

120 Howard Street, Room 760
San Francisco, CA 94105



**Classification Appeal Decision
Under Section 5112 of Title 5, U.S. Code**

Appellant:	[the appellant]
Position:	Supply Technician GS-2005-5
Organization:	[a shipyard] U.S. Department of the Navy
Decision:	Supply Technician GS-2005-5
OPM Decision Number:	C-2005-05-01

Signed by Denis J. Whitebook
DENIS J. WHITEBOOK
CLASSIFICATION APPEALS OFFICER

April 7, 1997
DATE

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision 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:

[CCs]

Introduction

On September 23, 1996, the San Francisco Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) received a position classification appeal from [the appellant]. His position is located in [the Department of the Navy]. The appellant's position is classified as Supply Technician GS-2005-5. He believes that it should be classified as Inventory Management Specialist GS-7/9/11 or, at least, a Supply Technician GS-2005-7. This appeal is accepted and decided under 5 U.S. Code 5112.

General issues

The appellant mentions the lack of guidance provided by his servicing personnel office in developing the position description. The appellant and his supervisor wrote the position description. The appellant's supervisor certified that the duties and responsibilities described in position description (PD) #65530 are accurate and complete. The appellant agreed that the duties in PD #65530 and additional information he provided reflect and describe the duties he performs. In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of his position. By law, we must make that decision solely by comparing his current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S. Code 5106, 5107, and 5112). In reaching our decision, we have carefully considered all relevant information provided by the appellant and his agency.

Position information

The appellant spends about 60 percent of his time on the following duties. He schedules and coordinates inventories with Department Property Responsible Officers. He conducts physical inventories of all Shipyard plant (Class 3 and 4) and minor property. He leads personnel assigned to the perpetual inventory team. He conducts audits of Department/Code/Shop property records and inventory records. He prepares discrepancy reports for Department Heads and reviews and analyzes information (e.g., internal/external activity transfers, movement control documents, reports of survey) submitted by Shipyard Property Administrator, Department Property Managers, and Department Property Responsible Officers to update discrepancy reports until Shipyard records are reconciled.

About 20 percent of his time is spent investigating and researching missing Government property as it relates to the inventory process. The property may be sensitive material that requires a high degree of safeguards and protection. He may be required to testify in military or civilian court in cases where gross negligence or criminal activity is suspected or found. To reconcile property inventory discrepancies, he contacts personnel within the installation, e.g., Shipyard managers, supervisors, Property Responsible Officers, etc.

He uses the remaining 20 percent of his time to (1) create, maintain, and update a property management computer data base, which includes generating graphs and statistics; (2) provide inventory management control for property items that are decentralized; and (3) audit and evaluate property management systems for compliance and effectiveness and to make recommendations to the Shipyard Property Administrator through his supervisor.

The appellant's PD and the information furnished by the appellant and his agency provide additional details about the appellant's duties and responsibilities and how they are carried out.

Series and title

The agency has classified the position to the Supply Clerical and Technician Series GS-2005. The appellant believes it should be classified to the Inventory Management Series GS-2010. However, before considering the supply occupations further, we will consider the Security Administration Series GS-080 and the Security Clerical and Assistance Series GS-086 since the appellant's position is located in a security office. The principal purpose of security administration work is to develop and implement policies, procedures, standards, training, and methods for identifying and protecting information, personnel, property, facilities, operations, or material. Our review of the information of record reflects that the principal purpose of the appellant's position is to perform inventory control work and the paramount qualifications for such work is a knowledge of supply operations. If the appellant finds assets that are not fully protected during an inventory, the Physical Security Officer is notified through the appellant's supervisor. The Information Security Officer is notified of comparable problems noticed during inventories. The appellant's position is not covered by either the GS-080 or GS-086 series.

Pages 3-5 of the GS-2005 standard explains how to distinguish between supply technician and supply specialist positions such as Inventory Management Specialist GS-2010 positions. Pages 4-5 of the standard for the Inventory Management Series GS-2010 describe the inventory management work that must be preponderant for the work to be classified to the GS-2010 series.

Inventory management specialists are responsible for planning and developing the control system, programs, or services; and for developing, adapting, or interpreting operating methods or procedures. For instance, the specialist provides guidance on or conducts surveys of supply and inventory management *functions*. This is in contrast to a supply technician like the appellant who inventories physical property. Supply technicians are primarily concerned with following the methods and procedures developed by supply specialists or management personnel and applying these guides to specific supply problems or situations. Supply technicians may occasionally develop individualized work plans or procedures. Like the supply technician positions, the appellant's position is primarily concerned with ensuring that property is properly inventoried and accounted for following agency guidance and instructions.

Specialists have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of programs and the needs and operations of the organizations serviced to plan and forecast inventory needs under changing technological or program requirements; develop long-range material support plans; make supply system decisions which consider more than the status of an individual item or the problem presented by a particular supply transaction, e.g., interchangeability of items among different equipment or systems; participate in planning for new data processing systems in terms of defining the nature of information required, organizational responsibilities, computer network requirements, and the nature of output desired from inventory management systems; etc. Supply technicians perform assignments requiring a less

extensive knowledge of programs, operations, or organizations serviced (e.g., they relate to functions that are stable or routine, to local needs, or to individual case problems or supply actions). Like the technician, the appellant's position requires a knowledge of the local Shipyard's organizational structure and operations to inventory and account for physical property at the Shipyard.

Specialists at grades GS-5/7 may perform work similar to that of a supply technician, but do so as a trainee in preparation for higher level work assignments (i.e., like the specialist assignments described in the above two paragraphs). Supply technicians may perform some of the same work as specialists, but they do so based on practical experience and familiarity with supply operations, the supply mission of the organization, and supply regulations, policies, procedures, and directives. The record does not reflect a preponderance of the appellant's work is, or will be, higher level assignments such as the specialist assignments described in the previous two paragraphs. The majority of his time is spent on assignments requiring practical experience and familiarity with the Shipyard's organizations and supply operations and agency and Shipyard instructions and guidance. Similar to a specialist assignment, the appellant evaluates the Shipyard's property management systems; however, this assignment is narrower in scope than that described in the specialist work examples above. It also would not be considered because it occupies less than 20 percent of his time and, as page 23 of the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards* explains, only duties that occupy at least 25 percent of an employee's time can affect the grade of a position.

The appellant's position does not perform the type of duties requiring higher level specialist knowledges and abilities. The work does, however, require knowledge of supply operations and program requirements, and the ability to apply established supply policies, day-to-day servicing techniques, regulations, or procedures to perform inventory control work necessary to ensure the effective operation of ongoing supply activities. Such work is covered by the Supply Clerical and Technician Series GS-2005 defined on page 1 of the GS-2005 standard.

According to titling instructions on page 5 of the GS-2005 standard, the position should be titled Supply Technician because it is classified at the GS-5 level for the reasons discussed in the grade evaluation section below.

Standard

The appellant leads teams of one to six employees in accomplishing physical inventories. The employees may be student aids or loaned or limited duty personnel. There is no information to indicate that he leads three or more employees on a regular and recurring basis and performs the range of leader duties described on pages 1-2 of the Work Leader Grade-Evaluation Guide to a degree that would warrant evaluating his position by that guide.

The position is covered by the grade level criteria in the standard for the Supply Clerical and Technician Series GS-2005.

Grade evaluation

The GS-2005 standard uses the Factor Evaluation System (FES), which employs nine factors. Under the 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.

In applying an FES standard, the position is classified by comparison to a factor level description. The Primary Standard (Appendix 3, *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*) and a related standard or guide such as the Grade-Evaluation Guide for Supply Positions may be used to point rate an individual factor when the position fails to meet the lowest, or exceeds the highest, factor level description in the FES standard being applied (page 21, *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*).

The appellant did not disagree with any specific factor evaluation made by the agency. Our evaluation with respect to the nine FES factors follows.

Knowledge required by the position -- Level 1-3 -- 350 points

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts that a worker must understand to do acceptable work and the nature and extent of the skills needed to apply this knowledge. The agency evaluated this factor at Level 1-2.

The appellant's knowledges meet Level 1-3 criteria for this factor. For instance, as discussed at Level 1-3, his work requires knowledge of supply regulations, policies, procedures, or other instructions relating to the specific function assigned, i.e., inventory control. As also discussed at Level 1-3, the appellant's position requires familiarity with automated supply data bases including the knowledge to structure and retrieve specialized reports. In addition, the appellant's position requires a sound working knowledge of the structure of the local supply organization and the organizations serviced at the Shipyard to carry out the physical inventory and investigation of discrepancies.

The appellant's knowledges fall short of Level 1-4 criteria. Work at Level 1-4 requires a thorough knowledge of governing supply regulations, policies, procedures, and instructions applicable to the specific assignments. The illustrations on pages 10 and 11 of the GS-2005 standard indicate that to be as thorough as required at Level 1-4, knowledge must be broad, substantive, or intensive.

The appellant investigates missing government property by reviewing documentation and contacting Shipyard managers, supervisors, Property Responsible Officers, Property Custodians, and employees to reconcile Shipyard plant (Class 3 and 4) and minor property inventory discrepancies. The employees in illustrations 3 and 4 require knowledge not just to provide supply services to a single installation such as the appellant's, but to provide services throughout an entire agency such as the Department of the Navy.

His knowledges are not as broad or substantive as those described in illustrations 2 and 4. The appellant conducts inventories, identifies discrepancies, and researches documentation associated with document accountability to reconcile Shipyard records. However, the record provides no evidence that he regularly performs the full variety of routine phases of property management found in illustration 2 on pages 10 and 11. In summary those phases include reviewing proposed purchases to ensure they are in accordance with the fiscal year plan; planning for and conducting segments of management studies (e.g., the utilization of property); reviewing records and demanding data to determine if property has become obsolete or excess to the needs of the organization or excess to the overall requirements of the agency; locating surplus property, determining age and probable condition by checking records, contacting local vendors, physically inspecting records, and arranging for transfer; *and* working with a supply specialist in preparing procedures for annual inventories, participating in inventory process, conducting investigations to determine causes of inventory discrepancies by checking all property records, compiling information necessary for consideration in survey action relating to loss, damage, or destruction of Government-owned property. Further, the record provides no evidence that he performs work comparable to illustration 4 on page 11 where the employee assists cataloguers by performing all but the most difficult technical duties concerned with the compilation and maintenance of agency system-wide supply publications.

Illustration 1 describes intensive knowledge required to work with urgent, critical shortage, and other special items. There is no evidence that the appellant performs such work or comparable work.

Since the appellant's knowledges are less broad, substantive, and intensive than envisioned in the illustrations on pages 10 and 11, they are less thorough than required at Level 1-4. The knowledges fall short of Level 1-4 but meet Level 1-3 criteria. As a result, the position's knowledges must be evaluated at Level 1-3 and 350 points are credited.

Factor 2, Supervisory controls -- Level 2-2 -- 125 points

This factor covers (1) the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, (2) the employee's responsibility, and (3) the review of completed work. The agency evaluated this factor at Level 2-2.

The appellant's supervisor provides general guidance comparable to Level 2-3, the highest level in the GS-2005 standard, where the supervisor makes assignments by defining objectives, priorities, and deadlines. The scope of the appellant's work does not reach Level 2-4 which is described in the Primary Standard and the Grade-Evaluation Guide for Supply Positions. The supervisor at Level 2-4 sets the overall objectives and decides on resources. The employee consults with the supervisor in determining which projects to initiate, develops deadlines, and identifies staff and resources required. This aspect is evaluated at Level 2-3.

However, the appellant's level of responsibility does not meet Level 2-3 where the employee handles problems and deviations in accordance with instructions, policies, previous training, or accepted practices in the occupation. Comparable to Level 2-2 on page 12, the record reflects that the

supervisor provides advice to the appellant when there are deviations from normal policies and procedures and intercedes when Department personnel are uncooperative.

Like Level 2-3 on page 13 of the GS-2005 standard, the appellant's completed work is reviewed for adherence to guidelines, processes, and procedures as well as soundness of judgment. The level of review over the appellant's work is closer than that described at Level 2-4 where finished work is reviewed from an overall standpoint in terms of feasibility, compatibility with program requirements, etc.

Under the 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. The supervisory control and review aspects meet Level 2-3; however, the employee's responsibility aspect meets Level 2-2. Since the full intent of Level 2-3 is not met, this factor is evaluated at Level 2-2 and 125 points are credited.

Factor 3, Guidelines -- Level 3-2 -- 125 points

This factor covers the nature of the guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them. Guidelines provide reference data or impose parameters within which action may be taken or knowledge used. The agency evaluated this factor at Level 3-2.

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 guidelines in specific cases. The employee may also determine which of several established alternatives to use. Situations to which existing guidelines cannot be applied or significant proposed deviations from the guidelines are referred to the supervisor.

At Level 3-3, guidelines are similar to Level 3-2, but because of the problem solving or case nature of the assignments, they are not completely applicable or have gaps in specificity. The employees 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.

Comparable to Level 3-2, the appellant's guidelines include several agency, Shipyard, and department instructions, desk guides, Material Management, material status reports, and interoffice memorandum guides. The appellant uses his judgment working within the parameters and precedents of established guidelines and refers situations requiring deviation from the guidelines to the supervisor as described at Level 3-2.

The appellant states that over the past three years he developed procedures and processes for the pilot perpetual inventory program including the schedule, computer program, and forms. The perpetual inventory has a three year cycle. Once the procedures and processes have been established, a position can no longer be credited with developing them since the work is no longer performed on a regular and recurring basis.

This factor is evaluated at Level 3-2 and 125 points are credited.

Factor 4, Complexity -- Level 4-2 -- 75 points

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 agency evaluated this factor at Level 4-2.

The information of record establishes that the appellant must identify discrepancies during inventories and determine the appropriate course of action within established procedures. The appellant refers deviations to his supervisor. This level of complexity is consistent with Level 4-2 where the work consists of duties that involve related steps, processes, or methods, including work such as performing routine aspects of technical supply management functions. The employee chooses a course of action from among options related to the specific assignment. Actions to be taken by the employee differ in such things as the source of information, the kind of transactions or entries, or other differences of a factual nature.

The information of record does not support a finding of Level 4-3. Work at Level 4-3 is difficult because it involves actions that are not standardized or prescribed, deviations from established procedures, new or changing situations, or matters for which only general provisions can be made in regulation or procedures. The employee analyzes the subject, phase, or issues involved and chooses a course of action from many alternatives. 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.

This factor is evaluated at Level 4-2 and 75 points credited.

Factor 5, Scope and effect -- Level 5-3 -- 150 points

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 the work products or services both within and outside the organization. The agency evaluated this factor at Level 5-3.

The scope of the appellant's work exceeds Level 5-2 on page 16 of the GS-2005 standard where the work involves the execution of specific rules. The scope is more comparable to Level 5-3 on page 16 as the appellant conducts physical inventories and identifies and reconciles inventory discrepancies in conformance with established parameters and guides. The work does not meet Level 5-4 in the

Grade-Evaluation Guide for Supply Positions or the Primary Standard where, for instance, the work involves formulating studies to substantially alter existing supply systems.

The results of the appellant's work affects more than the processes or services meeting customer requirements as described at Level 5-2. The accuracy and reliability of the perpetual inventory program affects the adequacy of the Shipyard's supply support operations which is comparable to Level 5-3 on page 16 of the GS-2005 standard. The work does not meet Level 5-4 in the Grade-Evaluation Guide for Supply Positions or the Primary Standard where, for instance, the work affects supply system design, installation, and maintenance in a wide range of activities.

This factor is evaluated at Level 5-3 and 150 points are credited.

Factor 6, Personal contacts & Factor 7, Purpose of contacts -- Levels 2/b -- 75 points

Match the level of regular and recurring personal contacts with the directly related purpose of contacts and credit the appropriate point value using the chart on page 18 of the GS-2005 standard.

Persons contacted

Comparable to Level 2 on page 17 of the GS-2005 standard, the record reflects that the appellant's regular and recurring personal contacts are with employees in the same agency, but outside the immediate organization. The persons contacted are engaged in different functions, missions, and kinds of work. For instance, the appellant contacts personnel at all levels throughout the Shipyard including managers and shop/code foremen, Property Administrators, Property Responsible Officers, Department Property Custodians, etc. The appellant's contacts do not meet Level 3 on page 17 where the contacts are with individuals from outside the employing agency in moderately unstructured setting (e.g., the contacts are not established on a routine basis, the purpose and extent of each contact is different, and the role and authority of each party is identified and developed during the course of the contact).

Purpose

Comparable to Level b, the highest level described in the GS-2005 standard, the record reflects that the appellant plans and coordinates the inventory schedule with the above contacts, provides technical advice on the perpetual inventory issues, and resolves discrepancies. To meet the full intent of the next higher level (Level c on page 21 of the Grade-Evaluation Guide for Supply Positions or Level 7-3 in the Primary Standard, page 3-17 of the *Introduction to the Standards*), the purpose of the contacts would involve on a regular and recurring basis influencing, motivating, interrogating, or controlling persons or groups that may be fearful, skeptical, uncooperative, or dangerous.

A combination of Levels 2 and b converts to 75 points.

Factor 8, Physical demands -- Level 8-2 -- 20 points

Like Level 8-2, the highest level described in the GS-2005 standard, the appellant's work requires physical exertion such as long periods of standing; walking over rough uneven surfaces; recurring bending, stooping, crouching; etc. to conduct physical inventories in warehouses, depots, and other storage areas. The appellant's position does not require lifting objects over 50 pounds, crawling in restricted areas, etc. as described at Level 8-3 in the Primary Standard (page 3-18, *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*). This factor is evaluated at Level 8-2 and 20 points are credited.

Factor 9, Work environment -- Level 9-2 -- 20 points

The appellant's work environment is comparable to Level 9-2 on page 19 of the GS-2005 standard. The appellant's work environment includes warehouses and industrial areas which require the use of protective gear such as hard hats, ear plugs, and safety glasses. The appellant's position does not meet Level 9-3 in the Primary Standard. Level 9-3 involves high risks with exposure to potentially dangerous situations or unusual environmental stress that require a range of safety and other precautions, e.g., working at great heights under extreme outdoor weather conditions, subject to possible physical attack or mob conditions, or similar situations where conditions cannot be controlled (page 3-19, *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*).

Summary

In sum, we have evaluated the appellant's position as follows:

Factor	Level	Points
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-3	350
2. Supervisory controls	2-2	125
3. Guidelines	3-2	125
4. Complexity	4-2	75
5. Scope and effect	5-3	150
6. Personal contacts &		
7. Purpose of contacts	2/b	75
8. Physical demands	8-2	20
9. Work environment	9-2	<u>20</u>
Total points:		940

The appellant's position warrants 940 total points. Therefore, in accordance with the grade conversion table on page 6 of the GS-2005 standard, his position is properly graded at GS-5 (855-1100).

Decision

The appellant's position is properly classified as Supply Technician GS-2005-5.