



Guidance on Establishing Agency Talent Teams

Agency Talent Team members are selected by agency leadership and the Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) or HR Director, for non-CHCO agencies, from current staff. Each Agency Talent Team drive on-the-ground implementation of the meritocratic and efficiency-driving recruitment process reforms outlined in the [Merit Hiring Plan](#) and include proven, strong performers with key functional and occupational expertise who are committed to making merit hiring reform a reality in the agency, a Talent Pool Manager and a Shared Certificate Coordinator (may be the same individual) responsible for building agency-wide familiarity with and awareness of shared certificates.

Agency Talent Teams are led by the CHCO or HR Director. Talent Team members bring their knowledge and expertise to help provide input at a strategic level and are a resource in driving and implementing these innovative hiring efforts across the Department (not just at the headquarters level but also throughout the components). Small agencies will be grouped together in consultation with OPM for their Talent Teams. Talent Team member roles include:

- **HR Specialists** who have both the technical and operational expertise to implement the recruitment and staffing processes (know and understand how to use the full range of hiring authorities and flexibilities to include veterans' programs, early career, Pathways, and STEM; position classification; assessment tools, including the Subject Matter Expert-Qualifications Assessment (SME-QA); and HR systems to include the USAJOBS Agency Talent Portal (ATP)).
- **I/O Psychologists** for measurement and assessment expertise to work together with HR Specialists and hiring managers to develop the appropriate assessment strategy for the applicant pool and develop assessments and train HR Specialists and/or SMEs on their use. Agencies that do not have I/O psychologists on staff may choose to consult with OPM to develop an assessment strategy.
- **HR policy experts** who can help breakdown current agency policies and update appropriate/relevant agency requirements to remove barriers to smooth the way for new practices.
- **Human Capital or HR data analysts** to track agency hiring metrics and keep agency leaders and OPM's Talent Team updated on progress towards meeting the Merit Hiring Plan requirements.
- **A project manager** to help facilitate and coordinate these efforts and personnel; develop and execute the communication strategy and materials, especially if this team is going to function as a resource for multiple components across a Department or for multiple small agencies.

Agencies must also include the following critical roles on their talent teams:

- **Talent Pool Managers** – HR Specialists who create and share certificates externally with other agencies – **and Shared Certificate Coordinators** – HR Specialists who share other agencies' certificates with hiring managers within their agencies
 - Must be Delegated Examining (DE)-certified.
 - Understand the requirements of the Competitive Service Act and how it is operationalized for the Department or agency and its components.
 - Have solid proficiency with HR Systems, to include the USAJOBS ATP.
 - Serve as the recruiting and hiring expert for the agency to be able to push shared and pooled certificates and educate agency hiring managers and HR Specialists to adopt these into practice.
 - Know the requirements to work with the original agency's (i.e., originating agency's) Talent Pool Manager (or the OPM Cross-Government HR Team) and agencies interested in using shared certs (receiving agencies).
- **Agency Administrator in the USAJOBS ATP**
 - Talent Team lead who has an oversight role on their agency's Talent Pool activities in the ATP
 - At the HQ level, agency administrators see talent pool activity across the Department and components; at the component level, the agency administrators will see only activity at the component level.
 - Does not require DE Certification.
 - Has strong proficiency with HR systems and the USAJOBS ATP.

In addition, agencies may consider designating **SME-QA Master Trainers** to perform the following functions. Note that agencies that do not have I/O Psychologists or other suitable candidates for this role may consult with OPM for help fulfilling their training and assessment strategy needs:

- Train other I/O Psychologists and HR Specialists across the agency and understand the various assessment methods and agency policies/business practices to implement the SME-QA process at their agency.
- Train SMEs for hiring actions using SME-QA, especially for shared certificates under the Competitive Service Act.
- Work with fellow HR Specialists, I/O Psychologists, and hiring managers on identifying appropriate assessment strategies and hiring actions for shared certs.

Updates to Talent Team members, Talent Pool Managers, and Shared Certificate Coordinators are to be added to sheet 2 (Agency Talent Team) of the *Merit Hiring Action Plan* and submitted together (due on the last business day of each month) to their agency folder on the Connect.gov [Merit Hiring Plan Page](#). Upon receipt of team information, OPM will reach out to schedule training for Talent Pool Managers and Shared Certificate Coordinators.