

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Division for Human Capital Leadership & Merit System Accountability
Classification Appeals Program

Chicago Field Services Group
230 S. Dearborn Street, DPN-30-6
Chicago, IL 60604-1687

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

Appellant: [appellant]

Agency classification: Supply Technician
GS-2005-5

Organization: [section] Section
Installation Material Management
Center
Directorate of Logistics [unit]
U.S. Army Garrison
Department of the Army
[location]

OPM decision: Supply Technician
GS-2005-5

OPM decision number: C-2005-05-08

/s/ Robert D. Hendler

Robert D. Hendler
Classification and Pay Claims
Program Manager

8/16/2005

Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 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).

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Introduction

On December 9, 2004, the Chicago Field Services Group of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal from [appellant]. Her position is currently classified as Supply Technician, GS-2005-5, and is assigned to the [unit] Section, Installation Material Management Center (IMMC), Directorate of Logistics (DOL) [unit], U.S. Army Garrison, Department of the Army (DA), [location]. The appellant believes that her position should be classified as Supply Technician, GS-2005-6. We received the agency administrative report on January 27, 2005. We accepted and decided this appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

To help decide the appeal, we conducted a telephone audit with the appellant on April 7, 2005, and a telephone interview with her immediate supervisor, the [division] Officer (PBO), on April 20, 2005. In reaching our decision, we carefully considered the audit and interview findings and all information of record furnished by the appellant and the agency.

Background information

The appellant occupies position description (PD) #[#####], which the agency revised at the appellant's request in order to include her current duties, and classified it on August 19, 2004,. The immediate supervisor certified its the accuracy. The appellant continued to disagree with the PD's accuracy and the grade assigned. OPM accepted her classification appeal on December 9, 2004, based on evidence that she had made a reasonable attempt to obtain an accurate PD.

General issues

The appellant's appeal rationale relies on the description of work in other PD's because she believes she has taken over duties previously assigned and performed by the occupant of a higher-graded position.

By law, we must classify a position solely by comparing an appellant's current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Since the comparison to standards is the exclusive method for classifying positions, we cannot compare the appellant's position to others, which may or may not be classified properly, as a basis for deciding the appeal.

In classifying the new PD, the agency changed Factor 1 from Level 1-4 to Level 1-3, and Factor 2 from Level 2-2 to Level 2-3. In her appeal letter, the appellant questioned why Factor Level 1 was decreased if her new PD included additional duties which require more knowledge. While different duties may require more or different knowledge, they do not automatically require the application of higher level knowledge. As stated previously, there is no assurance that her previous position was evaluated properly. The change in the analysis of factors by her agency does not affect our independent analysis of her current duties and responsibilities as required in the classification appeal process.

A PD is the official record of the major duties and responsibilities assigned to a position by an official with the authority to assign work. A position is the duties and responsibilities that make up the work performed by an employee. Position classification appeal regulations permit OPM to investigate or audit a position and decide an appeal on the basis of the actual duties and responsibilities assigned by management and performed by the employee. An OPM appeal decision grades a real operating position, and not simply the PD. Therefore, this decision is based on the actual work assigned to and performed by the appellant.

The appellant discusses several duties that she performed two years ago. However, 5 U.S.C. 5112 indicates that we can consider only current duties and responsibilities in classifying positions. OPM guidelines and previous decisions show that in evaluating positions such as the appellant's, current duties are those that have occurred in about the past year. Therefore, we cannot consider duties performed over a year ago in deciding this appeal.

The appellant also discusses the large amount of work she performs. However, volume of work cannot be considered in determining the grade of a position (*The Classifier's Handbook*, chapter 5).

The appellant also makes various other statements about her agency and its evaluation of her position. Because our decision sets aside all previous agency decisions, the appellant's concerns regarding her agency's classification review process are not germane to this decision. In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision based on the proper classification of the position.

Position Information

The appellant still disagrees with the wording of several paragraphs in the new PD of record, e.g., the description of office automation duties. The PD states that the employee performs a wide range of standard clerical assignments. She believes that "standard" describes typical clerical duties such as word processing, electronic mail, and calendar software, not the use of more complex software involving supply databases and spreadsheet software such as Excel. The appellant also states that because her supervisor is new to the section she has served as the "unofficial" [division] officer (PBO) for the unit since the 3rd Brigade was deployed to Iraq in 2003.

The appellant works under the general supervision of the PBO whose position is classified as Logistics Manager, GS-346-11. Her supervisor is the official PBO who has full authority for overseeing the supply, inventory, and excess equipment programs. The PBO supervises 5 employees, including 1 Supervisory Logistics Manager, GS-346-9, 2 Supply Technicians, GS-2005-5 (1 of whom is the appellant), and 2 Supply Clerks, GS-2005-4.

The appellant is primarily responsible for maintaining hand receipts and related records, and reviewing requests for nonexpendable property. A hand receipt is a report that lists all organizational property that is in a specific unit. The commander of each unit is required to inventory the equipment and sign the report certifying its accuracy. The appellant maintains approximately 35 separate hand receipts which require her to perform a variety of supply transactions related to the requisition, receipt, lateral transfer, and turn-in of the organizational

property for each unit. She reviews and edits requests for the presence of proper stock number, line number, nomenclature, unit of issue, price, quantity, Accounting Requirement Code (ARC), Department of Defense Address Activity Code (DODAAC), and basis of issue.

The appellant reviews requests for nonexpendable property for each of the units she services. She provides recommendations to the PBO for redistribution of assets and maintains liaison with other property and procurement activities for the purpose of coordinating supply actions and obtaining information in connection with the status of supply actions. Her duties require familiarity with FEDLOG and local cataloging procedures for nonstandard items and property accounting procedures established by regulations and by the PBO. The appellant initiates follow-up action on overdue requests and posts information to document register and supporting document files. She detects and corrects errors from the monthly referral listing received from the automated system. The appellant processes all changes to accounts caused by issues, turn-ins, inventory adjustments, lateral transfers, reports of survey, statement of charges; and monitors excess equipment.

The appellant processes [unit]-Revised (SPBS-R) transactions by inputting the required requisition data as created by issue, turn-in, inventory adjustment, reports of survey, and statements of charges. She performs annual reconciliation of Continuing Balance System-Expanded (CBS-X) transactions. The appellant tracks requisition status and resolve discrepancies. She compiles and interprets information from logistics systems such as SPBS-R and other web-based logistics programs. She provides guidance on property accountability, but does not dispose of excess property. She only reports excess property through recurring reports such as the Vehicle Processing Report.

The appellant also prepares various other reports, tabulated material, memoranda, and other related documentation in either rough draft or final form involving the use of a personal computer. She uses databases or spreadsheet software to enter, revise, sort, or calculate and retrieve data for standard reports. The appellant transmits and receives documents and messages electronically using PCs or workstations. She types required items using correct grammar, spelling, and format. We find that the (PD) of record contains the major duties and responsibilities assigned to and performed by the appellant and we incorporate it by reference into our decision.

Title, series, and standard determination

The agency has placed the appellant's position in the Supply Clerical and Technician Series, GS-2005, and titled it, Supply Technician, which is the prescribed title for all such covered positions GS-5 and above. While the appellant agrees with the series and title determination, she states that her own PD was developed using other duty statements taken from the position classification standards (PCSs) for the Inventory Management Series, GS-2010, and the Logistics Management Series, GS-346, and the Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide.

The GS-2010 PCS includes positions that involve analytical work in managing, regulating, coordinating, or otherwise exercising control over supplies, equipment, or other material. The work requires knowledge of acquisition processes, automated records and control systems,

material substitution criteria, and storage, issue, and disposal processes which are not required of the appellant's position.

In contrast, the appellant's primary and paramount duties and responsibilities for maintaining hand receipts and related records, and reviewing requests for nonexpendable property, and the corresponding knowledge and skills required to perform them, match those described in the GS-2005 series. This series includes positions that supervise or perform clerical or technical supply support work necessary to ensure the effective operation of ongoing supply activities. The work requires knowledge of supply operations and program requirements and the ability to apply established supply policies, day-to-day servicing techniques, regulations, or procedures.

The GS-346 PCS covers positions concerned with directing, developing, or performing logistics management operations that involve planning, coordinating, or evaluating the logistical actions required to support a specified mission, weapons system, or other designated programs. This series is not appropriate because the appellant's work does not require a knowledge of agency program planning, funding, and management information systems; broad knowledge of the organization and functions of activities involved in providing logistical support; and ability to coordinate and evaluate the efforts of functional specialists to identify specific requirements and to develop and adjust plans and schedules for the actions needed to meet each requirement on time as described.

Finally, the appellant's duties require familiarity with one or more automated supply databases to enter, correct, and retrieve recurring reports and to structure and retrieve specialized reports as clearly described at Factor Level 1-3 of the GS-2005 PCS. Although the duties of the position require the application of automation systems skills, they do not require a level of proficiency for competitive keyboard skills as defined in the GS-326 PCS.

The directly applicable GS-2005 PCS will be used to determine the grade of the appellant's position.

Grade determination

The appellant agrees with the agency's determination for Factors 2, 6, 7, 8, and 9. After a careful review of the record, we concur. However, she contests the agency's crediting of Levels 1-3, 3-2, 4-2, and 5-2. Therefore, this decision will address those factors.

The GS-2005 PCS uses the Factor Evaluation System (FES). Under FES, each factor level description in a standard describes the minimum characteristics needed to receive credit for the described 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. Our evaluation with respect to the FES factors follows.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position

This factor measures the nature and extent of information an employee must understand in order to do the work, and the skills needed to apply that knowledge.

At Level 1-3, the work requires knowledge of standardized supply regulations, policies, procedures, or other instructions relating to the specific functions assigned. Most positions require familiarity with one or more automated supply data bases to enter, correct, and retrieve recurring reports and to structure and retrieve specialized reports. Employees use a sound working knowledge of the structure of the local supply organizations serviced. Employees use this knowledge and ability to perform a variety of standard clerical assignments and to resolve recurring problems.

Illustrative of property management work at Level 1-3 is maintaining perpetual inventory records (typically referred to as a “property book”) of nonexpendable property for the organization serviced. When property is declared excess in any location, employees verify accurate description and quantity available. They circulate notifications of excess property available for other serviced units, prepare transfer documents according to prescribed procedures or, where no need exists, complete declarations of excess property. They circulate reports of excess property submitted by other offices or agencies to identify those with potential for local use and, after the need for an item is approved by a local operating office, prepare requisitions for items to be transferred. When nonexpendable property is lost, damaged, or destroyed, employees prepare survey reports.

At Level 1-4, the highest level described in the GS-2005 PCS, the work requires a thorough knowledge of governing supply regulations, policies, procedures, and instructions applicable to the specific assignment. This knowledge is used by employees to conduct extensive and exhaustive searches for required information; reconstruct records for complex supply transactions; and/or provide supply operations support for activities involving specialized or unique supplies, equipment, and parts such as special purpose laboratory or test equipment, prototypes of technical equipment, parts and equipment requiring unusual degrees of protection in shipment and storage, or others that are unique to the organization’s mission or are seldom handled.

Illustrative of property management work at Level 1-4 is maintaining accurate accounting and reporting systems for non-expendable property and performing routine phases of property management. Employees review proposed purchases to ensure they are in accordance with fiscal year property plan, review justifications, and recommend actions for property requests not on the plan. They plan for and conduct limited segments of management studies on the utilization of property, and make informal recommendations based on data developed. They review records and demand data to determine if property has become obsolete or excess to the needs of the organization and/or excess to the overall requirements of the agency. Employees at this level offer recommendations to operating officials for utilization; and prepare reports and necessary documentation for transfer of property. They also locate surplus property, determine age and probable condition by checking records, contacting local vendors, physically inspecting records, and arranging for transfer of property that can be used. Employees work with a supply specialist in preparing procedures for annual inventories, participate in inventory process, conduct investigations to determine causes of inventory discrepancies by checking all property records,

e.g., purchase orders, surveys, transfers, and other available sources, and compile information necessary for consideration in survey actions relating to loss, damage, or destruction of Government-owned property.

Level 1-3 is met. The appellant maintains perpetual inventory records (the property book) of nonexpendable property for the organization serviced. She uses database or spreadsheet software to enter, revise, sort, and retrieve data for standard reports as described at Level 1-3. She processes the issue, turn-in, inventory adjustment, reports of survey, and statements of charges to ensure accuracy. In doing so, she must apply a practical knowledge of governing supply regulations, policies, procedures and instructions related to property accountability. She answers recurring inquiries from item managers, warehousing employees, and soldiers. This includes answering questions regarding the proper paperwork submission and assisting soldiers with the location of equipment. She searches property records for lost, missing, or stolen items, and solves routine problems such as informing soldiers to pick up their equipment from the warehouse and/or reassigning equipment to more appropriate areas. This compares closely with the knowledge required at Level 1-3 as discussed previously in this decision.

Level 1-4 is not met. The appellant's work does not require the thorough knowledge necessary to perform most of the types of duties described at Level 1-4. These duties are assigned to and performed by employees in higher graded positions in the organization.. Most of the incumbent's time is simply focused on property accountability, document control, and routine inventory management work. In maintaining an accurate accounting and reporting system for non-expendable property, the appellant performs a few routine phases of property management work similar to that described at Level 1-4. While the appellant determines if property has become excess, she is not required to apply the full range of knowledge of Level 1-4. For example, she does not locate surplus property and arrange for its disposition, nor does she does perform the other aspects of the illustration, such as reviewing proposed purchases to ensure they are in accordance with the fiscal year property plan, conducting management studies and making recommendations, working with inventory specialists in preparing procedures for annual inventories, or processing field requests for new items for inclusion in the agency supply system. Thus, her work does not require the full depth and breadth of knowledge intended at this level. In dealing with property management, the appellant's primary responsibility includes limited aspects of inventory management and reviewing requests for nonexpendable property which does not require or permit her to perform the type or level of analysis intended at this level. Because, Level 1-4 is not fully met, this factor must be evaluated at Level 1-3 (350 points).

Factor 3, Guidelines

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

At Level 3-2, procedures for doing the work have been established and a number of specific guidelines are available in the form of supply regulations, policies, and procedures. The number and similarity of guidelines and work situations require the employee to use some judgment in locating and selecting the most appropriate guidelines, references, and procedures for application and in making minor deviations to adapt the guidelines in specific cases. At this level, the employee may also determine which of several established alternatives to use. Situations where

existing guidelines cannot be applied or that deviate significantly from the guidelines are referred to the supervisor.

At Level 3-3, guidelines are similar to the next lower level, but because of the problem-solving or case nature of the assignments, they are not completely applicable or have gaps in specificity. The employee uses judgment in interpreting and adapting guidelines such as policies, regulations, precedents, and work directions for application to specific cases or problems. The employee analyzes the results of applying guidelines and recommends changes.

As described at Level 3-2, the appellant uses regulatory guidelines, policies, procedures, and recommended practices as directed by the supervisor. These guides are generally directly applicable to the assignment. The appellant must have a working knowledge of DA regulations, Modernization Table of Equipment, Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA), Common Table of Allowances, technical manuals, supply procedures, standard operating procedures, local guidance, and oral instructions which are essential to property accountability and inventory management.

Level 3-3 is not met because the appellant's work does not require or permit her to interpret and adapt guidelines to the extent found at Level 3-3. Her processing of property book transactions does not allow her to deviate from system requirements. While the work requires some judgment in applying the guidelines, she cannot deviate from or substitute for standard policy or prescribed procedures without her supervisor's review and approval. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 3-2 (125 points).

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.

At Level 4-2, the work consists of duties that involve related steps, processes, or methods, including work such as performing routine aspects of technical supply management functions in support of a specialist. The employee decides what to do by recognizing the existence of and differences between a few easily recognizable situations and conditions, and choosing a course of action from among options related to the specific assignment. Actions to be taken by the employee, or responses to be made, differ in such things as the source of information, the kind of transactions or entries, or other differences of a factual nature.

At Level 4-3, the work involves unusually complicated or difficult technical duties involving one or more aspects of supply management or operations. The work at this level is difficult because it involves actions that are not standardized or prescribed, deviates from established procedures, involves new or changing situations, or entails matters for which only general provision can be made in regulations or procedures. This typically involves supply transactions which experienced employees at lower grades have been unable to process or resolve, or which involve special program requirements for urgent, critical shortage items requiring specialized procedures and efforts to obtain. The employee decides what needs to be done depending on the analysis of

the subject, phase, or issues involved in each assignment, and the chosen course of action may have to be selected from many alternatives. Decisions are based largely on the employee's experience, precedent actions, and the priority assigned for resolving the particular problem. The methods and procedures used to resolve each issue vary based on the circumstances of each individual case. The work involves conditions and elements that the employee must identify and analyze to discern interrelationships with other actions, related supply programs, and alternative approaches.

Similar to work described at Level 4-2, the appellant maintains lists of organizational property. The appellant's work is limited to property accountability and document control. Her work consists of performing essentially the same steps repetitively. She reviews and edits requests for nonexpendable property which involve a high degree of accuracy to ensure property is accounted for and supply requests are justified and accurate. She performs reviews and edits all requests, initiates follow-up, corrects errors, and processes changes initiated by adjustment documents. The situations she deals with are routine in nature and defined in the guidelines. The appellant rarely has to deviate from policy and procedure. When new situations arise she receives guidance from her supervisor

Level 4-3 is not met. The supply management work does not involve unusually complicated or difficult technical duties as intended at Level 4-3. The appellant's work does not regularly require her to analyze data for the purpose of identifying problems and determining the actions that should be taken to resolve them. These functions are vested in higher graded positions in the organization. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 4-2 (75 points).

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.

At Level 5-2, the work involves the execution of specific rules, regulations, or procedures and typically comprises a complete segment of an assignment or project of broader scope, such as when assisting a higher grade employee. The work or supply service affects the accuracy, reliability, or acceptability of further processes or services in meeting customer requirements in supported organizations and other supply units.

At Level 5-3, the work involves dealing with a variety of problem situations either independently or as part of a broader problem solving effort under the control of a specialist. Problems encountered require extensive fact-finding, review of information to coordinate requirements, and recommendations to resolve conditions or change procedures. The employee performs the work in conformance with prescribed procedures and methods. The results of the work affect the adequacy of local supply operations, or they contribute to improved procedures in support of supply programs and operations.

Level 5-2 is met. The appellant's work involves the execution of specific rules, regulations, and procedures dealing with property accountability and document control. She deals primarily with routine problems.

Level 5-3 is not met. The appellant is not required to identify or dispose of excess property. Her searches are limited to searching for missing items within the databases, and do not involve the extensive information gathering and fact-finding found at Level 5-3. The appellant is not required, on a regular and recurring basis, to make recommendations to resolve conditions or change procedures. Her work affects readiness, but the problems encountered do not require the extensive fact-finding and problem-solving intended at Level 5-3. Because Level 5-3 is not fully met, this factor must be evaluated at Level 5-2 (75 points).

Summary

By application of the GS-2005 PCS, we have evaluated the appellant's work as follows:

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Points</i>
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-3	350
2. Supervisory controls	2-3	275
3. Guidelines	3-2	125
4. Complexity	4-2	75
5. Scope and effect	5-2	75
6. Personal contacts and 7. Purpose of contacts	3-a	80
8. Physical demands	8-1	5
9. Work environment	9-1	<u>5</u>
	<i>Total points:</i>	990

According to the grade conversion table in the GS-2005 PCS, a total of 990 points falls within the GS-5 grade level point range (855-1100)

Decision

The position is properly classified as Supply Technician, GS-2005-5.