



United States Office of Personnel Management

Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions
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Standard: [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) (April 1993)
Factor: Factor 4, Personal Contacts, Subfactor 4A, Nature of Contacts
Issue: Interpretation of Level 4A-4

Identification of the Classification Issue

This issue arose in connection with an appellant's request for reconsideration of an appeal decision issued by an Office of Personnel Management region. The region evaluated Subfactor 4A, Nature of Contacts, at Level 4A-3, but the appellant argued that Level 4A-4 should have been assigned because he engaged in contacts with Senior Executive Service officials in other Federal agencies.

Resolution

According to the General Schedule Supervisory Guide, contacts credited under Subfactor 4A cover the organizational relationships, authority or influence level, setting, and difficulty of preparation associated with making personal contacts involved in supervisory and managerial work. To be credited, the contacts must contribute to the successful performance of the work, be a recurring requirement, have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the position, and require direct contact.

Level 4A-4 is the highest level described in the General Schedule Supervisory Guide for Subfactor 4A and is reserved for employees who frequently engage in the most difficult and demanding contacts required by supervisory and managerial work. This level includes contacts with:

Senior Executive Service, flag or general officer, or Executive Level heads of bureaus and higher-level organizations in other Federal agencies.

A careful reading of the above example of Level 4A-4 contacts indicates that all of the contacts listed refer to *heads of bureaus and higher level organizations in other Federal agencies*, whether they be in the Senior Executive Service, a flag or general officer, or Executive level managers. Contacts with Senior Executive Service officials who are not heads of bureaus or higher level organizations in other agencies are not creditable at Level 4A-4. The appellant's contacts with Senior Executive Service officials in other agencies included division chiefs and directors of administrative support organizations. The Office of Personnel Management found that these contacts were not creditable at Level 4A-4. Instead, the Office of Personnel Management found that the appellant's contacts with high-level officials in other Federal agencies did not exceed Level 4A-3, which includes contacts with:

high ranking military or civilian managers, supervisors, and technical staff at bureau and major organization levels of the agency; with agency headquarters administrative support staff; or with comparable personnel in other Federal agencies.

The appellant's contacts also matched Level 4A-3 in terms of the setting and required preparation; thus, the Office of Personnel Management credited Level 4A-3.