

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Classification Appeal and FLSA Programs

Dallas Oversight Division
1100 Commerce Street, Room 4C22
Dallas, TX 75242-9968

Classification Appeal Decision
Under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [appellant's name]

Agency classification: Management Analyst
GS-343-9

Organization: Automation Section
Planning and Special Programs Branch
Examination Division
[specific] District
[specific] Region
Internal Revenue Service
Department of the Treasury
[geographic location]

OPM decision: Management Analyst
GS-343-9

OPM decision number: C-0343-09-02

/s/Bonnie J. Brandon

Bonnie J. Brandon
Classification Appeals Officer

August 21, 2000

Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits specified in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Decision sent to:

Appellant:

[appellant's name and address]

Agency:

Chief
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Introduction

The Dallas Oversight Division of the U.S. Office Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal from [the appellant] on March 14, 2000. [The appellant] is a Management Analyst, assigned to the Automation Section, Planning and Special Programs Branch, Examination Division, [specific] District, [specific] Region, Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Department of the Treasury, [geographic location]. [The appellant] believes that his position should be classified as Management and/or Program Analyst, GS-343-11. We have accepted and decided the appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code.

The appellant's position was previously evaluated by the IRS National Classification Center. In reaching our classification decision, we have carefully reviewed all information furnished by the appellant and his agency, including the official position description (Standard Position Description number 92167). The appellant's supervisor agrees that the official position description is accurate except for the appellant's computer security duties. The appellant believes the standard position description does not clearly describe his duties as the District's coordinator for the Automated Information Management System (AIMS). As part of the written documentation for his appeal, the appellant provided detailed information about his duties and responsibilities as the AIMS Coordinator. Although the computer security duties are not addressed in the position description, they were considered in this appeal decision along with other information obtained during telephone interviews with the appellant and his supervisor.

General issues

During the interview, the appellant indicated that he believes the work he performs is similar to that performed by positions classified at GS-11 in other district offices. By law, a classification appeal decision is based on comparing the appellant's current duties and responsibilities to OPM position classification standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Since comparison to the standards is the exclusive method for classifying positions, we cannot compare the appellant's current duties to other positions as a basis for deciding an appeal. Therefore, the appellant's perceptions regarding similarity of his position and others have no bearing on the proper classification of his duties and responsibilities.

Position information

The primary purpose of the appellant's position is to assist the Examination Division in maintaining the Automated Information Management System (AIMS) for the Southwest District. As the AIMS Coordinator, the appellant serves as an analyst and advisor on the productivity, efficiency, and accuracy of this management system. His duties include distributing various management tables and reports; analyzing the reports for consistency and validity, reconciling discrepancies, and making corrections; and monitoring adjustments for corrections of accounts on the closure listing report. The appellant analyzes the status of AIMS controls and procedures and provides assistance in resolving problems. He also recommends changes in procedures, for example, recommending that forms be changed as the result of a program change in AIMS and recommending a directive on how to do trend analysis. The appellant also serves as the Integrated Data Retrieval System (IDRS) security representative for the Examination Division.

The IDRS security duties include issuing passwords, adding or deleting users, updating user profiles, unlocking terminals, and reviewing security reports. The position description and other material of record furnish more information about the appellant's duties and responsibilities.

Series, title, and standard determination

The appellant is required to have knowledge of agency programs and activities, management principles and processes, and evaluative methods and techniques. The work requires skill in application of factfinding and investigative techniques, oral and written communications, and development of presentations and reports. Work of this nature is covered by the GS-343 Management and Program Analysis Series.

The appellant's work is primarily concerned with analyzing, evaluating, and improving the efficiency of internal administrative operations. Therefore, the standard prescribes the title of Management Analyst.

Grade determination

Nonsupervisory positions in the GS-343 series at grade GS-9 and above are evaluated by reference to the Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide. This guide utilizes the Factor Evaluation System (FES) which employs nine factors for evaluating the position. Under the FES, each factor level describes the minimum characteristics needed to receive credit for that level. Therefore, if a position fails to meet the criteria in a factor level description *in any significant aspect*, it must be credited at a lower level. Conversely, the position may exceed those criteria in some aspects and still not be credited at a higher level. The standard assigns specific points for each factor level. After all factors are evaluated, the total points are converted to grade levels based on the grade conversion table in the guide.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts that the worker must understand to do acceptable work and the nature and extent of the skills needed to apply that knowledge. To be used as a basis for selecting a level under this factor, a knowledge must be required and applied.

Positions at Level 1-6 require skill in applying analytical and evaluative techniques to the identification, consideration, and resolution of issues or problems of a procedural or factual nature. The issues or problems deal with readily observable conditions, written guidelines covering work methods and procedures, and information of a factual nature. Included at this level is knowledge of the theory and principles of management and organization, including administrative practices and procedures common to organizations.

In addition to the knowledge specified at the previous level, assignments at Level 1-7 require knowledge and skill in applying analytical and evaluative methods and techniques to issues or studies concerning the efficiency and effectiveness of programs. This level includes knowledge of pertinent laws, regulations, policies, and precedents that affect the use of program and related

support resources (people, money, or equipment) in the area studied. Projects and studies typically require knowledge of the major issues, program goals and objectives, work processes, and administrative operations of the organization.

Knowledge at Level 1-7 is used to plan, schedule, and conduct projects and studies to evaluate and recommend ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of work operations in a program or support setting. The assignments require knowledge and skill in adapting analytical techniques and evaluation criteria to the measurement and improvement of program effectiveness and/or organizational productivity. Knowledge is applied in developing new or modified work methods, organizational structures, records and files, management processes, staffing patterns, procedures for administering program services, guidelines and procedures, and automating work processes for the conduct of administrative support functions or program operations. Knowledge may also be applied in analyzing and making recommendations concerning the centralization or decentralization of operations.

The appellant must have a thorough knowledge of AIMS. He must also be familiar with security procedures, internal workflow and examining procedures, the IDRS, and the Examination Return Control System (ERCS) and how it interfaces with AIMS. The appellant applies this knowledge in the day-to-day examining operations in order to analyze and resolve problems and to recommend system or procedural improvements. The appellant does not apply this knowledge in developing new or modified work methods, organizational structures, staffing patterns, records, and files, or in making recommendations concerning the centralization or decentralization of operations as envisioned for positions at Level 1-7. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 1-6.

Factor 2, Supervisory controls

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or *indirect* controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee's responsibility, and the review of completed work. Controls are exercised by the supervisor in the way assignments are made, instructions are given to the employee, priorities and deadlines are set, and objectives and boundaries are defined. Responsibility of the employee depends upon the extent to which the employee is expected to develop the sequence and timing of various aspects of the work, to modify or recommend modification of instructions, and to participate in establishing priorities and defining objectives.

At Level 2-3, the supervisor assigns specific projects in terms of issues, organizations, functions, or work processes to be studied and sets deadlines for completing the work. The supervisor or higher-grade analyst provides assistance on controversial issues or on the application of qualitative or quantitative analytical methods for which precedent studies are not available.

The employee at Level 2-3 plans, coordinates, and carries out the successive steps in factfinding and analysis of issues necessary to complete each phase of assigned projects. Work problems are normally resolved by the employee without reference to the supervisor, in accordance with the body of accepted policies and precedents. Work is reviewed for conformance with overall requirements and contribution to the objectives. Findings and recommendations developed by the employee are reviewed prior to release, publication, or discussion with management officials.

At Level 2-4, the employee and supervisor develop a mutually acceptable plan. Within the parameters of the approved plan, the employee is responsible for planning and organizing the work, estimating costs, coordinating with staff and line management personnel, and conducting all phases of the project. This frequently involves the definitive interpretation of regulations and study procedures and the initial application of new methods. The employee informs the supervisor of potentially controversial findings, issues, or problems with widespread impact. Completed projects, evaluations, reports, or recommendations are reviewed by the supervisor for compatibility with organizational goals, guidelines, and effectiveness in achieving the intended objective. Completed work is also reviewed critically outside the employee's immediate office by staff and line management officials whose programs and employees would be affected by implementation of the recommendations.

The appellant works under the supervision of the manager of the Automation Section. He plans, coordinates, and carries out his assigned projects that consist primarily of analyzing and coordinating the use of AIMS within the [appellant's specific] District. Work problems are normally resolved by the appellant using accepted policies, procedures, and precedents. The appellant drafts various memoranda and reports that are submitted through the supervisor to the division chief. The supervisory controls for the appellant's position fully meet Level 2-3. The appellant's position does not meet Level 2-4 in that his work does not involve the definitive interpretation of regulations and study procedures and the initial application of new methods. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 2-3.

Factor 3, Guidelines

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them.

Guidelines at Level 3-3 consist of standard reference material, texts, and manuals covering the application of analytical methods, techniques, and the subjects involved. Analytical methods contained in the guidelines are not always directly applicable to specific work assignments. However, precedent studies of similar subjects are available for reference. The employee uses judgment in choosing, interpreting, or adapting available guidelines to specific issues or subjects studied. The employee analyzes the subject and the current guidelines and makes recommendations for changes.

Included at this level are work assignments in which the subject studied is covered by a wide variety of administrative regulations and procedural guidelines. In such circumstances the employee must use judgment in researching regulations and in determining the relationship between guidelines and organizational efficiency, program effectiveness, or employee productivity.

Guidelines at Level 3-4 consist of general administrative policies and management and organizational theories which require considerable adaptation and/or interpretation for application to issues and problems studied. At this level, administrative policies and precedent studies provide a basic outline of the results desired, but they do not go into detail as to the methods used to accomplish the project. Within the context of broad regulatory guidelines the

employee may refine or develop more specific guidelines such as implementing regulations or methods for the measurement and improvement of effectiveness and productivity in the administration of operating programs.

Similar to Level 3-3, the appellant's work involves systems for which detailed procedures and guidelines are highly developed and controlled by other organizational components. The researches the various guidelines to resolve problems. When the appellant is unable to resolve the problem, he refers it to another AIMS Coordinator or to the IRS national office. Level 3-4 is not met in that the appellant does not make considerable adaptations or interpretations of general administrative policies and management and organizational theories in his work. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 3-3.

Factor 4, Complexity

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods in the work performed; the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work.

The work at Level 4-3 principally involves dealing with problems and relationships of a procedural nature rather than the substance of work operations, issues, or other subjects studied. At this level, the employee analyzes the issues in the assignment, then selects and applies accepted analytical techniques to the resolution of procedural problems affecting the efficiency, effectiveness, or productivity of the organization and/or workers studied.

At Level 4-3, projects usually take place within an organization with related functions and objectives, although organization and work procedures differ from one assignment to the next. Findings and recommendations are based upon analysis of work observations, review of production records or similar documentation, research of precedent studies, and application of standard administrative guidelines.

The work at Level 4-4 involves gathering information, identifying and analyzing issues, and developing recommendations to resolve substantive problems of effectiveness and efficiency of work operations in a program or program support setting. This is in addition to improving conditions of a procedural nature which relate to the efficiency of organizations and workers described at the previous level. By way of contrast with Level 4-3, work at this level requires the application of qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques that frequently require modification to fit a wider range of variables.

Subjects and projects assigned at Level 4-4 usually consist of issues, problems, or concepts that are not always susceptible to direct observation and analysis (for example, projected missions and functions). Difficulty is encountered in measuring effectiveness and productivity due to variations in the nature of administrative processes studied. Information about the subject is often conflicting or incomplete, cannot readily be obtained by direct means, or is otherwise difficult to document.

Characteristic of Level 4-4 is originality in refining existing work methods and techniques for application to the analysis of specific issues or resolution of problems. For example, the employee may revise methods for collecting data on workload, adopt new measures of productivity, or develop new approaches to relate productivity measurements to a performance appraisal system.

The appellant's work involves procedural issues rather than the content of the examining work. The appellant does not apply qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques that frequently require modification. The projects for which he is responsible do not usually involve substantive problems of effectiveness and efficiency of work operations nor consist of issues, problems, or concepts that are not directly observable. The administrative processes studied are not varied, but highly defined. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 4-3.

Factor 5, Scope and effect

This factor covers the relationship between the nature of the work, i.e., the purpose, breadth, and depth of the assignment, and the effect of work products or services both within and outside the organization.

The purpose of the work at Level 5-3 is to plan and carry out projects to improve efficiency and productivity. Employees at this level identify, analyze, and make recommendations to resolve conventional problems and situations. Work may also involve developing detailed procedures and guidelines to supplement established administrative regulations or program guidance.

At Level 5-3, completed reports and recommendations influence decisions by managers concerning the internal administrative operations of the organizations and activities. The work may involve identifying problems, studying, analyzing and making recommendations concerning the efficiency and productivity of administrative operations in different components of an organization.

Work at Level 5-4 involves establishing criteria to measure and/or predict the attainment of program or organizational goals and objectives. Work at this level may also include developing related administrative regulations, such as those governing the allocation and distribution of personnel, supplies, equipment, and other resources, or promulgating program guidance for application across organizational lines or in varied geographic locations. Work contributes to the improvement of productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency in program operations and/or administrative support activities at different echelons and/or geographical locations within the organization. Work affects the plans, goals, and effectiveness of missions and programs at these various echelons or locations. Work may affect the nature of administrative work done in components of other agencies.

The appellant plans and carries out assignments to improve efficiency and productivity of the organization and to resolve conventional problems and situations. He may recommend local procedures and guidelines to supplement established administrative regulations or program guidance. He is not involved in establishing criteria to measure and/or predict the attainment of program or organizational goals and objectives. His work primarily supports operations in

Arizona and does not provide primary support to activities at different echelons or geographic locations or work in components of other agencies. Within the [appellant's] District, there are AIMS coordinators located in [two other states] that serve as the primary contact for the offices located in those states. The scope and effect of the appellant's work falls short of Level 5-4. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 5-3.

Factors 6 and 7, Personal contacts and Purpose of contacts

Personal contacts include face-to-face contacts and telephone dialogue with persons not in the supervisory chain. Levels described under this factor are based on what is required to make the initial contact, the difficulty of communicating with those contacted, and the setting in which the contact takes place.

Above the lowest level, points should be credited under this factor only for contacts which are essential for successful performance of the work and which have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the work performed.

Personal contacts made at Level 2 are with employees, supervisors, and managers of the same agency, but outside of the immediate office, or employees and representatives of private concerns in a moderately structured setting.

Personal contacts at Level 3 are with persons outside the agency, which may include consultants, contractors, or business executives in a moderately unstructured setting. This level may also include contacts with the head of the employing agency or program officials several managerial levels removed from the employee when such contacts occur on an ad hoc basis.

The appellant's contacts are with employees, supervisors, and managers within the agency. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 2.

The purpose of personal contacts ranges from factual exchanges of information to situations involving significant or controversial issues and differing viewpoints, goals, or objectives. The personal contacts that serve as the basis for the level selected for this factor must be the same as the contacts that are the basis for the level selected for Factor 6.

The purpose of contacts at Level c is to influence managers or other officials to accept and implement findings and recommendations on organizational improvement or program effectiveness. The employee may encounter resistance due to such issues as organizational conflict, competing objectives, or resource problems.

At Level d, the purpose of contacts is to justify or settle matters involving significant or controversial issues; for example, recommendations affecting major programs, dealing with substantial expenditures, or significantly changing the nature and scope of organizations.

The appellant's contacts are to obtain or provide information and instructions, advise, make recommendations, and resolve problems or errors in a routine operating environment. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level c.

Factor 8, Physical demands

This factor covers the requirements and physical demands placed on the employee by the work assignment. This includes physical characteristics and abilities (for example, specific agility and dexterity requirements) and the physical exertion involved in the work (for example, climbing, lifting, pushing, balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, or reaching).

At Level 8-1, the work is primarily sedentary, although some slight physical effort may be required.

At Level 8-2, assignments regularly involve long periods of standing, bending, and stooping to observe and study work operations in an industrial, storage, or comparable work area.

The appellant's work is primarily sedentary although it requires occasional lifting of boxes. It does not involve long periods of standing, bending, and stooping to observe and study work operations in an industrial, storage, or comparable work area. The position does not require walking over rough, uneven, or rocky surfaces or recurring lifting of moderately heavy items. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 8-1.

Factor 9, Work environment

This factor considers the risks and discomforts in the employee's physical surroundings or the nature of the work assigned and the safety regulations required. Although the use of safety precautions can practically eliminate a certain danger or discomfort, such situations typically place additional demands upon the employee in carrying out safety regulations and techniques.

At Level 9-1, work is typically performed in an adequately lighted and climate controlled office and may require occasional travel.

Assignments at Level 9-2 regularly require visits to manufacturing, storage, or other industrial areas, and involve moderate risks or discomforts. Protective clothing and gear and observance of safety precautions are required.

The appellant performs his work in an adequately lighted and climate controlled office setting that requires no special safety precautions, protective clothing, or gear. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 9-1.

Summary

Factor	Level	Points
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-6	950
2. Supervisory controls	2-3	275
3. Guidelines	3-3	275
4. Complexity	4-3	150
5. Scope and effect	5-3	150
6. and 7. Personal contacts and Purpose of contacts	2c	145
8. Physical demands	8-1	5
9. Work environment	9-1	5
Total points:		1955

The appellant's position is credited with 1955 total points. Therefore, in accordance with the grade conversion table of the guide, his position is properly graded at GS-9.

Decision

The appellant's position is properly classified as Management Analyst, GS-343-9.