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SECY-97-112

FOR: The Commissioners

FROM: L. Joseph Callan /s/
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - COMSECY-96-027 - STRATEGIC
ASSESSMENT ISSUE PAPER: STAFFING AND CORE
CAPABILITIES (DSI-18)

PURPOSE:

To provide the Commission a preliminary action plan for projecting and maintaining skills requirements, availability, and staffing.

BACKGROUND:

As part of Phase II of the Strategic Assessment and Rebaselining Initiative, the Steering Committee forwarded to the Commission a direction-setting issue paper: Staffing and Core Capabilities (DSI-18). DSI-18 concentrated on five key areas which would apply to the management of human resources within the Agency. These areas are: (1) projecting skills requirements and availability; (2) staffing mission and programs; (3) training and developing staff; (4) attracting and retaining staff; and (5) managing staff imbalances. Within each of these five areas, the staff presented three implementation options for Commission consideration. The Commission determined that DSI-18 presented an internal strategic issue. Therefore, it was not included in the set of papers upon which the Commission issued preliminary views. The Commission did, however, request the staff to prepare a preliminary action plan for projecting and maintaining skills requirements, availability, and staffing, to be finalized after the strategic plan is formulated and receives Commission approval.

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DISCUSSION:

In response to SRM COMSECY-96-027, the staff has prepared a preliminary human resources (HR) action plan for managing and maintaining current and projected skills requirements and ensuring the availability of competent staff in the core technical areas. The plan takes into account Commission decisions on direction-setting issues and the human resources activities they have initiated. The HR plan will evolve as these initiatives unfold and revisions will be proposed as new initiatives and decisions are made that impact various components of the plan.

Human resource planning is an essential element in positioning the agency to respond to change, and an important aspect of the agency's strategic planning process. The plan describes the steps for initial implementation of an ongoing human resources planning process. The plan also includes a process for (1) developing baseline assessment data regarding core capabilities (needed to carry out core functions of the Agency), skills requirements, and skills availability; (2) selecting strategies to meet staffing needs and (3) updating human resources planning on a regular basis.

Several offices are currently engaged in activities directly related to facets of the human resources planning process as a result of Commission guidance. The Office of Research (RES) is performing a study on Core Research Capabilities and has put a greater emphasis on skills development and training. The Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) is involved in Job Task Analysis (JTA) activities. The Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data (AEOD) is internally evaluating the quality, consistency, and effectiveness of the current training, qualification, and development programs in providing regulatory KSAs. This is a more detailed, focused look at a particular area than the NRR JTAs. These NRR and AEOD efforts are expected to provide KSA insights. The Chief Information Officer (CIO) is conducting a skills assessment of CIO and Information Resources Management (IRM) staff. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and the Office of Personnel (OP) are determining the KSAs needed by supervisors to improve program planning, budgeting, and performance measurement. The Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) is conducting a study on Business Process Reengineering and is also reviewing the NMSS performance appraisal process. All of these activities are expected to provide insights into required core capabilities and related skills and competencies. The human resources action plan is intended to provide a framework within which these ongoing activities can be more closely coordinated and their results integrated into a consistent and comprehensive approach.

The attachments to this paper discuss specific issues the staff was asked to address in COMSECY-96-027. The preliminary human resource action plan and planning process are described in Attachment 1. Attachment 2 discusses criteria for determining core capabilities and needed skills. Attachment 3 presents criteria for deciding whether to use internal or external human resources to meet mission needs. The development of an Agency-wide inventory of staff knowledge, capabilities, and expertise that will be part of a proposed human resources management system is discussed in Attachment 4. Attachment 5 describes approaches for attracting, training, developing, and retaining staff and managing staff imbalances. The staff is available for a Commission meeting or a Commissioner Assistant briefing to further discuss this paper.

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS:

With the exception of implementation of a proposed human resources information system, the actions proposed in the preliminary action plan would not require additional resources. The resource requirements for an integrated human resources information system are discussed in Attachment 4.

COORDINATION:

This paper has been coordinated with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Information Officer has been informed of this initiative and agrees in principle with this approach. The Office of General Counsel has no legal objections.

L. Joseph Callan
Executive Director
for Operations

- Attachments:
1. Preliminary Human Resources Action Plan
 2. Core Capabilities and Skills and Competencies Requirements
 3. Criteria for Selecting Internal and External Staffing Sources
 4. Development of a Skills and Competencies Database
 5. Approaches for Training and Developing Staff, Attracting and Retaining Staff, and Managing Staff Imbalances

PRELIMINARY HUMAN RESOURCES ACTION PLAN

Introduction

The human resource (HR) action plan described below is made up of two parts. The first phase is the initial implementation of a human resource planning process in the context of the Agency's overall strategic and performance planning framework. This phase includes the development of assessment tools, criteria, and processes, and the development of baseline data on required core capabilities and related skill and competency requirements. The second phase is the process for updating human resources planning on a regular basis.

Identification of the Agency's skills and core capabilities requirements is key to achieving strategic, MYIP, and annual organizational performance objectives. Skills must be considered by line managers in the broadest sense of the total of knowledge, skills, abilities (KSAs), and competencies required to perform a designated function or maintain a core capability (Attachment 2).

The basic tools for implementation of both phases of the human resources action plan are:

- ! the strategic, multi-year implementation, and annual organizational performance plans, and the supporting information that has been developed in the course of the strategic assessment and rebaselining process;
- ! an organizational self-assessment process;
- ! a human resources planning process; and
- ! the set of available human resources strategies and action options and criteria for selecting from among them.

The timeline estimates in the chart begin with issuance of the action plan following Commission approval to proceed. The ranges reflect the expectation that some of the activities will be conducted in series, some in parallel.

PART I - INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES PLANNING

Task No.	Action	Responsible Official	Time-line
1	Issue Action Plan	EDO	D (day 1)
1.1	Brief the ALMPC on action plan.	OP	D+30 & ongoing
1.2	Update NUREG/BR-0100, Human Resources Strategic Planning within the NRC (Guide)	OP	D+180
2	Identify Core Capabilities		
2.1	Conduct organizational self-assessment and identify required core capabilities at office/region level	OD/RA Supvs/Mgrs	D+180
2.2	Integrate/normalize office/region results at Agency level	DEDOs, CIO, CFO	D+180 to 240
2.3	Review and approve agency-wide list of core capabilities and required skills/competencies	Executive Council	D+ 240 to 270
3	Assess availability of skills/competencies from internal and external sources over planning horizon		
3.1	Identify current skills/competencies of existing staff	Supvs/Mgrs	D+180
3.2	Aggregate results in agency-wide skills database	OP	D+180 to 360
3.3	Assess anticipated increments to staff skills and competencies vis-à-vis core capability requirements achievable through training over planning horizon; project next 3 years	Supvs/Mgrs AEOD OP	D+180 to 270
3.4	Identify current and anticipated shortfalls or gaps in staff skills and competencies	OD/RA Supvs/Mgrs	D+180 to 270
3.5	Assess availability of required skills/competencies in civilian labor pool over MYIP planning horizon	OD/RA OP	D+180 to 240
3.6	Assess potential for obtaining required skills and competencies by contracting with DOE labs, universities, private companies	OD/RA ADM	D+180 to 240

Task No.	Action	Responsible Official	Time-line
3.7	Integrate current and projected skills availability, shortfalls, and overages at the Agency level	DEDOs, CIO, CFO	D+270 to 330
4	Implement strategies for obtaining and retaining needed skills and competencies		
4.1	Identify, evaluate and recommend options for overcoming skill/competency shortfalls and imbalances at the office/region level	OD/RA OP, ADM	D+270 to 330
4.2	Integrate and normalize office/region recommendations regarding shortfalls and imbalances across the Agency	DEDOs, CIO, CFO	D+330 to 390
4.3	Review and select suite of strategies	Executive Council	D+390 to 420
4.4	Implement selected strategies	OD/RA OP, ADM	D+420 Ongoing

PART II - UPDATING THE HUMAN RESOURCE ACTION PLAN

Regular updating of the human resource action plan is an important aspect of the strategic planning process. It will consist primarily of adjustments to the initial plan dictated by unfolding events. The process described below presumes utilization of the planning tools developed and put in place in the initial implementation of the human resource action plan described in Part I.

Task No.	Action	Responsible Official	Date
1	Evaluate human resource accomplishments against planned objectives	OD/RA	Nov
1.1	Identify shortfalls	OD/RA	Nov
1.2	Identify causes of shortfalls	OD/RA OP, ADM	Nov
2	Identify changes in core capability requirements generated by changes in strategic plan, MYIP, or current performance plan	OD/RA	Dec
3	Identify shortfalls or overages in needed skills and competencies generated by core competency changes in strategic plan and programs	OD/RA	Dec
4	Select strategies to overcome shortfalls	OD/RA OP, ADM	Dec
5	Integrate strategies across the Agency	DEDOs, CIO, CFO	Jan
6	Review and approve action plan	Executive Council	Jan

CORE CAPABILITIES AND SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES REQUIREMENTS

Identification of Core Capabilities and Skills Requirements

An ongoing corollary to the strategic planning process is the identification of the core capabilities and the critical skills and competencies which are required to implement and carry out NRC line managers' strategic planning objectives. As the planning objectives are translated into implementation activities, mission objectives are more narrowly defined. Specific work groupings of skills, by competency levels, can be identified, using basic criteria for identifying skills and core capabilities, and matched against available employees with the appropriate skills, core capabilities, and competency levels. The deltas between the skills and core capabilities needed and the employees available become the primary identification of requirements.

Core capabilities are the capabilities needed to carry out the core functions of the Agency. Accordingly, the criteria for determining core capabilities are derived from the criteria for determining core functions, namely, Agency functions required by:

- Statute
- Executive Branch directions
- National security
- Commission policy decisions, particularly regarding DSIs
- Regulation
- Congressional mandates
- National Performance Review (NPR) commitments
- International agreements and commitments

Core functions determine the core capabilities required to meet the Agency's mission. Core capability requirements determine the technical, regulatory, and managerial skills and competencies required to carry out the mission.

The criteria used to determine the skills and competencies needed to meet the NRC's health and safety mission should be job based in that the primary assessment should be the critical task requirements of the Agency and the skills required to carry out those tasks successfully. The NRC needs three broad categories of skills: technical, regulatory, and managerial. Within these three broad categories, the skills and competencies should be divided into those generally available on an immediate basis either internally or externally and those for which the supply is short, training is needed, or long-term development programs would come into play. Primary strategic concentration should be with those skills and competencies which cannot be easily obtained. In addition, where major program or organizational changes are developing, skills and competencies associated with organizational realignments should be identified. This should apply also to identifying core capabilities.

The Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) Job Task Analysis study and the Office of Research (RES) Core Capabilities study are expected to provide some insight to core capabilities. AEOD is internally evaluating the quality, consistency, and effectiveness of the current training, qualification, and development programs in providing needed regulatory KSAs. Insights gained from these activities will be factored into organizational self-assessment approaches being developed in response to guidance from DSI-15 Management Philosophy and DSI-17 Management and Organization (COMSECY-96-026, COMSECY-96-031).

Strategies for Responding to Skills and Core Capability Requirements

Strategies for responding to skills and core capability requirements are first linked to whether the requirements are short term and easily met through conventional staffing activities or are more strategic in nature because of organizational impacts, major mission changes, technology shifts, scarce labor supply, or training/retraining requirements. Strategies are also influenced by full time equivalent (FTE) staffyear and funding availability, and the political/human impact of various strategies at any point in time.

Strategies fall into four major areas: (1) outsourcing (contractors, consultants, etc.); (2) recruitment from external sources; (3) hiring from internal sources; and (4) development and training. Within these areas the specific approaches to be used, such as the mix of permanent to contingent staff, entry level to full performance level staff, will vary with the specific situations generating the requirements. Availability of time, funding, and FTE staffyears is also critical.

The full range of options, outsourcing, recruitment, staffing, and training/ development activities can be brought into play with sufficient planning time. For example, where the planning process identifies a future skill need, the manager can assess the benefits of in-house or outsourced capability, internal vs. external recruitment, or using training and developmental programs to satisfy the requirement. The planning process should also provide guidance on the magnitude and duration of the skill requirement, which in turn would help the manager determine whether approaches such as the visiting fellow program, term appointment, outsourcing, interagency detail, or permanent hiring would be of value to meet the need.

Elements to consider in determining the staff mix would thus include general cost, time, internal availability, labor supply both internal and external, training and development required, FTE staffyear limitations, need to control salary and benefits, degree of staff imbalances at the time, etc. No one method or strategy would apply across the board to all situations. Attachment 3 contains further guidance with regard to choosing among these options.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAFFING SOURCES

The primary criterion for determining whether to use internal staff or external sources to perform an Agency function is a determination that the function is or is not an inherently governmental function. The Office of Federal Procurement Policy has defined a function as inherently governmental if it is so intimately related to the public interest as to mandate performance by Government employees. Activities that require either the exercise of discretion in applying Government authority or the application of value judgments in making decisions for the Government are inherently governmental. Typical examples are:

- the performance of adjudicatory functions;
- conduct of criminal investigations;
- determination of Agency policy, such as determining the content and application of regulations;
- determination of program priorities or budget policy, guidance, strategy and requests;
- direction and control of Federal employees;
- selection for Federal employment;
- approval of position descriptions and performance standards of Federal employees;
- approval of Federal licensing actions and inspections; and
- collection, control and disbursement of fees.

Services in support of activities such as those listed above are not necessarily inherently governmental functions and may be performed by contractors, subject to appropriate Agency control.

Outside the realm of inherently governmental functions, the choice among staffing options is based on a determination of the estimated effectiveness and efficiency of the capability that the option would provide to accomplish the function in question.

Different staffing options have different inherent effectiveness and efficiency costs and benefits. For example, permanent staffing promotes such values as independence, corporate memory, a strong health and safety culture, and regulatory expertise. It also entails long-term commitment of full time equivalent (FTE) staffyears, some higher salary and benefit costs, and some risk over time of skills imbalance, particularly if expertise is narrow. Reliance on temporary staff and contractor support avoids long-term commitment of resources, and provides rapid access to state-of-the-art expertise. It foregoes, however, many of the institutional values associated with permanent staffing, and may cost more in the short-term.

The relative importance of the inherent advantages and disadvantages of potential staffing options depends upon the characteristics of the work to be performed, including:

- long- or short-term duration;
- long- or short-term value of expertise required;

- value of corporate memory;
- need for independence; and
- whether it is a “primary” or “supplemental” skill (e.g. financial management)

Further, the parameters in effect at the point in time of selecting a staffing option may shape the choice on the basis of such factors as:

- length of available lead time to acquire or develop capability;
- current availability of sources of expertise;
- level of staffyears available; and
- level of funding available.

In the case of inherently governmental functions, the only question is whether the employee should be hired permanently, or on some time-limited basis. That decision would be based on many of the same effectiveness and efficiency considerations that apply when the function is not inherently governmental. The table below provides criteria or guidelines for determining whether to staff permanently (long-term) or temporarily (short-term).

	Criteria	Staffing Sources	
		If	Then
1	Long-term function	Yes	Hire permanent staff
		No	Hire temporary staff/contractor
2	Broad application in NRC	Yes	Hire permanent staff
		No	Rely on contractor/national lab
3	High need for independence	Yes	Hire permanent (1=Yes) or temporary (1=No) staff,
		No	Rely on contractor/lab/temporary staff
4	Time for skill development available	Yes	Hire permanent staff at entry level
		No	Hire permanent senior staff (1 and/or 2=Yes) or rely on contractor/temporary staff
5	Skill readily available from external sources	Yes	Rely on contractor/temporary staff
		No	Hire permanent staff if 1 or 2 =Yes
6	Function relatively unique to NRC	Yes	Hire permanent staff if 1 or 2 =Yes
		No	Rely on contractor support

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	Criteria	Staffing Sources	
		If	Then
7	High need for regulatory expertise	Yes	Hire permanent staff
		No	Rely on contractor support
8	FTE available for a long-term investment	Yes	Hire permanent staff
		No	Hire temporary staff; rely on contractor support
9	Internal staff less expensive over life-cycle of function	Yes	Hire permanent staff
		No	Rely on contractor support
10	Function is cyclical but requires state-of-the-art expertise	Yes	Rely on contractor support
		No	Default to criteria listed above
11	Core capability gains value from presence of critical mass of expertise in-house	Yes	Hire permanent staff
		No	Default to criteria listed above

In practice, managers would use these and other criteria in electing staffing options in the course of updating their human resource action plans. The Agency's historical bias toward relying on a robust permanent staff to carry out functions reflects its sense of the values, intangible but no less real, added by a relatively large, technically competent, health and safety conscious permanent staff. Budget realities may force the Agency to consider other options more closely.

DEVELOPMENT OF A SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES DATABASE

To respond to COMSECY-96-066 (DSI-22), the Office of Personnel is evaluating, with the assistance of Office of Information Resources Management (IRM) alternative commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) packages to support a proposed integrated human resources information system. The inventory of technical core capabilities and related skills and competencies will be part of this proposed system along with other capabilities such as training, staff planning, performance appraisal, etc. The preliminary planning estimate of the cost of a corporate human resources information system that would include a skills and competency database is \$5-6M over 4 years to buy the hardware and software and develop the database, and approximately \$340K annually to operate it. A more precise estimate of the cost of the proposed system will not be known until a Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) analysis is performed.

Development and maintenance of an agency-wide position and skills database represents a significant commitment of time and resources by line managers and NRC support staff offices. However, in an era of decreased resources and limited external recruitment, the ability to quickly analyze changing job requirements and match them to available human resources can significantly enhance the Agency's ability to position itself for change. With an up-to-date and user-friendly database, a manager could quickly identify employees with the right knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and competency level to meet the requirements of a position or assignment to be filled; could identify training or retraining requirements to match surplus employees to vacant/new positions; and could identify the magnitude of training requirements when new technology is being implemented. The skills database would be the vehicle for maintaining, updating, projecting, and tracking skills and competency levels, including the formal qualifications programs for licensing and inspection.

Database Development Options

The acquisition and development of an agency-wide skills and competencies database is included in OP's plan to procure and implement a corporate-level human resources information system. The OP plan is to identify and procure a commercial-of-the-shelf product that will complement the PayPers application under development, providing the additional functionality, including a skills database, required for effective management of the agency's human resources.

Several commercial human resources information systems available today have the capability not only to collect skills and competency information, but to integrate this skills data into the information processing and reporting functions that support position management, hiring, merit promotion, staff utilization, training and development, and performance management. This integration capability would greatly facilitate maintenance and utilization of skills data.

Absent an integrated human resources information system, the agency would be able to conduct initial skills identification and requirements activities, and record the results partly in its current systems and partly in ad hoc applications created for this purpose. Utilization and on-going

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maintenance of the data would require significant amounts of manual manipulation. This would be labor intensive, and the timeliness and accuracy of the data would be a constant challenge.

Resource Estimates and Considerations:

The preliminary estimate for a corporate human resources information system that would incorporate a skills and competency database is 2.6M for FY 1998. This would include costs for hardware, software, maintenance, operations, and data migration strategy and implementation.

Initial development and on-going maintenance of skills requirements will require a substantial commitment of management and staff support time. Previous efforts to catalogue required skills in the aggregate, let alone for individual positions, proved to be labor intensive, and revealed considerable differences of opinion among managers as to which skills were required and in what priority.

One benchmark indicator of the level of effort required to develop a comprehensive set of skill requirements is the AEOD-sponsored effort to assess regulatory knowledge, skills, and abilities. Completion of this project is expected to require eight staff years over a two-year period. Achieving consensus and consistency with regard to key positions or classes of positions is expected to take a comparable investment of 8-10 staffyears over a period of 2-3 years. Fortunately, developing a comprehensive list of agency skills requirements will benefit directly from the AEOD project and related activities.

Utilization and maintenance of skills information will require some general training and reorientation to accustom managers and supervisors to using desk top access to human resources information. That access, however, can provide them powerful tools not only to maintain and utilize skills information, but also to make timely, well-informed decisions with regard to all aspects of managing the human resources for which they are responsible.

APPROACHES

FOR

TRAINING AND DEVELOPING STAFF

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING STAFF

MANAGING STAFF IMBALANCES

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Approaches for Training and Developing Staff

With the expectation that Federal budget and resources constraints will continue, productivity demands upon NRC staff necessitate management providing cost-effective training and development programs.

An effective approach for training and developing staff now and into the next century must look at four basic training and development areas: (1) maintaining the KSAs at peak levels through continuous learning for employees; (2) managing Agency career transition activities; (3) fostering the change to a high performing, results-oriented organization along with the organizational and HR systems changes that will develop; and (4) addressing emerging outcomes resulting from changes in mission, organization, technology, culture such as staff imbalances, realignment of career to transitional workforce, etc. Many different training options may be used; however, on-the-job training will remain a primary tool where possible.

Task No.	Action to Be Taken	Action Officer/Target
1	Maintain KSAs currently required at peak levels.	
1.1	Assess current KSA levels to identify gaps between required and actual KSA levels of existing staff; upgrade KSAs of existing staff to expected levels	Line managers with OP, AEOD assistance.
1.2	Continue and improve annual training needs survey with emphasis on identification of training and development (T&D) specifically targeted to KSA maintenance and creation of coalitions to allocate resources for training and development in line with KSA needs.	Line managers with OP, AEOD assistance annually and as a result of any T&D needs identified through the office level multi-year implementation plans or other planning documents.
1.3	Continue encouragement and use of IDPs which will address skills and competencies needed and identify on-the-job opportunities and mentoring requirements.	Line managers with OP, AEOD assistance - on an ongoing basis.
1.4	Maximize use of alternative T&D approaches including satellite broadcasting, distance learning, televideo training, computer-based training, etc.	Line managers, OP, AEOD, and IRM, on an ongoing basis as such activities become available and are implemented in the NRC.
1.5	Create a learning organization. Facilitate workplace learning by placing emphasis on coaching - help employees acquire knowledge themselves in order to facilitate continuous performance improvement.	Line managers with the assistance of OP, AEOD, and designated mentors on an ongoing basis and as immediate activities require.
1.6	Maintain T&D source database for use in responding to immediate KSA shifts not anticipated in annual or long-range planning.	OP, AEOD, with assistance from supervisors and managers on an ongoing basis to ensure currency.
2	Manage career transition activities.	

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Task No.	Action to Be Taken	Action Officer/Target
2.1	Maintain a career management center/office at the Individualized Learning Center with available computer resources, publications, counseling services, etc., and provide periodic information to employees on the center and on career management activities and opportunities.	OP - as directed by top management and as resources permit.
2.2	Provide guidance to supervisors and managers on mentoring and counseling to assist them in dealing with employees in change.	OP, SBCR, with consultant assistance, as required on an ongoing basis.
2.3	Integrate career planning and management requirements into planning for organizational realignments or mission changes.	Line managers with OP, AEOD assistance - on an ongoing basis as changes occur.
2.4	Provide guidance and incentives to employees to take charge of their own careers - including relooking at traditional career paths and need for new career flexibility.	OP, supervisors and managers, and/or mentors as individual or group situations occur which trigger career management planning.
2.5	Provide general guidance to employees on Agency changes and potential future KSAs and competencies requirements so that both supervisors and employees can target career management activities to mesh with organizational needs.	Line managers with OP assistance - as changes are identified.
3	Foster change to high-performing, results-oriented Agency.	
3.1	Identify T&D opportunities which will facilitate employee understanding of high performing, results-oriented requirements.	Line managers with OP, AEOD input and assistance, and best practices from other agencies or professional groups - as needed on an ongoing basis.
3.2	Provide guidance to supervisors and employees on new organizational structures such as flat or horizontal organizations or self-directed teams, their potential impact on how work is performed and KSAs are utilized.	OP with consultant assistance as necessary on an as needed basis or in response to office multi-year planning implementation efforts.
3.3	Provide guidance to supervisors and employees on alternative HR systems which may have potential for future application.	OP with consultant assistance - as necessary on an as needed basis or in response to individual line manager requests or office multi-year planning implementation.
3.4	Develop T&D options associated with designing and implementing alternative organizational or HR systems on a test or pilot basis.	Line managers in cooperation with OP - as requested and as such pilot programs are discussed.
4	Address emerging outcomes resulting from change.	
4.1	Identify and implement T&D requirements associated with staff imbalances from reorganization or functional realignments.	Line managers with OP, AEOD assistance - as soon as reorganizations, functional realignments, or other situations causing imbalances can be identified.

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Task No.	Action to Be Taken	Action Officer/Target
4.2	Identify and implement T&D requirements resulting from new technology or from discontinuance of existing technologies.	Line managers with OP, AEOD assistance as early as changes can be identified and planned for.
4.3	Identify specific T&D requirements for supervisors resulting from supervisory ratio reductions, new types of organizations, social and cultural impact of managing culturally diverse employees, etc.	Line managers with OP assistance - as required on an ongoing basis as changes are identified.
4.4	Identify the T&D impact of shifts in organizational culture, in realigning the workforce mix such as using career or contingent employees.	Line managers with OP assistance and assistance from subject matter consultants - as required when shifts can be identified or projected.

Managers would follow these approaches for determining their training and development needs in the course of updating the human resource action plans.

Approaches for Attracting and Retaining Staff

The Agency plan for attracting and retaining staff must be flexible enough to deal with both resource reductions and potential increases due to mission changes. Key to the plan will be the culture and structure of the Agency, the nature of the workforce now and in the future, and the perspective of the current and future staff in terms of how to attract and retain the best.

Attracting and retaining staff must also be linked to HR systems and organizational structures. For example, a well-designed variable compensation system (base pay plus variable pay components) has recruitment and retention positives and negatives -- marginal employees would be encouraged to leave, and high performing employees would be rewarded accordingly, while most employees might or might not receive within-grade increases and, therefore, might not do as well as with the current system. But when looking at an organization structure and the HR systems best suited to that structure, the recruitment and retention advantages and disadvantages should automatically be factored in.

Much has been written about the work perspectives of workers by generational category -- traditional (pre-1946), baby boomers, baby busters, generation X, and what is needed to effectively manage workers in these and other demographic groupings. Many of the "soft" personnel programs dealing with worklife quality have developed over the last 15 to 20 years in response to what is needed to recruit and retain an increasingly diverse and aging workforce.

In terms of addressing recruitment and retention, we can look at three broad issue groups: (1) workforce demographics; (2) worklife quality; and (3) workforce systems.

Task No.	Action to Be Taken	Action Officer/Target
1	Workforce demographics - generational, ethnic, etc.	
1.1	Identify range of demographic areas to be considered.	Line managers with assistance from OP and input from SBCR - on an ongoing basis.
1.2	Refine outreach activities to consider demographic considerations when recruiting externally.	Line managers with assistance from OP - on an as needed basis.
1.3	Ensure internal career management activities incorporate demographic considerations.	Line managers assistance from OP (including Career Management Program Manager) - on an ongoing basis.
1.4	Enhance training for supervisors and managers on supervising a demographically diverse workforce.	OP with assistance of line managers - as training is identified and needed.
1.5	Incorporate demographic approaches in recruiting efforts and in periodic employee outreach and informational activities.	Line managers with assistance of OP - on an ongoing basis.
2	Worklife quality - "soft" programs like work-at-home.	
2.1	Ensure current programs are fully identified and periodically publicized to existing staff and in recruitment information.	OP with assistance of line managers on an annual or other identifiable basis.
2.2	Ensure recruiters are knowledgeable about worklife quality programs and can respond to questions.	Line managers with OP assistance - as needed when programs change or new recruiters are used.
2.3	Identify potential areas of expansion in existing or new programs that could be adopted that would substantially enhance recruitment and retention efforts. Identification should include a cost/benefit analysis and any consideration of mission changes which might involve addition of groups of employees from agencies where such expanded programs were already in place.	ODs/RAs with assistance from OP based on mission changes, functional transfers, new government-wide initiatives or other factors.
2.4	Maintain state-of-the-art awareness of developments and best practices in worklife quality programs and assess effectiveness of ongoing programs.	OP with assistance from line managers, supervisors, employees and other OP staff, as needed on an ongoing basis.
2.5	Link worklife quality and demographic activities where feasible and where such linking would be productive - for example, highlighting elder care programs to current staff or full professional level candidates rather than to new college graduates.	Line managers in cooperation with OP - as activities change.
2.6	Survey Agency employees periodically on a broad or narrowly focused basis to determine extent of interest in and/or satisfaction with worklife quality programs.	OP with contract support and input from supervisors, managers, and employees - on a periodic basis or when change is being studied.

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Task No.	Action to Be Taken	Action Officer/Target
3	Workforce systems issues - matching HR systems to organizations.	
3.1	Identify types of organizational structures, such as teams and flat organizations, and the HR compensation, performance management, staffing, and other systems best suited to them.	OP with consultant or other in-house input resulting from best practices reviews and line management requests - updated on a periodic basis to be determined.
3.2	Assess short term and long range costs associated with changing systems, including moving to multiple systems.	OP, with consultant assistance as required, as systems are proposed.
3.3	Identify advantages/disadvantages in recruiting and retaining employees associated with various organizational structures and alternative HR systems.	OP with input from line managers, supervisors, and consultants - in coordination with #1.
3.4	Provide guidance to supervisors and managers in choices in organizing work and using alternate HR systems including start-up costs and time and training required before a high quality, high-performing organization is achieved.	OP with input from consultants as required - work into existing supervisory training courses or establish new courses as appropriate in addition to general OP information dissemination.
3.5	Develop pilot or demonstration projects to test various organizational structures and alternative HR systems which would be of potential high value to the Agency.	Line managers with OP input and assistance - as requested by Agency management.

Following this guidance when updating human resource action plans will assist managers in determining their staffing and retention strategies.

Approaches for Managing Staff Imbalances

Staff imbalances, from the broadest perspective, include both skills imbalances and staff imbalances where skills are not the major concern. The issue has both positive and negative aspects from both the Agency (management) and employee outlook. Dealing with situations that affect a small number of employees calls for different approaches from situations where large numbers of employees are involved.

Causes of imbalances include position abolishment, transfers of function, reorganizations, mission changes, technology changes, and resource changes. Transfers in or hiring of employees other than on a one-for-one replacement basis generates imbalances both in terms of deployment of staff and identification of skills. This is especially true where functions are being transferred from one Agency to another such as would occur if NRC were to be tasked with oversight of Department of Energy (DOE) activities. Proper assignment of employees transferring with the function, especially as the Agency determines how it will manage the new functions, will present problems. Imbalances occurring where staff separations are identified - retirements or transfers or separations, will be of concern where critical skills are being lost. Management of staff resources must take into account greater internal staff flexibility in being reassigned to areas of need coupled with targeted external recruitment. Managers must also bear in mind that employees' grade levels and qualifications will impact their fungibility in moving from one skill area to another to address imbalances. The two key elements are knowing the KSAs and competencies of current staff and of functions to be performed so that the matching process can be accomplished with a minimum of effort.

Reorganizations associated with downsizing, mission changes, NPR or GPRA initiatives affect staff and skills, and also secondary issues such as career paths. For example, NPR initiatives to change the supervisory ratio are resulting in a flatter organization with fewer supervisors. Deployment of excess supervisors into new positions or career paths with minimal impact on morale and productivity requires careful planning and counseling.

Technology or mission changes that wipe out need for existing KSAs or bring in new ones affect how we deploy current staff resources, how we handle training to meet new needs, and how we recruit. Decision points develop when the manager must decide whether to reassign, retrain, separate, and/or recruit.

In the end, there are four basic approaches to managing staff imbalances: (1) recruitment; (2) reassignment; (3) training; and (4) separation. How these come into play, either separately or in combination, is basically determined by the manager(s) concerned in concert with the Office of Personnel (OP). Strategic and program planning activities should identify the potential for critical imbalances. Day-to-day management activities in implementing strategic planning initiatives or in responding to short term or long range changes or situations will drive other choices in utilizing staff effectively.

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Task No.	Action to Be Taken	Action Officer/Target
1	Addressing imbalances through recruitment.	
1.1	Define situation - i.e., upsizing, downsizing, realigning, mission or technology changes.	Line managers with input from OP on an as needed basis as situations develop and as part of multi-year implementation plan initiatives.
1.2	Identify what imbalances can be addressed through internal measures. Make maximum use of career management initiatives in making choice to go internal or make use of external recruitment.	Line managers with the assistance of OP on an as needed basis as situations develop and as part of multi-year implementation plan activities.
1.3	Define recruitment needs - identify time line to fill, level of proficiency needed, targeted recruitment sources, any additional training needed once on board.	Line managers with assistance of OP on an as needed basis as decisions are made to go external recruitment.
1.4	Pull together recruitment team and focus recruitment approaches and Agency advantages to meet interests of targeted group.	OP with participation of line managers, supervisors, Agency technical representatives as required on an as needed basis as recruitment is initiated.
1.5	Identify and implement electronic recruitment activities.	OP with supervisor or manager input as available as required when external recruitment is initiated.
1.6	Assess effectiveness of targeted external recruitment in resolving imbalances and apply lessons learned to future recruitment initiatives.	OP with input from supervisors, managers and others after completion of recruitment efforts or on a periodic basis as feasible.
1.7	Integrate and normalize office/region recommendations regarding imbalances and recruitment options.	DEDOs, CIO, CFO.
1..8	Review and select suite of strategies.	Executive Council.
2	Addressing imbalances through reassignment.	
2.1	Identify KSAs of individuals being affected through imbalances and probable Agency vacancies to which they could be reassigned immediately.	Line managers with OP assistance as situations develop and individuals or groups of individuals are identified.
2.2	Identify KSAs of positions or functions in shortage category to which Agency employees could be matched or where recruitment could readily resolve short term problems.	Line managers with OP assistance as situations develop or are identified through the multi-year implementation plan process.
2.3	Consider multiple approach to handling reassignments including directed reassignments, competitive announcements, rotational assignment offerings, career management opportunities, etc.	Line managers with input from OP as part of the implementation strategy for effecting reassignments.
2.4	Consider situations where individual reassignment would have to be combined with training before the employee was fully proficient in the new position.	Line managers with OP assistance as situations develop where reassignments are an option.

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Task No.	Action to Be Taken	Action Officer/Target
2.5	Advise supervisors and managers on advantages of various types of reassignments and value to the Agency as a whole in making the Agency more responsive through a flexible, well rounded workforce.	Senior management with OP assistance.
2.6	Provide appropriate publicity for Agency employees to promote reassignments as career enhancing to encourage more employees to voluntarily seek reassignments.	OP with input from line managers on a periodic basis to be determined and in career management guides.
2.7	Integrate and normalize office/region recommendations regarding resolving imbalances through reassignment.	DEDOs, CIO, CFO.
2.8	Review and select suite of strategies.	Executive Council.
3	Addressing imbalances through training and development.	
3.1	Match skills requirements identified through strategic and program planning activities to skills and proficiencies of current staff to determine specific imbalances.	Line managers with OP assistance as various planning initiatives are implemented and other organizational or mission changes occur.
3.2	Identify the extent to which the imbalances can be resolved by internal or external training and development of current staff, including describing types of training and development activities which would be appropriate (e.g., Senior Fellowship Program) and time and resources required.	OP with input from supervisors and managers on an ongoing basis in response to projected imbalances or specific situations.
3.3	Identify recruitment and training programs such as the Intern Program or Graduate Fellowship Program which could be used to address skills imbalances where sufficient time is provided to move from entry to full proficiency levels. Include identification of KSAs involved, number of individuals, cost benefit.	OP with input from supervisors and managers on an ongoing basis as opportunities present themselves for a longer training and development timeline.
3.4	Identify pool of Agency employees considered in the overage category due to reorganizations, etc. Identify KSAs which could be expanded to increase their competitiveness for reassignment opportunities. Identify through career counseling any retraining efforts that may be appropriate and feasible to enable such employees to move into new career areas within the Agency.	Line managers with OP assistance as situations are identified in implementing planning initiatives, in effecting reorganizations, in redesigning work operations to meet mission or technological change or on an individual basis.
3.5	Integrate and normalize office/region recommendations regarding training and development options for correcting skills imbalances.	DEDOs, CIO, CFO.
3.6	Review and select strategies.	Executive Council.
3.7	Maintain technical/occupational training programs for employees to ensure KSAs are at peak levels to address changes and minimize the number of imbalances developing.	OP with input from supervisors and managers on an ongoing basis for all employees of the Agency.
4	Addressing imbalances through separation.	

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Task No.	Action to Be Taken	Action Officer/Target
4.1	Strengthen training and support of supervisors to deal with employees during the probationary period to weed out marginal performers.	Line managers with OP assistance on an ongoing basis and as part of formal supervisory training.
4.2	Explore strengthening of performance management systems to build in results oriented objectives to identify, and assist, where possible, marginal or unsatisfactory employees.	Line managers with assistance of OP on an experimental basis as resources permit.
4.3	Explore possibility of piloting pay system redesigns to implement systems such as variable pay which encourage top performers and cause poor performers to reevaluate their career plans.	Line managers with assistance of OP on an experimental basis as resources permit and in response to interest in particular systems.
4.4	Identify those employees who cannot or will not be retrained and who have no meaningful job and cannot be productively reassigned for appropriate action including separation.	Line managers with assistance of OP as reorganizations or realignments occur and employees cannot be immediately placed.
4.5	Integrate and normalize office/region recommendations regarding options for addressing imbalances through separation.	DEDOs, CIO, CFO.
4.6	Review and select suite of strategies.	Executive Council.
4.7	Provide clear guidance and training for supervisors on how to deal with poor performers or excess employees, especially in situations where assistance has been provided but has been refused or has not worked.	OP with assistance from managers, consultants, etc., on an ongoing basis and as needed.
4.8	Provide guidance to employees through career management counseling, supervisory mentoring or counseling activities, notices, etc., on being flexible in career goals and opportunities, in maintaining skills, in being productive, etc., to minimize situations where skills are outdated or employees must be reassigned.	OP, line managers, and designated mentors on an ongoing basis for all employees.

Managers would use these and other criteria when determining how to manage staff imbalances in the course of updating their human resource action plans.

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