



DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY
HEADQUARTERS
CAMERON STATION
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22304-6100

DLAR 1404.4

DLA-KS

DLA REGULATION
NO. 1404.4

29 Jan 91

MERIT PROMOTION PROGRAM
(Supplementation is permitted by primary level field activities (PLFAs).)

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE. This DLAR establishes the policy and procedures designed to ensure a systematic means of selection for promotion in the competitive service (GS/GM-15 and below). It implements Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs), Part 335, and Federal Personnel Manual (FPM) chapter 335. It is applicable to HQ DLA, all DLA field activities, and Federal activities serviced by a DLA Office of Civilian Personnel (OCP). It does not apply to matters covered by Article 13 of the Master Agreement between DLA and the DLA Council of American Federation of Government Employees Locals.

A. Personnel Actions Covered. The competitive procedures of this DLAR must be applied to the following actions:

1. Temporary Promotions of More than 120 Calendar Days. In determining when this 120-day time limit has been met, all noncompetitive details to higher graded positions or to positions with known promotion potential, and all temporary promotions that occurred within the 12 months before the effective date of the present temporary promotion must be counted.

2. Term promotions of between 2 and 4 years duration.

3. Details of more than 120 calendar days to higher grade positions or to positions with known promotion potential.

4. Training which is part of an authorized training agreement allowing an employee to qualify for a different occupational series, part of a promotion program, or required before an employee may be qualified for a position or considered for a promotion.

5. Reassignment or demotion to a position with more promotion potential (i.e., a position from which an incumbent may progress noncompetitively to a higher grade) than that of the highest grade previously held on a permanent basis. This does not apply to assignment actions taken in accordance with reduction-in-force regulations.

6. Transfer to a higher graded position (see subparagraph B11).

7. Reinstatement for more than 120 days to a permanent or temporary position at a higher grade than the highest grade previously held on a permanent basis. For this purpose, the grade of the position to which reinstated refers to the full performance level of the position.

B. Personnel Actions Not Covered. The competitive requirements of this DLAR do not apply to the following actions:

1. Promotion resulting from the upgrading of a position without significant change in the duties and responsibilities due to the issuance of a new classification standard or the correction of a prior classification error.

2. Position change resulting from the application of reduction-in-force procedures when the action is technically termed a promotion because pay fixing policy requires the employee to receive a rate of pay higher than received in the former position.

3. Career promotion of an employee without further competition when at an earlier stage the employee was selected from an Office of Personnel Management (OPM) certificate or under competitive promotion procedures for an assignment intended to prepare the employee for the position being filled. This includes any promotion up to and including the full performance level of the job series.

4. Promotion to the highest grade within a primary level field activity (PLFA) (or organization where employed, if the organization is smaller than but collocated with a PLFA) where at least 25 percent of the nonsupervisory positions in the series are graded. Selecting officials may not use this provision to select candidates from outside their own organizational unit.

5. Promotion of an employee whose position has been reconstituted because of either a planned management action or a gradual accretion of additional nonsupervisory duties and responsibilities, provided:

a. The employee will continue to perform the former position as well as the new duties assigned.

b. The addition of the new duties and responsibilities will not adversely affect the grade of another occupied position.

c. The additional duties and responsibilities do not change a former nonsupervisory position into a supervisory position.

d. The employee meets all other requirements for promotion to the position.

6. Career ladder promotion following noncompetitive conversion of participants in such programs as cooperative education or Federal Junior Fellowship.

7. Temporary promotion (or reinstatement to a position at a grade level higher than the highest grade previously held on a permanent basis) of 120 days or less.

8. Repromotion to a grade or intervening grade from which an employee was demoted without personal cause.

9. Repromotion to a grade which is no higher than the highest grade previously held on a permanent basis or to a position which offers a noncompetitive promotion to a position that is no higher than the specific full performance level of any position previously held on a permanent basis. This provision will not apply to an employee previously demoted or removed for cause.

10. Promotion of an employee not given proper consideration in a previous competitive promotion action, or in resolution or settlement of a grievance or Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint.

11. Transfer at the grade presently held on a permanent basis to a position at the same grade and with promotion potential that is no higher than that of the present position.

12. Selection of candidates for DLA Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Programs.

C. Evaluation and selection of Heads and Deputies of PLFAs. Procedures are set forth in DLAR 1404.14, Selection, Assignment, and Appointment of Heads and Deputies of DLA PLFAs, and Heads of HQ DLA Principal Staff Elements (PSEs).

D. Evaluation and selection of PLFA Civilian Personnel Officers, Deputy Civilian Personnel Officers, and Equal Employment Managers. When a vacancy occurs in any of these occupations, the servicing OCP will notify DLA-KS. The servicing OCP will

prepare and forward to DLA-KS a draft Job Opportunity Announcement (JOA) using the standard knowledges, skills, and abilities (KSAs) established for the position. After approval of the draft by DLA-KS, the vacancy will be advertised in the prescribed manner. DLA-KS will administer the rating/ranking process. Any exceptions to these procedures for these series must be approved in advance by DLA-K.

II. POLICY

A. All positions which are required to be filled competitively under the provisions of this DLAR must be advertised by a JOA. JOAs may pertain to more than one position, may advertise open continuous announcements, and may be used to establish registers from which covered vacancies may be filled over a period of time.

B. All selections for competitive position change must be based on job-related criteria.

C. Management may fill vacancies from a variety of sources and is free to select or not select any candidate referred for promotion or position change under the terms of this DLAR. It may leave the position vacant, reannounce the position, or abolish or reengineer the position.

D. Selection actions must be free of discrimination based on race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, marital status, political affiliation, nondisqualifying physical or mental handicap, or labor organization affiliation or nonaffiliation.

E. Any employee who has the authority to take, direct others to take, recommend, or approve any personnel action shall not appoint, employ, promote, advance, or advocate for appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement any relative as defined in FPM chapter 310. No employee shall take, or direct others to take, any prohibited personnel practice as set forth in Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 101(a).

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Area of Consideration. The organizational and/or geographical area stated in the JOA within which qualified candidates will be eligible for consideration for competitive position change.

B. Cut-off Score. A score combining all the measuring instruments being used in a rating plan to identify highly qualified candidates. Candidates

whose scores are below the cut-off score will not be referred for consideration.

C. Full Performance Level. The highest grade level for a specific position to which an employee who occupies the position may be promoted noncompetitively.

D. Highly Qualified Candidates. Candidates who, in addition to meeting the basic qualifications for a position, have additional specialized KSAs necessary for success in the position to be filled. Their total score (where rating and ranking is required) is at or above the cut-off score and their performance rating of record is at or above Fully Successful.

E. Job-Related Criteria. The specific KSAs determined through job analysis to be necessary for successful job performance.

F. Priority Consideration. Consideration given to certain categories of employees prior to the issuance of competitive promotion certificates.

G. Promotion Potential Position. A position filled at any grade below the full performance level.

H. Selecting Official. An individual delegated the authority to make the decision regarding the selection for placement into a position.

I. Selective Placement Factor. A KSA or other factor that is an essential addition to a basic qualification standard.

J. Subject Matter Expert (SME). A person who has knowledge and experience which has provided a familiarity with the duties, qualifications requirements, and responsibilities of a position.

K. Test. Oral, written, or performance demonstrations by promotion candidates which are scored and the total score then used as a selection factor.

L. Underrepresented Position. A position in an occupation or at a grade level in which the organization under the selecting official has not reached the applicable DLA EEO and/or Affirmative Employment Program goal(s).

IV. **SIGNIFICANT CHANGES**. Changes include the addition of several new methods for the referral of highly qualified candidates and greater PLFA flexibility in determining the number of highly qualified candidates to be referred for consideration. Other changes include new delegations of authority to

PLFAs to determine whether or not to interview highly qualified candidates, to set opening and closing dates for JOAs, and to determine final dates for receipt of applications. This revision contains major changes and should be reviewed in its entirety.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. HQ DLA

1. The Staff Director, Office of Civilian Personnel DLA (DLA-K) will provide broad policy guidance to PLFAs on merit promotion matters.

2. The Chief, Staffing, Labor, and Employee Relations Division, Office of Civilian Personnel (DLA-KS) will provide advice and assistance to PLFAs on promotion and related in-service placement matters.

3. Heads of HQ DLA principal staff elements (PSEs) will ensure that actions taken under this regulation are made on the basis of merit and fitness and comply with EEO policies and relevant career development programs.

B. PLFAs

1. Heads of DLA PLFAs will ensure that actions covered by this regulation are made on the basis of merit and fitness and comply with EEO policies.

2. Civilian Personnel Officers will coordinate, implement, supplement, and administer the DLA Merit Promotion Program for all serviced organizations and employees covered by this DLAR.

3. Equal Employment Managers (EEMs) will identify those positions and/or fields which are underrepresented, aid the Civilian Personnel Officer in identifying recruitment sources and in communicating job opportunity information to sources of minority and female candidates, advise line managers and supervisors in carrying out their EEO responsibilities, review completed promotion certificates for positions identified as underrepresented prior to commitment, and notify the appropriate OCP of promotion action complaints which might result in formal discrimination complaint actions.

C. Supervisors and Managers will familiarize themselves with and actively support the DLA Merit Promotion Program.

D. Employees will complete and forward the required application forms as specified within time limits.

E. The Commander, DLA Administrative Support Center (DASC) will implement this DLAR for HQ DLA.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. General Considerations. Certain considerations must be made before or during the merit promotion process.

1. Mandatory Placement Actions. If an individual in any of the categories below is available and qualified when a vacancy occurs, that individual must be given appropriate placement entitlement.

a. Persons with statutory, regulatory, or administrative reemployment or restoration rights. These include employees returning from Military Service, employees returning from overseas assignments under the terms of a return agreement, or persons whose names appear on a Reemployment Priority List.

b. Placement actions required in connection with reduction-in-force.

c. Placement, reassignment, or promotion that is directed by OPM, the Merit Systems Protection Board, or other authority to effect a corrective action resulting from an appeal, grievance, or EEO complaint decision, or to correct a violation of law or regulation.

d. Placement of employees entitled to mandatory placement under provisions of the DoD Priority Placement Program.

e. Placement of qualified recovered disability annuitants and former employees receiving Workers Compensation.

2. Priority Consideration for Employees Receiving Grade or Pay Retention. Before making selections under competitive promotion procedures, activities will provide priority consideration to their current employees who are receiving grade or pay retention because they were involuntarily placed in lower grade positions for reasons such as reduction-in-force, correction of classification error, return from overseas, or declination of functional transfer. Such employees must be in the area of consideration for the position. If these employees are qualified and interested, priority consideration must be extended for positions at or below the grade from which demoted and in the pay group which covered the employee prior to placement in the lower grade position. Priority consideration will not extend to positions which offer known promotion potential to a grade above that from which demoted. Priority

consideration will cease when the employee is no longer entitled to receive grade or pay retention benefits. Declination of an offer at an intervening grade will terminate the employee's entitlement to repromotion at that grade level, but the employee will continue to receive priority consideration for higher grades up to and including that from which downgraded unless further declinations occur. Employees entitled to priority consideration will have their names and qualifications statements referred to the selecting supervisor before a promotion certificate or other listing is submitted. The selecting official is not required to interview or select employees referred under these provisions.

3. Priority Consideration for Employees in Other Categories. Employees for whom priority consideration is awarded as part of the disposition of an EEO complaint and employees denied proper promotion consideration because of an error or promotion program violation are also entitled to priority consideration. The conditions of referral described in the paragraph above will apply. Unless otherwise dictated by settlement agreement, declination of a valid job offer within the commuting area by these employees will result in termination of entitlement to priority consideration.

B. Areas of Consideration

1. Activities should set areas of consideration wide enough to obtain a sufficient number of well-qualified candidates. Areas wider than those shown below may be used when considered appropriate. However, the following minimum areas of consideration must be used when announcing a position under competitive promotion procedures:

For permanent GM/GS-15 positions:	DoD-wide
For permanent positions at GS-14 and GM-13/14:	DLA-wide
For permanent positions GS-7 through GS-13, Trainees at GS-5/7, Upward Mobility Positions, and all Wage Supervisor (WS) positions:	PLFA-wide
For other permanent positions at GS-3 through GS-6 and all Wage Grade (WG) and Wage Leader (WL) positions	Units within PLFA

2. Any area of consideration narrower than the above may not be used without prior approval of DLA-K.

3. For permanent positions at GM/GS-14 and below (and all WG/WL/WS positions) where

minorities and/or women are underrepresented at PLFAs, and the above minimum areas of consideration are not likely to include candidates from the underrepresented groups, activities must expand the area of consideration to whatever area is likely to attract highly qualified candidates from the underrepresented groups.

4. The area of consideration for a temporary promotion for more than 120 calendar days will be the same as for permanent promotion if it is announced that the promotion may later be converted to permanent without further competition.

5. The full performance level of a position will be used when applying the grade level criteria above to select a minimum area of consideration.

C. JOAs

1. A JOA must be used to solicit candidates whenever a position is likely to be filled by competitive procedures, unless a register already exists for that type and level position. JOAs must be used to establish registers from which successive vacancies may be filled over a period of time.

2. JOAs will include the minimum information outlined in enclosure 1.

3. PLFAs will set policy for the determination of the length of time a JOA will be open for receipt of applications.

4. Although JOAs for a specific vacancy are generally used for only one position, any number of additional like positions may be filled from the same announcement if the promotion certificate is issued within 6 months after the closing date of the JOA. This provision may not be used to provide a list of candidates for a competitive temporary promotion unless the JOA being considered was used to advertise a temporary promotion of equal or greater duration.

5. For positions for which there is a continuing need, JOAs will be announced in one of the following ways:

a. An open continuous basis, so that interested applicants within the area of consideration may apply at any time prior to cancellation of the JOA.

b. An established promotion register basis, so that interested applicants may apply only during the limited periods indicated. A promotion register will be used for a period up to 2 years, provided the JOA is reopened at least every 6 months to allow for the submission of applications from other interested candidates and the updating of applications pre-

viously filed. If the JOA is not reopened, the promotion register may not be used for more than 6 months after the closing date of the announcement.

D. Determining Basic Eligibility

1. Applicants must meet basic eligibility requirements such as time-in-grade, time after competitive appointment, and qualifications requirements by the closing/cut-off date of the JOA.

2. Candidates who have a current summary performance rating of Minimally Acceptable or Unacceptable will not be referred for promotion consideration. They will be notified that they are ineligible for further consideration. Candidates who fail to submit a performance rating will be assigned a presumptive rating of Fully Successful.

3. Activities will establish local policy regarding the acceptance of applications and amendments/additions. See enclosure 2.

E. Determining Basic Qualifications

1. Candidate evaluation will be based upon a review of an SF 171, Application for Federal Employment, or appropriate locally developed substitute document. Official Personnel Folders may be used only to corroborate information provided by the applicants.

2. Under certain circumstances, qualification standards may be modified. See enclosure 1.

F. Evaluation of Candidates

1. A written rating plan must be developed for each position (or group of positions) which will be filled through competitive promotion procedures, regardless of which referral method is used. The rating plan will describe:

a. The KSAs identified through job analysis as necessary for successful job performance and the degree to which each is needed.

b. The measurement methods to be used.

c. The cut-off score which is used to determine which candidates are referred.

2. Candidates will be rated by personnel specialists, by one or more SME(s) approved by the OCP, or by a rating panel.

3. No employee will serve on a rating or interview panel when one of the candidates is a relative as defined in FPM chapter 310.

4. If an Agency-developed rating plan exists for the position (same title, series, and grade), it must

be reviewed to determine its job relatedness to the subject vacancy:

a. If the Agency rating plan appropriately addresses all the major elements of the vacancy, it must be used to evaluate the applicants.

b. If the Agency rating plan does not appropriately address the major job elements of the vacancy, it may be modified or a different rating plan may be developed. The new or modified rating plan must be forwarded to the DLA Civilian Personnel Service Support Office (DCPSO) located in Columbus, OH, upon completion for consideration as an addition to the DLA rating plans library.

5. If no Agency-developed rating plan exists for the position, a new plan must be developed. A copy of it must be forwarded to DCPSO upon completion.

G. Determining the Highly Qualified. Only candidates determined to be highly qualified will be referred for promotion consideration. Enclosures 3 through 6 detail referral methods for determining the highly qualified.

H. Preparing the Promotion Certificate

1. Each PLFA must establish a policy concerning the number of candidates to be referred to the selecting official for selection consideration. See enclosure 2.

2. When a vacancy is advertised for filling at more than one grade level, it must be treated as though it were more than one vacancy. The selecting official should be provided a promotion certificate for each advertised grade level.

3. The next available highly qualified candidate may be referred for each:

a. Referred candidate who declines further consideration.

b. Additional vacancy.

c. Applicant who is found to be unsuitable or who is disqualified.

4. Promotion candidates will be referred to the selecting official in alphabetical order so their scores, where used, will not be divulged.

I. Interviews

1. Each PLFA must develop policies relating to whether the selecting official may interview some, all, or none of the candidates referred to him/her for consideration. See enclosure 2.

2. Selecting officials may not administer any type of test or formally scored questions to arrive at an in-

terview score and/or use that test or interview score as a primary basis for selection.

J. Candidate Selection

1. Any promotion candidate referred may be selected based on job-related criteria.

2. Panels will not be used to select candidates for promotion except individuals for career intern development programs or when it is impractical to delegate to any one official the authority to select. However, panels may be convened to interview and recommend candidates as long as the selecting supervisor remains responsible for making his/her own selection.

3. Written reasons for selection will be required from selecting officials whenever a position is under-represented for a particular group, one or more members of that group are referred, and a nonunder-represented candidate is selected. (See DLAR 1446.1, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program, and the DLA Affirmative Action Program Plan.)

K. Release of Employees

1. Employees selected for competitive promotion in accordance with this DLAR will be released promptly, normally on the beginning of the second pay period following the selection. In unusual cases, the release may be extended by mutual consent of the gaining and losing supervisors to a maximum of 30 calendar days following the date of request for release. Release may be extended beyond the 30-day time limit only with the consent of the employee involved.

2. A losing supervisor will not condition a release upon the ability to obtain a replacement employee or attempt to restrict employees from accepting promotions. Losing supervisors must release employees receiving competitive reassignments or changes to lower grade within 30 calendar days after the date of request for release.

L. Effective Dates of Promotions. No employee will be promoted with an effective date earlier than the completion of all required substantive reviews for appropriateness of the action and signature (on the SF 52, Request for Personnel Action) by the last official delegated authority to approve the action.

M. Records Maintenance and Disclosure

1. The OCP will maintain a merit promotion record for each competitive action accomplished in accord-

ance with this DLAR. The record must allow reconstruction of the action and will contain, as a minimum, copies of the rating plan used, the applications of all applicants, copies of the JOA and position description, all rating and ranking sheets, documentation of any selection(s), applicant flow data by race and sex, and information regarding underrepresentation of the position, including the numbers of underrepresented candidates referred for consideration. These records will be maintained for 2 years or until an OPM evaluation (whichever comes first). In cases involving discrimination complaints, the records must be retained for 4 years after final administrative action on the case. In cases involving Agency grievances, the records must be retained for 3 years after final administrative action on the case.

2. Candidates and their representatives are entitled to be shown or told the following information:

- a. Whether or not they were found to be qualified.
- b. Whether or not they were in a group from which the selection was made.
- c. Who was selected.
- d. Their own supervisory performance rating.
- e. Their own ratings (scores on the evaluation factors, if such scores were used).

3. A candidate who has filed a formal complaint or grievance, and/or his/her representative is entitled to have access to some of the information regarding candidate selection. The names and qualifications of unsuccessful candidates will not be disclosed. However, the following information may be released:

BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTOR

6 Encl

1. Information Which Must be Included in JOAs
2. Requirements for Local Supplementation to DLAR 1404.4
3. Job Analysis Procedures
4. Job Specific Rating Procedure
5. Alternative Referral Methods
6. Generic Crediting Plans

DISTRIBUTION
0 (CPOs)

COORDINATION: DLA-LR, DLA-LP

a. For successful candidates, their name(s) and qualifications. This includes current and past grades, series, title, and job description(s), awards and training that helped qualify the candidate(s), membership in professional organizations, education level, and numerical ratings assigned during the rating process. All other personal information on the successful candidate(s) will be withheld from the complainant pursuant to Exemption 6 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6)).

b. For unsuccessful candidates, the current and past grades, series, titles, job descriptions, and numerical ratings assigned during the rating process. Their names, social security numbers, and other personal information will be withheld from the complainant pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6). (NOTE: Do not deny the complainant access to his or her own application. However, verify the identity of the complainant prior to granting access to the personal data.)

4. The following information will not be released pursuant to Exemption 2 of the FOIA (5 U.S.C. 552(b)(2)):

a. Locally developed or DLA developed KSA rating plans.

b. Internal Qualification Guides which supplement OPM Handbook X-118C, Job Qualification System for trades and labor occupations, or locally developed crediting plans which copy or reference these guides.



GARY C. TUCKER
Colonel, USA
Staff Director, Administration

INFORMATION WHICH MUST BE INCLUDED IN JOAs

The following information is to be included in JOAs:

- A. JOA number.
- B. Title, series, grade, pay plan, and location(s) of position(s).
- C. Promotion potential (if any).
- D. Area of consideration.
- E. Opening and closing dates.
- F. Description of duties.
- G. Minimum qualification requirements established or approved by OPM.
- H. A description of any modification of established qualifications requirements.
- I. The knowledges, skills, and abilities determined through the process of job analysis to be essential to successful performance in the job.
- J. Any selective placement factors.
- K. Conditions of employment, such as tour of duty, temporary duty (TDY) travel, driver's license, financial statement filing requirement, and security requirements.
- L. A statement that applications will be accepted from veterans readjustment authority (VRA) eligibles and 30 percent or more disabled veterans.
- M. Referral methods and criteria to be used to determine the Highly Qualified candidates.
- N. The statement: "The Defense Logistics Agency is an equal employment opportunity employer."
- O. A statement regarding the requirement to serve a probationary period for supervisory/managerial positions.
- P. Statement that basic eligibility requirements such as time-in-grade, minimum qualifications, and other regulatory requirements must be met by the closing date (or the closing/cut-off date of the register, if one is used).
- Q. Length of temporary promotion or detail (if appropriate).
- R. How and where to apply, including any special forms required.
- S. Statement concerning PCS payment/nonpayment entitlement.
- T. Statement as to whether the position is a drug testing designated position.
- U. Statement as to whether the position is subject to mobility or rotation.

REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL SUPPLEMENTATION TO DLAR 1404.4

When implementing this DLAR locally, PLFAs must establish written policy for the following:

A. Dates until which applications will be accepted, whether personally or by mail.

B. Dates until which additions/changes to applications may be accepted.

C. Number of candidates to be referred for consideration.

D. Circumstances under which all, some, or none of the candidates referred will be interviewed by the selecting official.

E. Circumstances, if any, under which interview panels may recommend a selection to a selecting official.

F. Circumstances, if any, under which a selecting official may further interview candidates if an interview panel was used.

G. Amount of consideration a selecting official must give to candidates interviewed by an interview panel but not recommended for selection.

JOB ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The conduct of a proper job analysis is an integral part of the merit promotion process. Outlined in this enclosure is DLA's approach to the conduct of job analysis. The OCPs should use SMEs to the extent deemed necessary.

A. Experience should be evaluated in terms of the applicants' possession of relevant KSAs. Before their deliberations, the SME(s) should become acquainted with the position under review by reading the following:

1. Position Description.
2. OPM Handbook X-118 Qualification Standards for the position vacancy.
3. Position Classification Standards.
4. Other occupational information.

B. Using the position description and personal knowledge of the position requirements, the SME(s) should identify the major job functions for the position. These functional statements should represent the major, significant requirements of the position. The functional statement displays the following features:

1. An observable unit of work made up of an aggregate of common tasks, functions or work operations.
2. Distinguishable from other functions.
3. Has purpose, goal orientation, and is mission-related.
4. Anyone assigned to the position must perform the function. It is a good idea to begin the major job functional statement with an action verb, such as "routes, examines, compiles, and prepares." This grammatical construction is not absolutely necessary to have a good functional statement, but its use puts the functional statement in its proper frame of reference, specifically, to an observable output.

C. After the major job functions have been identified, the SME(s) should identify the KSAs that a candidate would need to successfully perform the major job functions. The following methods should be employed to identify the KSA which will be used in rating and ranking candidates:

1. Frame the KSA statement.
 - a. The KSA statement should begin with:
 - (1) "Knowledge of . . ."
 - (2) "Skill in (or at) . . ."
 - (3) "Ability to . . ."

b. The KSA statement should identify one simple, readily identifiable characteristic.

c. Qualifiers such as "thorough knowledge," "basic knowledge," "considerable skill," "familiarity with," and "demonstrated ability" are unnecessary and should not be used.

d. The KSA statement should not include words indicating a level of performance, such as "efficient, sound, or good." Decisions about the appropriateness and measurability of level of performance will be made later in the process.

2. Develop a laundry list of KSA(s). Approximately 20 KSA statements normally capture the most relevant aspects of the job. After the listing of these KSA(s), each KSA should be linked to one or more of the major job functions. The SME(s) must identify which KSA(s) is/are needed to perform each of the major job functions.

3. Review the KSA statements to detect duplication or whether some KSAs are prerequisites of other KSAs. For example, if the "ability to follow written instructions" and the "ability to interpret regulatory material" statements are identified in the KSA listing, the first ability is a prerequisite for the second ability, therefore, the first ability can be combined into the second. Combining duplicate KSAs or prerequisite KSAs will decrease the total list by one-half to two-thirds.

4. Rank the remaining KSAs from most important to least important to determine which KSAs are essential for the candidates to bring to the position, thus enabling the candidate to perform successfully. If a KSA can be learned on the job within the first 90 days, that KSA should receive a least important rating. Normally, the ranking of KSAs will result in a listing of 7 to 10 essential KSAs.

5. Determine the final listing of KSAs by identifying the specific KSAs which are measurable. A KSA is not measurable if:

- a. Differences in possession above a minimum level are not related to job performance.
- b. The KSA possession exists to the same extent among all potential candidates.
- c. The KSA is job-related, but the differences in possession above the minimum level would be something that few candidates would possess.

d. The KSA is clearly job-related, but specific training will be provided within 90 days to increase the level of possession of the KSA.

6. Define each KSA. A KSA definition allows the SME(s) to state clearly the meaning of the KSA so potential candidates will have a better understanding of the factors which will be used in rating and ranking candidates. A KSA statement by itself does not address its relationship to the vacant position. For example, the "ability to communicate in writing" statement applies to several positions from secretary to Deputy Commander. Using the following format, the SME(s) should define the KSA for a given position:

() must be able to ()
Position Title Action

() in order to ()
How or Method Purpose

under ()
What constraints or guidelines

As an example, the KSA "ability to communicate in writing" for a secretary position can be defined as follows:

The secretary (position title) must be able to communicate (action) in writing (how or method) to prepare general correspondence (purpose) in accordance with office procedures (guidelines).

D. Each KSA which has been defined must be further analyzed to determine the benchmarks for the rating and ranking plan. The SME(s) will identify experience examples, i.e., task performance which would demonstrate a candidate's possession of the KSA. At least three levels should be identified: Credit Level 4 (Superior), Credit Level 3 (Good), Credit Level 2 (Satisfactory). If possible, a Credit Level 1 (Acceptable) may also be identified. Superior level task examples should represent demonstration of a KSA at a level equal to that expected for highly acceptable performance of each duty linked with the KSA. The acceptable level may be no lower than the requirements in OPM Handbook X-118, Qualification Standards. The following problems should be avoided in constructing the benchmarks for the rating and ranking plan:

1. Task examples not related to performance of the vacant position.
2. Use of job titles in the benchmarks.
3. Requiring performance in a specific organizational environment/setting.

4. Use of performance and degree of supervision adjectives such as "efficient, sound, and consistent" and "close, independent or general".

E. The tasks provided by the SME(s) must be combined into composite task statements to derive general level definitions for each KSA at 3 or 4 Credit Levels. The general level definition progression may be defined by the common action, the object, the purpose, and/or the guidelines of the composite task statements at each level.

1. For example, progression through common action for the "ability to use regulatory material" could result in the following:

- Superior Level: Interprets regulatory material.
- Good Level: Researches regulatory material.
- Satisfactory Level: Applies regulatory material.
- Acceptable Level: Recognizes regulatory material.

2. Progression through object for the "ability to communicate in writing" could result in the following:

- Superior Level: Writes technical reports.
- Good Level: Writes critiques.
- Satisfactory Level: Writes letters.
- Acceptable Level: Writes internal communications.

3. Progression through purpose for the "ability to schedule work" could result in the following:

- Superior Level: Schedules work to accomplish Agency mission.
- Good Level: Schedules work to accomplish project goals.
- Satisfactory Level: Schedules work to accomplish unit objectives.
- Acceptable Level: Schedules work to accomplish own work objectives.

4. Progression through guidelines for "ability to plan, organize, and schedule work" could result in the following:

- Superior Level: Processes actions using general Agency policy.
- Good Level: Processes actions using implementing guidelines.
- Satisfactory Level: Processes actions using established local precedent.
- Acceptable Level: Processes actions using step-by-step procedural instructions.

The progression of the general level definition could be any one of the above or any combination of common action, object, purpose, or guidelines depending upon the type of progression indicated in the benchmark composite task statements. The following is a complete example of the development of general level definitions from benchmark composite task statements:

Example: Composite Task Statement for "Ability to Comprehend and Apply Written Procedures"

Superior Level: Interprets program requests; interprets flowcharts for programming; comprehends computer file documentation; interprets memory dumps.

Good Level: Finds and uses coding instructions, researches and uses accounting instructions; locates and uses documentation instructions.

Satisfactory Level: Completes a computer run request; codes from a flowchart; applies program documentation guidelines; corrects program error listing.

Acceptable Level: Codes for programs; follows production schedules; follows written procedures with no interpretation required.

From these composite task statements, the following general level definitions would be developed and combined with the task statements to form a complete set of benchmarks for the "ability to comprehend and apply written instructions":

Superior Level: Researches needed material and interprets written instructions (e.g., interprets program requests; interprets flow charts for programming; comprehends computer file documentation; interprets memory dumps).

Good Level: Researches and comprehends standards not requiring interpretation (e.g., finds and uses coding instructions, researches and uses accounting instructions; locates and uses documentation instructions).

Satisfactory Level: Applies step-by-step procedures (e.g., completes computer run requests; codes from a flowchart; applies program documentation guidelines; corrects computer error listing).

Acceptable Level: Follows specific instructions (e.g., codes for programs; follows production schedules; follows written procedures with no interpretation required).

Note that this procedure is intended to define levels of possession of the KSA that are indicative of levels of performance on the job. Therefore, avoid using tasks or level descriptions for superior or satisfactory which are indicative of a grade level higher than the job for which you are recruiting. Avoid using tasks or level definitions that would occur below the qualifying experience required in defining the acceptable level.

F. Determine the relative worth of KSA(s), i.e., how many points are each KSA worth out of the total points assigned to experience as a rating factor. The total worth of a particular KSA will be divided into increments such that Credit Level 4 = the total worth, Credit Level 3 = 75 percent of the total worth, Credit Level 2 = 50 percent of the total worth, and Credit Level 1 = 25 percent of the total worth. The weight given each KSA will be fully documented.

G. Each step of the KSA benchmark will be fully documented and submitted to DCPSO-S for review and consideration as a DLA Standard Rating and Ranking Benchmark.

JOB SPECIFIC RATING PROCEDURE

This enclosure outlines a formal referral method used by this Agency to rate candidates for merit promotion.

A. Evaluation procedures to be followed and measuring information to be used will be based solely on job-related criteria.

B. KSAs and KSA benchmarks must have been developed in a manner consistent with the Uniform Guidelines and/or enclosure 3.

C. As a minimum, the factors which must be considered in the development of rating plans are:

1. Quality of Experience
2. Performance Rating
3. Education, Training, and Self Development
4. Awards

Additional factors considered relevant and essential to the ranking process, such as required tests or group interviews may also be included at the discretion of the PLFA.

D. Specific point values will be assigned to each of the required factors within the following ranges:

1. Quality of Experience, 50-70
2. Performance Rating, 15-30
3. Education, Training, and Self-Development, 5-30
4. Awards, 5-15

For positions which provide for subsequent promotion based on completion of a formal training program, the ranges for experience are changed to 25-70 and for Education, Training, and Self-Development to 5-50.

E. The point value of each applicant's performance rating (DLA Form 46, Performance Rating, or its equivalent for non-DLA candidates) will equal the total scores achieved on each relevant critical element (Exceptional = 3 points, Highly Successful = 2 points, and Fully Successful = 1 point) multiplied

by the total point value assigned to supervisory ratings as a ranking factor and then divided by the score which would have been achieved had all of the critical elements been rated Exceptional.

(Thus, the value of a rating with 5 relevant critical elements--3 of which are rated Highly Successful and 2 of which are rated Fully Successful--in a promotion action in which performance ratings are assigned a weight of 30 points would be:

$$\frac{(2+2+2+1+1)(30)}{15} \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{240}{15} \quad \text{or} \quad 16 \text{ points.}$$

All candidates must be afforded an opportunity to submit a DLA Form 46 or a comparable rating form from another agency, but, if one is not available for a particular candidate, that candidate will be assigned a presumptive rating of fully successful. Applicants with less than fully successful ratings will not be referred for promotion consideration. See paragraph VID2 of this DLAR for more information on the use of performance ratings.

F. Education, Training, and Self-Development which is determined to be relevant and indicative of likely possession of one or more of the KSAs identified for the position being filled should be credited at one of five levels: Level 1 = full credit (i.e., 100 percent of the weight assigned to this element), Level 2 = 75 percent credit, Level 3 = 50 percent credit, Level 4 = 25 percent credit, and Level 5 = 0 credit. Descriptors for each of these levels should be prepared for each rating plan developed to assure specific job-relatedness.

G. Awards should be evaluated in a manner like that used for education, training, and self-development, except that only three levels should be established: Level 1 = full credit, Level 2 = half credit, Level 3 = 0 credit.

ALTERNATIVE REFERRAL METHODS

I. Enclosure 3 outlines job analysis procedures to be used to develop relevant KSAs. Variations to the procedures in enclosure 3 may be used as long as they meet the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection procedures.

II. Either the job specific referral method described in enclosure 4 or any of the alternative referral methods described in this enclosure may be used to determine the highly qualified.

A. Additional alternative referral methods may be developed as long as they satisfy the requirements of the Uniform Guidelines.

B. Where alternative referral methods are developed, they must be sufficiently documented to allow for reconstruction of the ratings and/or points assigned.

C. When the referral method chosen by the OCP involves assigning points for quality of experience, performance rating, education or training, and awards, the range of points specified in enclosure 4 must be used.

III. Following are a group of alternative referral methods which may be used in lieu of the procedure described in enclosure 4:

A. Method 1 - Ten or Fewer Qualified Candidates

1. If 10 or fewer candidates qualify for a vacancy, or qualify at a given grade level if the position was advertised at more than one grade level, an abbreviated procedure for determining the highly qualified may be used. Under this procedure, PLFAs may use whatever job-related criteria they consider appropriate to distinguish well-qualified candidates from those who meet only minimum qualifications requirements. Only those candidates determined to be well-qualified may be referred for consideration. Ratings do not have to be assigned, and an elaborate or structured evaluation process is not required. Such factors as length of experience may not be used to distinguish well-qualified candidates from those who are minimally qualified. Candidates being referred must possess a current annual performance rating of at least Fully Successful. (See paragraph VID2 of this DLAR for further information regarding performance ratings.)

2. This provision may also be used in situations where positions are advertised at more than one geographic location and more than 10 candidates meet the requirements described in subparagraph A1 above, but no more than 10 of the applicants qualify for any one geographic location.

B. Method 2 - Use of Generic Crediting Plans

1. This method uses generic crediting plans, one for GS/GM positions and one for wage grade positions, instead of the job specific referral method described in enclosure 4.

2. Examples of Generic Crediting Plans are attached as enclosure 6.

C. Method 3 - Referral of All Candidates With an Annual Summary Rating of At Least "Fully Successful" and a Rating of at Least "3" on a 4-Point Scale on Two or More Principal KSAs

1. Under this procedure, applicants who have annual summary ratings of at least "Fully Successful" and who have experience and training which affords them a rating of at least 3 points (on a 4-point scale) on two or more principal KSAs from the rating plan developed for the vacancy will be considered to be highly qualified and will be referred for consideration.

2. The selection of the principal KSAs will be made by the SME and/or the servicing staffing specialist.

D. Method 4 - Select One Benchmark for Each KSA and Assign Scores Relative to that Benchmark

1. Evaluation of experience, education, awards, and supervisory rating will be conducted as described in enclosure 4, except that the evaluation of experience will be performed based on applicants' scores on one benchmark for each KSA.

2. Each KSA will have only one benchmark described instead of the three benchmarks for each KSA normally used in the procedure described in enclosure 4.

3. The single benchmark for a KSA will describe appropriate experience for well-qualified candidates.

4. Candidates will be rated at, above, or below the level of experience described in the benchmark.

5. Candidates rated above the benchmark will be assigned 4 points (on a 4-point scale), those rated at the benchmark will receive 3 points, and those below the benchmark will receive 2 points or less.

6. Scoring for education and training, performance rating, and awards will be accomplished as described in enclosure 4.

E. Method 5 - Use of Assessment Center Techniques

1. When a job analysis identifies skills that are difficult to evaluate from a review of experience (e.g., oral and written communication, leadership, interpersonal skills, problem analysis, judgment and decision making, flexibility, etc.), an assessment center may be worth considering. Typically, supervisory and managerial positions are among those requiring these kinds of skills.

2. Under the assessment center concept, candidates participate in a series of job simulations and exercises which are designed to elicit behaviors which are relevant to the skills being measured. Concern about the type of experience a person has had which should have provided him/her with the appropriate KSAs gives way to an emphasis on the degree to which the candidate, through his/her behaviors in the exercises, demonstrates possession of the requisite skills.

3. Assessors are required to have sufficient training in assessment center techniques to enable them to observe, record, and evaluate relevant candidate behavior in a variety of exercise settings. The specific training requirements depend on the assessor's past experience with assessment centers and the nature of the particular assessment center being administered.

4. Job simulations and exercises take on a variety of forms, depending on the specific skills being measured and the nature of the jobs being filled. There are both individual and group exercises, and both written and oral formats. Some examples of the kinds of exercises employed in assessment centers are: group discussions (with either assigned or unassigned roles), inbaskets, subordinate counseling sessions, writing memos, and problem analyses requiring written reports.

5. When assessment center techniques are used, points may be assigned in either of two ways. In the first method, points for the assessment center exercise will be taken out of the total points awarded for experience. For example, instead of allowing 60 points for experience, the organization could alter the JOA to allow 40 points for experience and 20 points for the assessment center exercise. In the second method, points assigned for the assessment center exercise will be separate from the points assigned for experience, performance rating, training and self development, and awards. Assignment of points for all except the assessment center exercise will be in accordance with enclosure 4 of this regulation. That is, applicants may still earn up to 100 points for experience, performance rating, training and self development, and awards. Separate from those ratings, activities will determine the number of points to be assigned for the assessment center exercise. The highly qualified group will be assessed using assessment center techniques. Candidates scoring highest will be referred for consideration.

6. Organizations wishing to use an assessment center must coordinate their efforts in advance with DCPSO-S.

GENERIC CREDITING PLANS

An alternative to job specific crediting plans is the use of generic rating plans. This enclosure provides a sample generic plan for GS/GM positions and one for wage grade positions. The points for the rating elements are examples only. You may change the point

values within the limits specified in enclosure 4 to suit your needs. There must be some brief documentation of the reasons for the points assigned to facilitate reconstruction or review of the action.

GENERIC GS/GM RATING PLAN

EXPERIENCE

A Level

Experience in the same or substantially similar line of work (usually in the same title and series), at a level below that of the position to be filled, and possession of all of the knowledges, skills, and abilities identified for the position. 60 Points

B Level

Experience in a related field at a level below that of the position being filled and possession of all the knowledges, skills, and abilities identified for the position OR

Experience in the same or substantially similar line of work at a level below that of the position to be filled and possession of most of the knowledges, skills, and abilities identified for the position OR

Education that is completely qualifying for the position. 40 Points

C Level

Other qualifying experience or combination of experience and education. 20 Points

Performance Rating

Current Exceptional rating - 24 Points

Current Highly Successful rating - 18 Points

Current Fully Successful rating - 12 Points

Education

Only education which was not used to qualify the applicant under Experience above may be counted.

10 Points Maximum

	<u>GS-2/ GS-4</u>	<u>GS-5/ GS-8</u>	<u>GS-9 Level and above</u>
- Master's degree, or equivalent, in an appropriate field.	10	10	10
- Bachelor's degree, or equivalent, in an appropriate field.	10	10	7
- 2 or more years of appropriate education above the high school level.	10	10	5
- 1 or more years of appropriate education above the high school level.	10	5	3
- Related self-development course work or training above the high school level. (120 hours at GS-9 and above; 80 hours at GS-5/8; 40 hours at GS-2/4.)	5	3	3

Applicants are to be awarded points for the highest level they have achieved, not a combination of points.

Awards

Significant performance award (For example, Quality Step Increase, Sustained Superior Performance Award, PMRS Performance Award, or equivalent.)

Less than 3 years old - 6 Points

3 or more years old - 3 Points

GENERIC WAGE GRADE CREDITING PLAN

You may change the point values within the limits specified in enclosure 4 to suit your needs. There must be some brief documentation of the reasons for the points assigned to facilitate reconstruction or review of the action.

EXPERIENCE

A Level

Experience in the same or substantially similar line of work at a level equal to or immediately below that of the position to be filled, which demonstrates possession of all the knowledges, skills, and abilities identified for the position. 60 Points

B Level

Experience in the same line of work, a related field, or a substantially similar line of work, at a level equal to or immediately below that of the position, which demonstrates possession of some of the knowledges, skills, and abilities of the position. 40 Points

C Level

Other qualifying experience or combination of experience and education. 20 Points

Performance Rating

Current Exceptional rating - 24 Points
Current Highly Successful rating - 18 Points
Current Fully Successful rating - 12 Points

Education

Only training which was not used to qualify the applicant under Experience above may be counted.

Directly-related self-development coursework or training that is significantly above the norm for employees in the position to be filled. 10 Points

One or more self-development courses that have been determined to be somewhat relevant to the position being filled. 5 Points

Awards

Significant performance award (For example, Quality Step Increase, Sustained Superior Performance Award, or equivalent.)

Less than 3 years old - 6 Points
3 or more years old - 3 Points