



## United States Office of Personnel Management

**Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness**  
*Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions*  
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**Standard:** [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) (April 1993)  
**Factor:** Factor 5, Difficulty of Typical Work Directed, and Factor 6, Other Conditions  
**Issues:** (a) Identifying the level of typical work directed  
(b) Linkage of Factors 5 and 6

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

These related issues arose in an Office of Personnel Management region's adjudication of an appeal. The appellant occupied the position of Personnel Officer, GS-0201-13, at a medium-size military installation. The appellant directed the work of: (1) several GS-12 program chiefs who, in turn, directed a sizable amount of GS-11 level specialist work, an equivalent amount of supporting technician work, and a small amount of clerical work; and (2) a military personnel officer. With respect to Factor 5, the appellant disagreed with the agency's conclusion that certain work was excluded from consideration, as well as the agency's assessment of the amount of creditable GS-12 level work. The level of work credited under Factor 5 directly impacts the evaluation of Factor 6.

### **Resolution**

#### **Issue (a): Identifying the Level of Work Directed**

The region considered all of the work performed in the personnel office and reached the following conclusions:

--Interns: The work performed by these employees was excluded from consideration for two reasons. First, the interns performed work that was associated with a different occupational area not directly related to the mission of the personnel office. Second, the appellant exercised no technical supervision over the interns' work.

--Personnel clerical positions: The work of several GS-5 and GS-6 Personnel Clerical positions was excluded because it did not entail making substantive decisions in personnel work and was, therefore, considered supportive of the basic work of the unit.

--Personnel assistant positions: The work of two GS-6 and GS-7 Personnel Assistants was included because it involved the performance of substantive work directly related to the mission of the personnel office.

--Military personnel management work: The military personnel management work was found to be creditable, but at the GS-11 level rather than the GS-12 level, as claimed by the appellant.

--Program chief positions: Assuming the nonsupervisory work performed by the GS-12 program chiefs was correctly classified, the region credited this work at the GS-12 level, but excluded the supervisory work of these positions. The region also excluded the "trouble-shooter" work performed by the program chiefs since the grade assigned to that work was based on extraordinary independence. This work was credited at the grade that would have been assigned if the work were performed under normal supervision, i.e., GS-11.

By excluding work that was not appropriately considered, the region concluded that about 17 percent of the workload directed by the personnel officer was GS-12 level work. This did not meet the requisite 25 percent necessary to credit GS-12 work as the level of work most typical of the organizational unit directed.

According to the General Schedule Supervisory Guide, when there is a heavy supervisory or managerial workload related to work above the base level, and that workload requires at least 50 percent of the duty time of the supervisory position under evaluation, the grade of the higher level work may be used as the base level for second- and higher-level supervisors. The region considered this alternative method of base level determination, but concluded that there was not a sufficient GS-12 workload to credit this grade as the most representative level of work directed. The amount of GS-12 level work creditable (100.5 hours per week) did not constitute a heavy workload demanding half of the appellant's time.

Having considered both methods for determining the difficulty of typical work directed, the region found that GS-11 level work was creditable for Factor 5. This level of work represented 25 percent or more of the creditable work of the personnel office.

#### **Issue (b): Linkage of Factors 5 and 6**

Under the General Schedule Supervisory Guide, there is a direct linkage of the criteria for Factors 5 and 6. The latter factor measures the extent to which various conditions contribute to the *difficulty* and *complexity* of carrying out supervisory duties, authorities, and responsibilities. The

difficulty of work is measured primarily by the level of work credited under Factor 5. Complexity is measured by the level of coordination required, and it increases as the base level increases. The lettered paragraphs under Factor 6 are structured to cover positions that function as either first-, second-, or higher-level supervisors.

The region considered credit for Level 6-5. Paragraph a could not be credited because the work directed by the appellant did not meet the level of difficulty that characterizes this level (i.e., GS-12); nor did the appellant make major recommendations in at least three of the seven areas described in paragraph a. Paragraph b was not applicable because the work directed was not equivalent to the GS-13 level. Paragraph c was likewise not creditable. While the region credited GS-11 as the level of typical work directed by the appellant, the subordinate program chiefs did not *individually* direct a substantial workload of GS-11 level work. Each chief supervised only a few subordinates and did not expend a significant amount of time actually supervising GS-11 level or any other work of the unit. Rather, the majority of the chiefs' time was spent on personally performed work. Furthermore, the region concluded that no feasible redistribution of the work directed would result in an acceptable structure that would permit each subordinate supervisor to direct a substantial workload of GS-11 level work.

The appealed position met none of the criteria for crediting Level 6-5. The region credited Level 6-4a, as this was the highest level fully met by the appealed position. While Level 6-4a pertains to first-level supervision, the region concluded that this level was appropriate for the appellant's position because: (1) the appellant directly and indirectly supervised GS-11 level nonsupervisory work, and (2) the appellant performed coordination and integration activities comparable to those typical of Level 6-4a.