

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 and Program Analyst
GS-0343-11

Organization: [appellant's activity]
Department of the Air Force
[geographic location]

OPM decision: Management and Program Analyst
GS-0343-11

OPM decision number: C- 0343-11-02

/s/ Bonnie J. Brandon

Bonnie J. Brandon
Classification Appeals Officer

4/24/00

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]

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Introduction

On January 27, 2000, the Dallas Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management accepted a classification appeal from [the appellant]. The appellant's position is currently classified as Management and Program Analyst, GS-343-11. This position is assigned to the [appellant's activity] (hereinafter referred to as Office), [appellant's higher level organization] (hereinafter referred to as Directorate), [location]. The appellant does not dispute the title and series of her position. However, she believes that her position should be graded as GS-12. She specifically disagrees with the agency's evaluation of three factors (4, 6, and 7). We have accepted and decided this appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code.

To help decide the appeal, an Oversight Division representative interviewed the appellant, a senior analyst whom she assists, and her immediate supervisor.

Position information

The appellant and her supervisor certify that the appellant's position description [number] is current and accurate. The appellant's Office provides personnel data system technical support for the Directorate. The Directorate manages both the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System and the Air Force Military Personnel System modernization effort within the [appellant's higher level organization]. The Directorate serves the entire Department of Defense community and many other Federal agencies. The Air Force Military Personnel System serves the entire Air Force active duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve personnel.

The primary purpose of the appellant's position is to perform nonsupervisory management and program analysis in support of the Directorate mission. The appellant spends the preponderant portion of her time performing planned and ad hoc studies to evaluate new ways to improve the Office's business efficiency and effectiveness. She also manages the funds execution and cost accounting data for contractor and civilian pay baselines including Department of Defense reimbursement positions.

The appellant performs a variety of other important support functions. She coordinates Office administrative work with the various Directorate support offices, e.g., Human Resources, Labor, Manpower, and Budget (occupies about 25 percent of her time), recruits computer program interns at universities and colleges (about 5 percent), and provides administrative supervision to the PALACE ACQUIRE interns (about 5 percent).

Series, title, and standard determination

The appellant believes that the agency's assigned title and series of her position are correct. Since the primary purpose of this position is to perform nonsupervisory management and program analysis work, the position is best covered by the GS-343 Management and Program Analyst Series and best titled Management and Program Analyst.

The appellant believes that the administrative supervision she provides PALACE ACQUIRE interns was inadequately credited by her agency. We find that this position does not meet the

minimum three-fold criteria for application of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide. Supervisory work must: constitute a major duty occupying at least 25 percent of time; include technical *and* administrative direction to others; and include other supervisory personnel functions, i.e., assign and review work, assure that production and accuracy requirements are met, approve leave, and recommend performance standards and ratings. Since the appellant's position fails to meet the established criteria, no additional credit is warranted for administrative supervisory responsibilities.

Nonsupervisory positions in the GS-343 series are properly evaluated using the Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide.

Grade determination

None of the appellant's assignments requiring coordination of the human resources, labor, manpower, and budget administrative work with other Directorate offices exceed the GS-11 level when compared to appropriate classification standards, such as the standard for the GS-201 Personnel Management Series. The appellant's recruiting activities at colleges and universities also do not exceed the GS11 level. Therefore, these duties will not be discussed further.

The Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide uses the Factor Evaluation System. It places positions in grades by comparing their duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements with nine FES factors common to nonsupervisory General Schedule positions. A point value is assigned to each factor based on a comparison of the position's duties with the factor-level descriptions in the Guide. The factor point values mark the lower end of the ranges for the indicated levels. For a position factor to warrant a given point value, it must be fully equivalent to the overall intent of the selected factor level description. If the position fails in any significant aspect to meet a particular factor level description in the Guide, the point value for the next lower factor level must be assigned, unless the deficiency is balanced by an equally important aspect that meets a higher level. The total points assigned are converted to a grade by use of the grade conversion table in the Guide.

Although the appellant believes that her position warrants a higher grade, she challenges only the evaluation of Factor 4, Complexity; Factor 6, Personal contacts; and Factor 7, Purpose of contacts. She does not disagree with the agency's evaluation of Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position; Factor 2, Supervisory controls; Factor 3, Guidelines; Factor 5, Scope and effect; Factor 8, Physical demands; and Factor 9, Work environment. We have reviewed the agency's rationale and conclusions for these six factors and concur with the agency's findings. Our evaluation, therefore, will address only those three factors the appellant disputes.

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 appellant believes that the management and program analysis work she performs fully supports Level 4-5. She provided several work products that she believes best illustrate the actual level of complexity inherent in her position.

After careful review of the appellant's position description and work examples, and after comprehensive audit discussions with the appellant, her co-worker, and her supervisor, we find that the appellant's management and program analysis assignments clearly exceed Level 4-3, where the analysis primarily concerns problems and issues of a procedural nature. The appellant's work deals more with the substance of Office operations, issues, and other program requirements. Her final work products are designed to provide substantive management analyses that help in overall Office management planning, evaluation, and policy decisions.

The work examples the appellant provided involve substantive program measurement and analysis. For example, the appellant prepared a five-year plan for downsizing that was incorporated within the overall Directorate Modernization Program In-Process Review. She also prepared the operations and maintenance budget estimates involving resource planning for outsourcing civilian positions and the reduction schedule of contractor work years dedicated to the Directorate project. In addition to addressing process issues in such studies, the appellant gathers information, identifies and analyzes issues, and develops appropriate recommendations to resolve substantive problems of Office effectiveness and efficiency of work operations. She applies qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques that frequently require modification to fit a wide range of variables.

To accomplish her analytical assignments, the appellant refines the existing work methods and techniques for application to the analysis of specific issues or resolution of problems. For example, she revises her methods for collecting data on workload and adopts new measures of productivity. We find that the studies and analyses done by the appellant fully meet Level 4-4.

Level 4-5 statements of complexity in the appellant's position description are not supported by our findings. The breadth and scope of the studies that the appellant completes are not fully characteristic of Level 4-5. Although the appellant completes analyses of interrelated issues of effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity of substantive mission-oriented programs, her work does not require the development of detailed plans, goals, and objectives for the studies or the development of new analytical methods which are characteristic of Level 4-5 work. In contrast to positions at Level 4-5, the appellant receives her study goals from her supervisor and develops an appropriate approach to analyze the issue or concern based on her previous experience. She occasionally leads specific, well-designed studies, e.g., outsourcing and privatization, but she usually participates as a team member in the larger, more comprehensive studies in the Office or Directorate. The primary purpose of her analytical work is to gather the required information, put it in a usable, acceptable format, and present the information to her supervisor. We found no conflicting program goals and objectives typical of Level 4-5 that complicate decisions which the appellant makes about how to proceed in planning, organizing, and conducting her assigned studies. Her study findings and conclusions are not highly subjective but are readily verified through replication of study methods or reevaluation of results. The appellant's work does not meet the full intent of Level 4-5.

Level 4-4 is assigned and 225 points are credited.

Factor 6, Personal contacts, and Factor 7, Purpose of contacts

On a regular and recurring basis, the appellant deals with Directorate and other Air Force employees, supervisors, and managers within and outside her office in a moderately structured setting. Her personal contacts fully meet Level 2. Level 3, however, is not met, since the appellant's contacts do not regularly include persons outside the Air Force and do not involve a moderately unstructured setting. The appellant's contacts are rarely with high-ranking officials such as other agency heads or top congressional staff officials. Most often her contacts are with other program officials. Since Level 2 is fully met and Level 3 is not fully met, Level 2 is assigned.

The appellant believes that the organizational placement of her position alone fully supports Level c credit. The organizational placement of the appellant's position is not the primary consideration in evaluating the purpose of contacts. Rather, it is the complexity of the contacts themselves that is paramount.

The primary purpose of the appellant's contacts is to provide advice to Office and Directorate managers on a variety of analytical decision-making alternatives. She presents her supervisor with information that may be used by him or others in making decisions and recommendations and influencing agency top management officials. The purpose of the appellant's contacts is typical of Level b where employees provide advice to managers concerning decision-making alternatives, appraisals of success in meeting goals, or recommendations for resolving administrative problems. Employees at Level b influence and motivate individuals or groups who are working toward mutual goals and who have basically cooperative attitudes.

The purpose of the appellant's contacts does not meet Level c where employees typically encounter resistance from managers or other officials because of organizational conflict, competing objectives, or resource problems. At Level c, employees must influence uncooperative management officials or others to accept and implement findings and recommendations. Although statements in the appellant's position description indicate that the purpose of her contacts meets Level c, we found no support for those statements during our fact-finding. Consequently, Level b is assigned to the appellant's position.

Factors 6 and 7 are evaluated at Level 2b, and 75 points are credited.

Summary

In summary, application of the Guide to the appellant's management and program analysis work results in the following factor level evaluations:

Factor	Level	Points
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-7	1250
2. Supervisory controls	2-4	450
3. Guidelines	3-4	450
4. Complexity	4-4	225
5. Scope and effect	5-4	225
6 and 7. Personal contacts and Purpose of contacts	2-b	75
8. Physical demands	8-1	5
9. Work environment	9-1	5
Total points:		2685

Using the Guide's grade conversion table, 2685 points falls within the 2355-2750 range. The appellant's management and program analysis work is evaluated as GS-11.

Decision

The position is correctly classified as Management and Program Analyst, GS-343-11.