittee on Performance Management is to help improve performance management in the Federal Government by assessing and highlighting best practices, participating in the formation of regulatory and programmatic agendas relative to performance management, recommending strategies for enacting legislation, and recommending oversight and programmatic changes.

APPENDIX 3: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR PRESENTATION

During the August 10, 2006 CHCO Council Training Academy Session, the Department of Labor's Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer presented details on the Department's competency assessment methodology and tools. The presentation was subsequently updated as shown below.

DOL Competency Initiatives

- The Benefits of the Competency Initiatives
- The Process
- The Results
- Lessons Learned and Next Steps

The Benefits

- To ensure that employees have the needed skills to perform the DOL mission today and into the future
- To align employee skills with the mission and goals of the Department
- To identify any disparities in existing skills

The Benefits

- To develop strategic plans for training or other developmental opportunities to close employee skill gaps
- To use new competency models to recruit new staff

The Process

1. DOL identified mission critical occupations
   - 10 Agencies, over 6,000 employees assessed (2004)
2. Agency focus groups identified their competencies
   - General
   - Technical
3. Competency Assessment tools were identified and benchmarked
4. Competency Models were developed

The Process

5. Senior level Inter-Agency workgroup was assembled

   a) Decisions Made

   – Corporate Approach
   – Management Driven Initiative
   – Assessment to be done by managers
   – Assessment for Workforce/Organizational needs

The Process

6. Data Collection & Processing

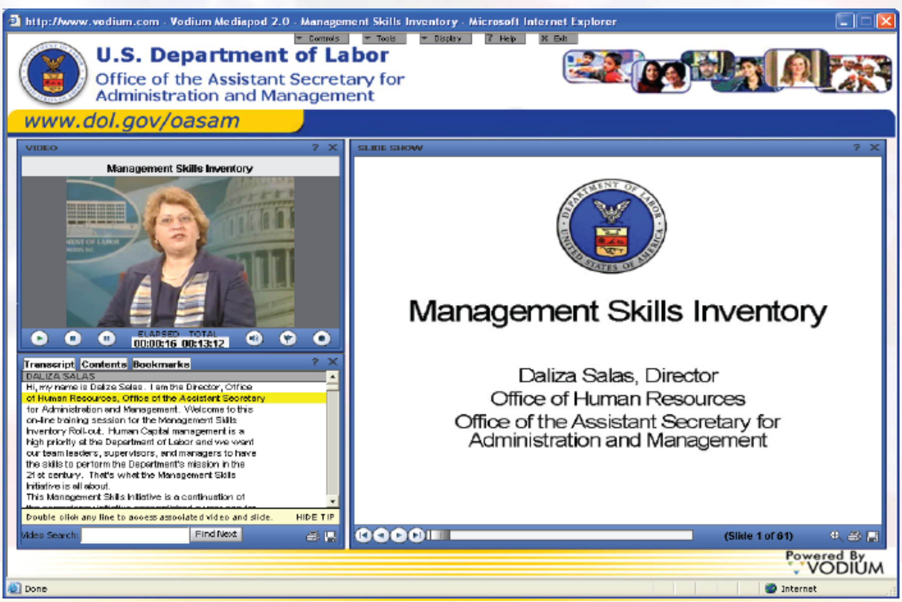
   – HR data (Merge Data)
   – IT involvement for data security
   – Clean up of data

The Process

7. Communication

- Why, When, How
- Fact Sheet
- Q & A
- Executive Summary
- Exxceed Competency Tool

The Process



The Process

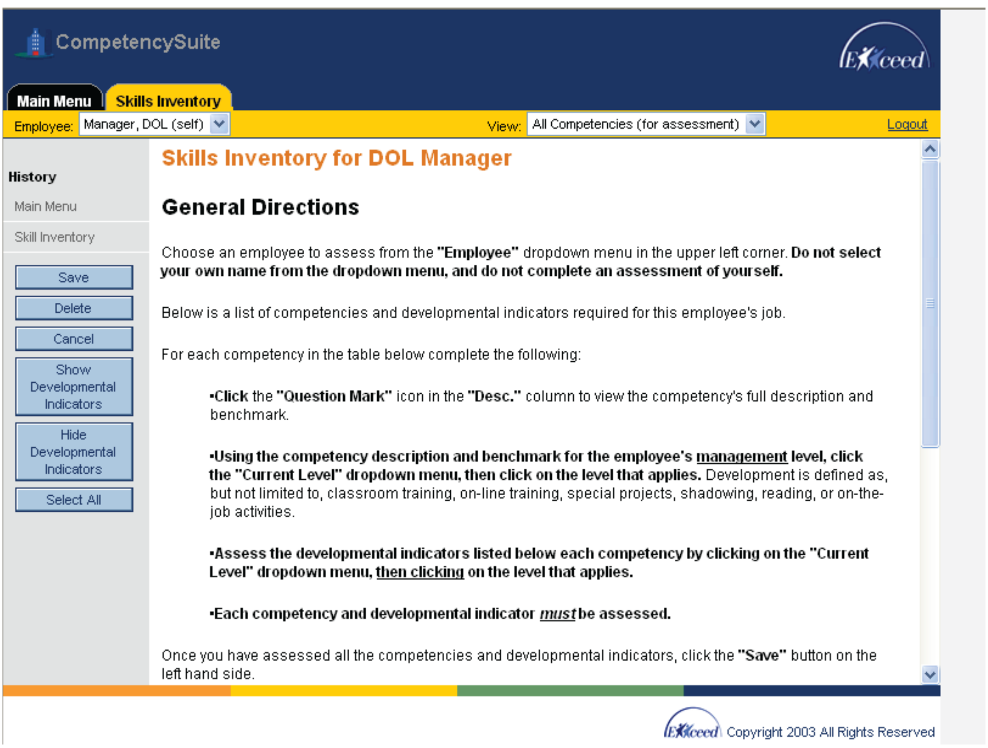
8. Implementation

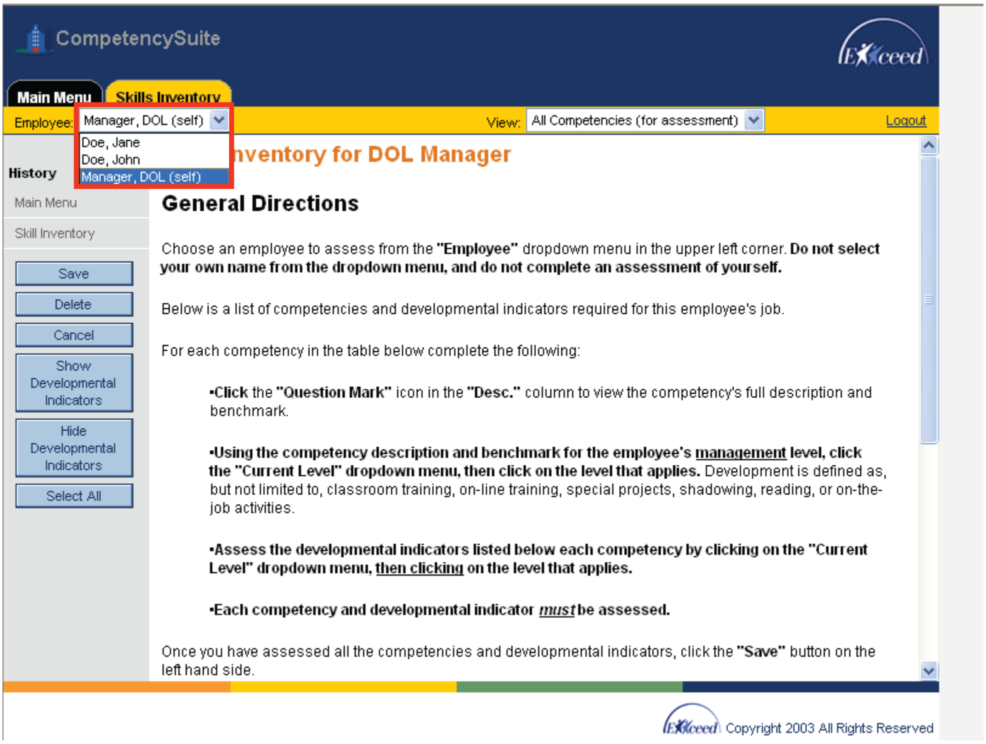
– Pilot Group

– Roll Out Schedule was Staged

– Performance Appraisal Timing


CompetencySuite
EXceed
Main Menu
Skills Inventory
Employee: DOL Manager
Logout
Password
Help
Main Menu
Skills Inventory
The Skills Inventory lists your employees' competencies, benchmarks and developmental indicators. Click the "View Skills Inventory" link below to assess your employees' current competencies.
View Skills Inventory
EXceed Copyright 2003 All Rights Reserved


CompetencySuite
EXceed
Main Menu
Skills Inventory
Employee: Manager, DOL (self)
View: All Competencies (for assessment)
Logout
History
Main Menu
Skill Inventory
Save
Delete
Cancel
Show Developmental Indicators
Hide Developmental Indicators
Select All
Skills Inventory for DOL Manager
General Directions
Choose an employee to assess from the "Employee" dropdown menu in the upper left corner. Do not select your own name from the dropdown menu, and do not complete an assessment of yourself.
Below is a list of competencies and developmental indicators required for this employee's job.
For each competency in the table below complete the following:
•Click the "Question Mark" icon in the "Desc." column to view the competency's full description and benchmark.
•Using the competency description and benchmark for the employee's management level, click the "Current Level" dropdown menu, then click on the level that applies. Development is defined as, but not limited to, classroom training, on-line training, special projects, shadowing, reading, or on-the-job activities.
•Assess the developmental indicators listed below each competency by clicking on the "Current Level" dropdown menu, then clicking on the level that applies.
•Each competency and developmental indicator must be assessed.
Once you have assessed all the competencies and developmental indicators, click the "Save" button on the left hand side.
EXceed Copyright 2003 All Rights Reserved


CompetencySuite
EXceed
Main Menu
Skills Inventory
Employee: Manager, DOL (self)
Doe, Jane
Doe, John
Manager, DOL (self)
View: All Competencies (for assessment)
Logout
History
Main Menu
Skill Inventory
Save
Delete
Cancel
Show Developmental Indicators
Hide Developmental Indicators
Select All
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•Each competency and developmental indicator must be assessed.
Once you have assessed all the competencies and developmental indicators, click the "Save" button on the left hand side.
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CompetencySuite
EXceed
Main Menu
Skills Inventory
Employee: Doe, Jane
View: All Competencies (for assessment)
Logout
History
Main Menu
Skill Inventory
Save
Delete
Cancel
Show Developmental Indicators
Hide Developmental Indicators
Select All
Help
1 – N/A (Not applicable): This competency or indicator is not required for this individual's position.
DOL Competencies
Competency Name
Desc.
Current Level
Learning
Accountability (Manager)
Designs and implements performance metrics and measures to use as criteria in measuring achievement of results.
Develops and implements effective internal controls to ensure the integrity of the organization.
Develops monitoring and evaluation plans of program goals and objectives to focus on desired results.
Mentors, coaches, and/or leads others in identifying and using best practices for program and/or staff accountability.
Conflict Management (Manager)
Consults with important stakeholders outside the agency on contentious issues before deciding on a course of action.
Ensures that overall security procedures are in place to prevent and respond to disruptive individuals/visitors.
Mentors, coaches, and/or leads others in effectively resolving confrontational and conflictive situations.
Creativity and Innovation (Manager)
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CompetencySuite
EXceed
Main Menu
Skills Inventory
Employee: Doe, Jane
View: All Competencies (for assessment)
Logout
History
Main Menu
Skill Inventory
Save
Delete
Cancel
Show Developmental Indicators
Hide Developmental Indicators
Select All
Help
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Creativity and Innovation (Manager)
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Creativity and Innovation (Manager)
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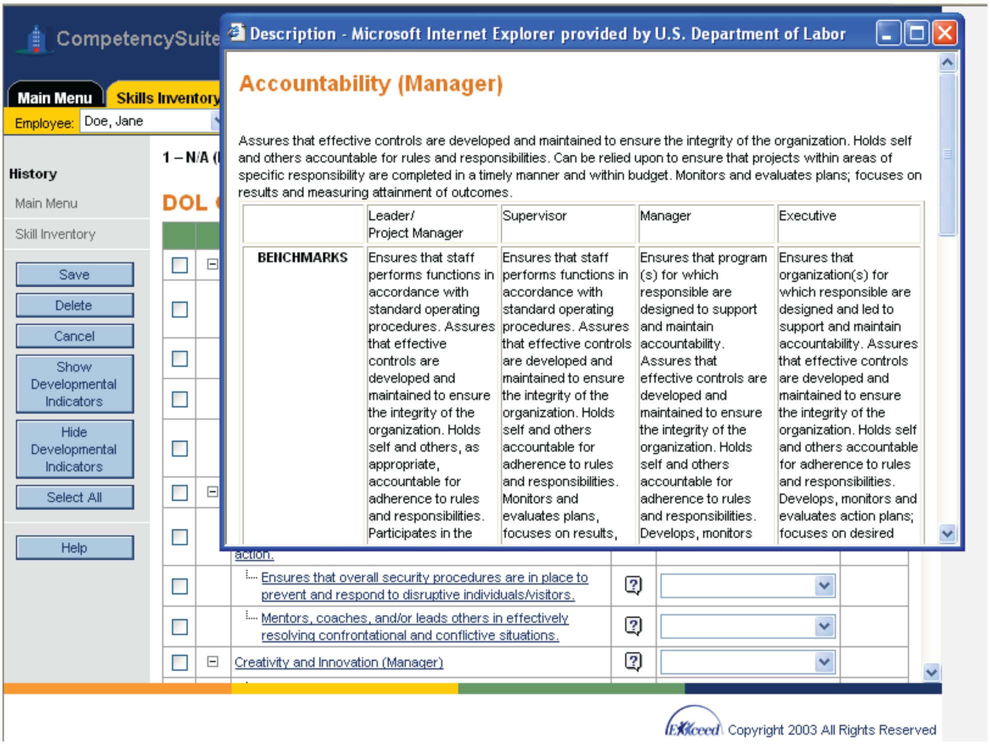
CompetencySuite
Main Menu
Skills Inventory
Employee: Doe, Jane
History
Main Menu
Skill Inventory
Save
Delete
Cancel
Show Developmental Indicators
Hide Developmental Indicators
Select All
Help
1 – N/A (
DOL
Description - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by U.S. Department of Labor
Accountability (Manager)
Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Holds self and others accountable for rules and responsibilities. Can be relied upon to ensure that projects within areas of specific responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget. Monitors and evaluates plans; focuses on results and measuring attainment of outcomes.
Leader/ Project Manager
Supervisor
Manager
Executive
BENCHMARKS
Ensures that staff performs functions in accordance with standard operating procedures. Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Holds self and others, as appropriate, accountable for adherence to rules and responsibilities. Participates in the
Ensures that staff performs functions in accordance with standard operating procedures. Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Holds self and others accountable for adherence to rules and responsibilities. Monitors and evaluates plans, focuses on results,
Ensures that program (s) for which responsible are designed to support and maintain accountability. Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Holds self and others accountable for adherence to rules and responsibilities. Develops, monitors
Ensures that organization(s) for which responsible are designed and led to support and maintain accountability. Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Holds self and others accountable for adherence to rules and responsibilities. Develops, monitors and evaluates action plans; focuses on desired
action.
Ensures that overall security procedures are in place to prevent and respond to disruptive individuals/visitors.
Mentors, coaches, and/or leads others in effectively resolving confrontational and conflictive situations.
Creativity and Innovation (Manager)
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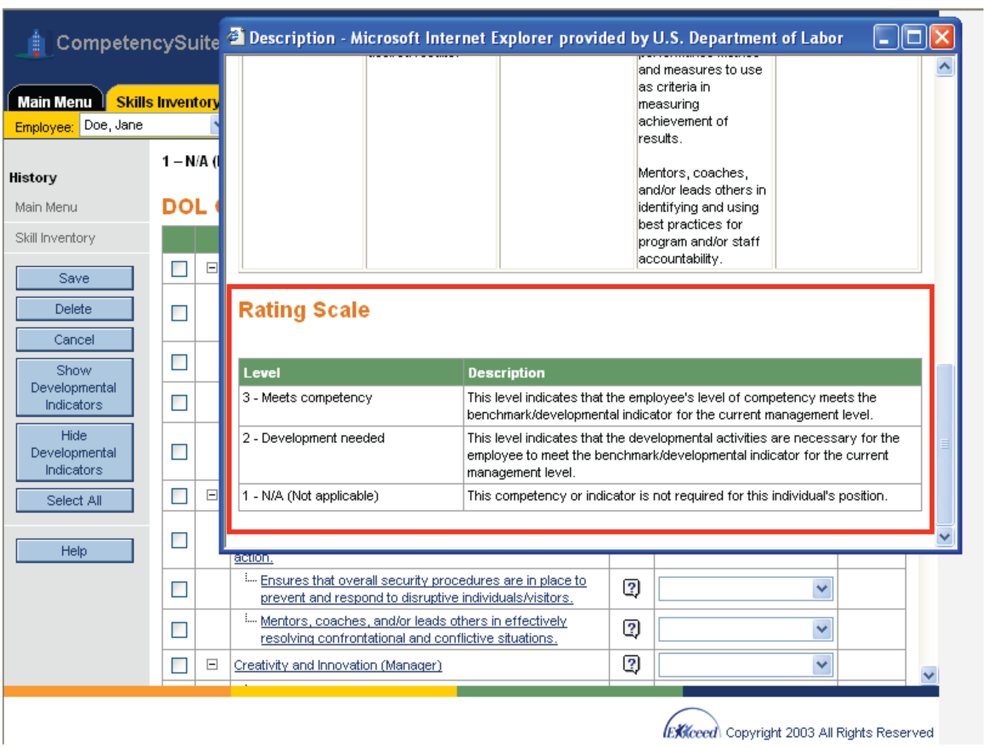
CompetencySuite
Main Menu
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Show Developmental Indicators
Hide Developmental Indicators
Select All
Help
1 – N/A (
DOL
Description - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by U.S. Department of Labor
and measures to use as criteria in measuring achievement of results.
Mentors, coaches, and/or leads others in identifying and using best practices for program and/or staff accountability.
Rating Scale
Level
Description
3 - Meets competency
This level indicates that the employee's level of competency meets the benchmark/developmental indicator for the current management level.
2 - Development needed
This level indicates that the developmental activities are necessary for the employee to meet the benchmark/developmental indicator for the current management level.
1 - N/A (Not applicable)
This competency or indicator is not required for this individual's position.
action.
Ensures that overall security procedures are in place to prevent and respond to disruptive individuals/visitors.
Mentors, coaches, and/or leads others in effectively resolving confrontational and conflictive situations.
Creativity and Innovation (Manager)
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The Process

9. Action Plans for closing the gaps
    a) Strategies for closing the gaps
        – Additional training
        – On-the-job training
        – Mentoring
        – Job Sharing
        – Job rotations
        – Collaboration between agencies on training of common or general competencies

The Results

Mission Critical Occupations

– Data was Aggregated at Agency and DOL Occupation Levels

– 6 Core Competencies that cut across all Agencies:
    – Writing
    – Self Management
    – Interpersonal Skills
    – Oral Communication
    – Problem Solving
    – Legal, Government and Jurisprudence

The Results

Mission Critical Occupations

- Agency collaboration for closing gaps
- Revamping of Training Curriculum
- Revamping of Recruitment Process

The Results

Mission Critical Skills Inventory 2004 at a Glance

• Participating Agencies	10
• Number of Models	27
• Number of Competencies	54
– General Competencies	20
– Technical Competencies	34
• Supervisors	1126
• Employees Assessed	6402
• **Completion %**	**99%**

The Results

Management Occupation

- Management Skills Initiative
  - Model developed for Supervisory/Management position
  - Data was aggregated for Agency & Department
  - Senior Executives were not assessed

The Results 2004

Management Occupation at a Glance

• Participating Agencies	8
• Number of Models	1
• Number of Competencies	
– Team Leader/Project Manager	25
– Supervisor	45
– Manager	71
• Employees Assessed	1864
• Assessors	658
• **Completion %**	**95%**

Next Steps (from baseline assessments)

- Continue to monitor closing of skill gaps –Proud-to-Be Initiative & Human Capitol Scorecard
- Anticipate in 2007 to reassess skills
- Compare the 2004 to the 2007 assessments
- Revise action plans
- Modify models, if necessary

The Journey Continues

Competency Reassessment 2007

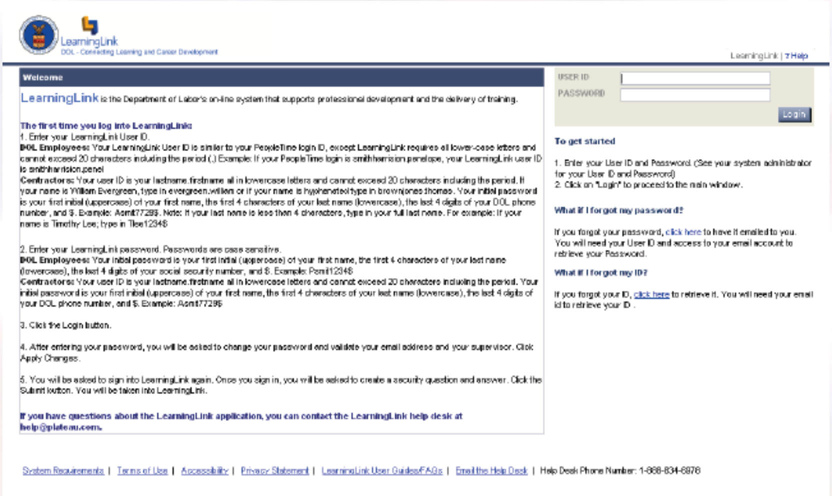
Update - 2007

- Continue to monitor closing of skill gaps –Proud-to-Be Initiative & Human Capitol Scorecard
- Conduct competency reassessment for mission critical occupations
- Use DOL's Learning Management system, LearningLink to conduct competency reassessments
- Reassessment – 2 Phased Process
  - Pilot test/assessment
  - Full Departmental rollout
- Compare results of the 2004 and the 2007 assessments
- Analyze gap closures, set new targets, as appropriate, and revise action plans
- Modify models, if necessary

LearningLink

- As part of DOL's E-training initiative, DOL acquired Plateau's Learning Management system
- DOL's learning management system, LearningLink, provides employees streamlined access to a one-stop portal of training and services.
- LearningLink also has a robust competency assessment tool.

LearningLink Skills Assessment Login Page



LearningLink - Sample Message to Assessors

Complete employee skills assessments for the following employees:

Smith, John
Smith, Jane

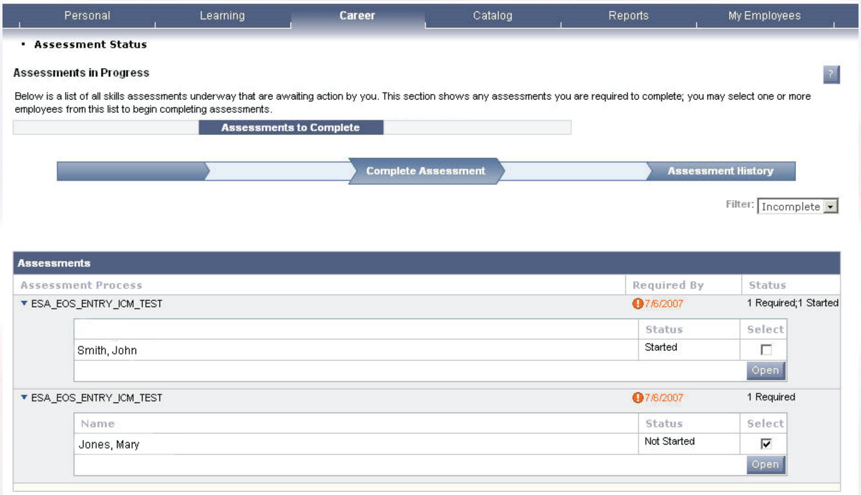
Please review this list of employees and notify your agency point of contact for the skills assessment if any of the employees above are not assigned to you or if there are any employees who are not on this list but who should be included in this assessment process. You should continue with the assessment process for the remaining employees.

A quick reference guide is attached for performing a skills assessment in LearningLink. Please note only managers and supervisors will be assessing their employees in LearningLink. The competency models and developmental indicators have been preloaded along with the employees that report directly to you. The assessment period is from **October 29, 2007 through November 16, 2007**.

Please log into LearningLink and complete these skills assessments at your earliest convenience. You can access LearningLink by clicking on following link: https://learninglink.dol.gov or via LaborNet at http://labornet.dol.gov.

If you need any assistance or experience any problems, please contact the LearningLink Help Desk at help@plateau.com or 1-888-834-6978.

LearningLink Assessment Page Sample



Personal | Learning | Career | Catalog | Reports | My Employees

• Assessment Status

Assessments in Progress

Below is a list of all skills assessments underway that are awaiting action by you. This section shows any assessments you are required to complete; you may select one or more employees from this list to begin completing assessments.

Assessments to Complete

Complete Assessment | Assessment History

Filter: Incomplete

Assessments

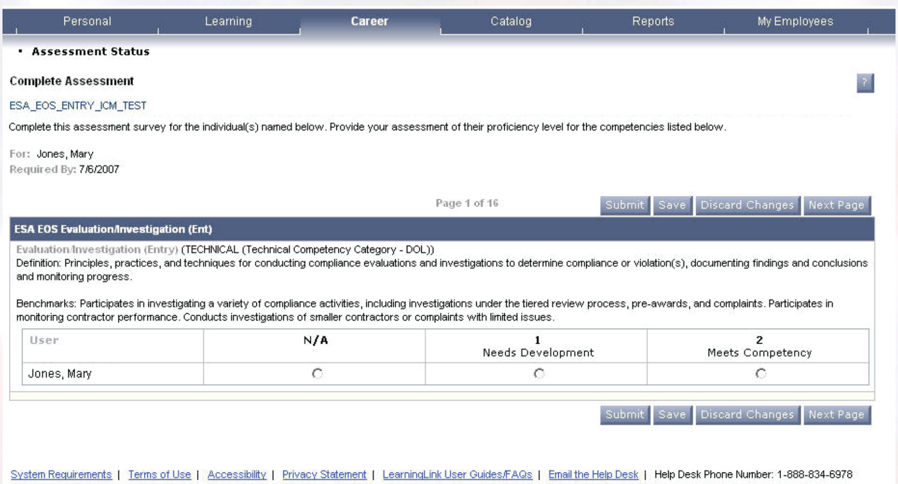
Assessment Process	Required By	Status
▼ ESA_EOS_ENTRY_ICM_TEST	7/6/2007	1 Required;1 Started

	Status	Select
Smith, John	Started	☐
		Open

▼ ESA_EOS_ENTRY_ICM_TEST	7/6/2007	1 Required

Name	Status	Select
Jones, Mary	Not Started	☑
		Open

LearningLink Assessment Page Sample



Personal | Learning | Career | Catalog | Reports | My Employees

• Assessment Status

Complete Assessment

ESA_EOS_ENTRY_ICM_TEST

Complete this assessment survey for the individual(s) named below. Provide your assessment of their proficiency level for the competencies listed below.

For: Jones, Mary
Required By: 7/6/2007

Page 1 of 16 | Submit | Save | Discard Changes | Next Page

ESA EOS Evaluation/Investigation (Ent)

Evaluation/Investigation (Entry) (TECHNICAL (Technical Competency Category - DOL))
Definition: Principles, practices, and techniques for conducting compliance evaluations and investigations to determine compliance or violation(s), documenting findings and conclusions and monitoring progress.

Benchmarks: Participates in investigating a variety of compliance activities, including investigations under the tiered review process, pre-awards, and complaints. Participates in monitoring contractor performance. Conducts investigations of smaller contractors or complaints with limited issues.

User	N/A	1 Needs Development	2 Meets Competency
Jones, Mary	○	○	○

Submit | Save | Discard Changes | Next Page

System Requirements | Terms of Use | Accessibility | Privacy Statement | LearningLink User Guides/FAQs | Email the Help Desk | Help Desk Phone Number: 1-888-834-6978

Competency Assessments Using LearningLink

- 2007 Mission Critical Occupation reassessments to be conducted October 29, 2007 to mid-December 2007
- As done previously, only managers are to assess the employees.
- Department-wide interagency taskforce responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing the reassessment phase.
- Extensive upfront work required to:
  - Load the models to LearningLink
  - Complete data scrubs (HR data) to ensure proper assessments
- DOL pilot tested the LearningLink competency tool in July 2007
  - Two subcomponent agencies were identified and reassessed two of their mission critical occupations
  - Results of the pilot assessments indicated that the skills gaps identified in 2004 were closing as a result of the strategies that were used.

2007 Skills Assessments and Next Steps

- In October four agencies began their reassessments.
- 12 occupations are being reassessed
- Comparisons will be made to 2004 data results
- Agencies' action plans are due by January 2008
- If analysis also shows areas where there are no skills gaps agencies are to identify how they will sustain and maintain the workforce competency in these areas.

2007 Skills Assessments and Next Steps (continued)

- In November an additional 4 Agencies will conduct their reassessments.
- 7 occupations will be reassessed
- Results to be compared with 2004 data
- Agency actions plans are plans are due by January 2008.
- If analysis also shows areas where there are no skills gaps agencies are to identify how they will sustain and maintain the workforce competency in these areas.

APPENDIX IV (PART I) DHS CRITICAL POSITION SUCCESSION PLANNING PROFILE

– Instructions –

The DHS Critical Position Succession Planning Profile helps DHS leaders assess succession risks in their organizations and identify steps to mitigate them. When completing the profiles, start with critical senior positions – those responsible for a major program, having significant budget responsibility, or requiring unique competencies.

- **Position Info** - Enter identifying information about the position and current incumbent. Grades include: PA and PAS for Presidential Appointees ('S' indicates Senate confirmation is required, SES for Senior Executive Service, TSES for TSA executives. SL for Senior Level, and ST for Scientific and Professional). If a GS employee indicate GS level. Date Appointed is the date the incumbent was appointed to this position.
- **Criticality of Position to DHS Mission –** Rate as high, moderate, or low based on the consequences of a 1 to 3 month vacancy: High – Operations of entire component adversely affected; Moderate – Operations of a major program adversely affected.
- **Difficulty of Finding Qualified Successor –** Rate as high, moderate, or low. Consider the unique competencies needed to be successful in the position as well as the ability to attract qualified candidates.
- **Appointment Status –** Select Political or Career. If Political, indicate Career employee who could take reins during a transition.
- **Component Priorities Supported –** List the Component Priorities this position supports.
- **Key Competencies Needed for Position –** Identify relevant competencies (e.g., 8 leadership competencies from DHS Executive Performance Agreement, competencies from the five standard ECQs, mandatory or desirable technical factors, and any desirable professional credentials).
- **Readiness of Internal Candidates –** Assess internal agency employees and identify the number of candidates in each category (i.e., ready now, ready within 1-2 years, or ready within 3-5 years). Do not include names. If a reasonably precise number of "ready" internal candidates cannot be determined, enter a

qualitative judgment such as "there are a high number of ready now candidates." Take into account current skill levels as well as planned development that is expected to be completed within the specified time frames.

- **Developmental Assignments –** Cite the kinds of developmental assignments and other developmental techniques that might be found in a potential successor's IDP (e.g., SES Candidate Development Program, Rotational Assignment, Executive Leadership Program, Fellows Program or FEI programs).

- **Developmental Training –** Cite the kinds of developmental training that a potential successor would need to complete to IDP (e.g., SES Candidate Development Program, Rotational Assignment, Executive Leadership Program, Fellows Program, FEI programs, or other training).

- **Outlook for Recruiting in Future –** Assess the agency's actual or anticipated experience in attracting external candidates based on recent recruiting experience and the current economic client as well as:
  - Existence of key competencies and/or technical factors in other agencies/industries
  - Salary compatibility with other agencies/industries

- **Potential Sources of External Candidates –** Cite professional groups that may be sources of candidates as well as public and private sector entities that may currently employ the type of professional needed.

- **Succession Risk Rating and Rationale –** Rate as high, moderate, or low risk and provide a brief supporting statement. This rating will be used to concentrate efforts on positions at highest risk. Base the rating on an overall assessment of information provided on the completed position profile. For example, a position that has several candidates who are "ready now" and good chances for external recruitment would generally be assigned a "low" risk rating.

APPENDIX IV (PART II)

DHS Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer
Critical Position Succession Planning Profile

The DHS Critical Position Succession Planning Profile helps DHS leaders assess succession risks in their organizations and identify steps to mitigate them. Complete profiles first for key positions – those responsible for a major program or budget.

Position Info Press the F2 key to edit any field

Current Incumbent Name

Component / Division | First | MI | Last | Position Title

Series | Grade | Date Appointed

Reports to: First | MI | Last | Title

Criticality to DHS mission

Difficulty to find qualified successor

Appointment Status: Noncareer

If non-career, could convert to career?

Interim Career Successor Name: First | MI | Last

Component Priorities Supported

Key Competencies Needed For Position.

Internal Candidates Press the F2 key to edit any field

Readiness of Internal Candidates - Assess internal agency employees and identify the number of candidates in each category below. Do not include names. If a reasonably precise number of "ready" internal candidates cannot be determined, enter a qualitative judgment from the drop down list provided. Take into account current skill levels as well as planned development.

Ready now ____ Ready in 1-2 years ____ Ready in 3-5 years ____

Developmental Assignments

Developmental Training

External Candidates Press the F2 key to edit any field

Outlook for External Recruiting in Future - Assess the agency's actual/anticipated recruiting experience in attracting external candidates and the current economic climate as well as the existence of key competencies and/or technical factors in other agencies/industries including salary compatibility with other agencies/industries.

External Outlook

Potential Sources of External Candidates

Succession Risk Rating Press the F2 key to edit any field

Succession Risk Rating - This rating will be used to concentrate efforts on positions at highest risk. Base the rating on an overall assessment of information provided on the completed position profile.

Succession Risk Rating ____

Rationale for Succession Rating

CHCO COUNCIL
www.chcoc.gov

MARCH 2008