



First Line Supervisors In Federal Service

SELECTION, DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT



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A Report by a Panel of the

**NATIONAL ACADEMY
OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

February 2003

First-Line Supervisors in the Federal Service

*Their Selection, Development,
and Management*

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- The hundreds of federal leaders who willingly shared their time and insights, providing greater appreciation of how their environment is changing. Although there are significant areas for improvement, it is vital to recognize the hard working and dedicated public servants who are leaders in the federal government.

The views expressed in this report are those of the Panel.
They do not necessarily reflect the views of the Academy as an institution.

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Executive Summary

“It is time for a new generation of leadership to cope with new problems and new opportunities. For there is a new world to be won.”

John F. Kennedy

First-line supervisors are at the center of the federal government’s leadership issues. They are responsible for day-to-day leadership, coaching, and mentoring of non-supervisory employees. They also serve as an advocate for agency policies and programs and represent employees’ interests to senior management. In an era of rapid change, their success requires a deft touch.

First-line supervisors face issues that had far less impact on earlier generations of leaders: exploding technological capabilities, non-traditional work schedules, diversity management, contractor management, and more. Laws (*The Government Performance and Results Act*), policies (*The President’s Management Agenda*) and programs (*The Office of Personnel Management’s 27 Managerial Competencies*) have significantly heightened expectations for managerial performance, particularly pertaining to better mastery of “people skills” and workforce performance.

As the demands on federal leaders have grown, their numbers have significantly declined, in total and as a percent of the federal workforce.¹

¹*The 21st Century Federal Manager: A Study of Changing Roles and Competencies*. Preliminary Research Findings. National Academy of Public Administration. July, 2002, pp. 15&16.

2 FIRST-LINE SUPERVISORS IN THE FEDERAL SERVICE

There were 77,134 fewer leaders in 2001 compared to 1991, a 28% reduction. At the same time, the average age has increased and retirement is available to many.² An Academy survey (see Appendix A) found that more first-line supervisors would opt to retire on or before their retirement eligibility date (45%) than would keep working (34%).

This report is the second in a five-study series undertaken by the Academy to address the changing roles of federal managers in the 21st Century. It outlines the challenges and opportunities that federal agencies face in building successful first-line supervisors, those individuals responsible for the work of non-supervisory employees. An extensive array of information has been collected and considered, including demographic data, studies and surveys, and opinions of supervisors, key executives, human resources professionals, and non-supervisory employees.

The selection, development, and performance management of the estimated 125,000 federal first-line supervisors must be significantly strengthened in most agencies. Currently, there are very few candidate development programs as most agencies select the most competent technician for supervisory openings without considering leadership capability. Training often is provided yet not integrated into a comprehensive approach that develops future leaders. Further, supervisor performance management rarely has the same fundamental and specific focus that executive performance management has.

Individual agencies are well situated to determine and develop programs that best fit their needs, and they have the flexibility to do so. This report suggests how individual agencies can strengthen these efforts, which should receive government-wide priority. Specific findings and recommendations, which are incorporated throughout the report, are summarized below:

FINDINGS

First-line supervisors are the federal government's largest corporate leadership asset in sheer numbers and direct impact. Yet they must be more adequately prepared and supported to perform at the level that current and future needs require. Supervisors function at the point where public policy becomes action, and they directly represent management's voice to non-supervisory federal employees. As such, their behavior and

²Ibid, p. 120—The percent of leaders age 46 and older increased from 53% in 1991 to 69% in 2001.

job performance are a major determinant of organizational performance, workplace morale, and job satisfaction. They also influence employees' decisions to remain in or leave an organization.

Supervisory jobs are becoming increasingly difficult to perform as the number of supervisors and managers declines. Expanding spans of control, exploding technological change, complex “people issues,” and evolving workplace models challenge both novice and seasoned supervisors alike. Agreement on this finding is widespread among supervisors, the employees they supervise, the managers to whom they report, and the oversight agencies—U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO)—that review their performance.

With some exceptions, federal agencies do a poor job of managing this corporate asset, beginning with the selection process. Some agencies have excellent leadership development programs for identifying supervisory candidates, but most do not offer extensive preparation. Also, most supervisory jobs require technical competence, but technical abilities usually far outweigh leadership competencies as a selection factor. Too often, leadership potential is not even considered in the equation.

Federal agencies need to do a better job of developing and training supervisors. While some have successful training programs, it is uncommon for first-line supervisory training to be part of an agency's comprehensive leader development program.

Performance management is another area that needs significant improvement. A poor selection process, coupled with insufficient performance management (particularly of newly-minted leaders), help to explain the genesis of many leadership cadre shortcomings. Even employees with good leadership potential can fail because they are not routinely provided expectations of performance, and feedback and consequences for success or failure.

The federal government is at a demographic crossroads for its leadership cadre. As the “baby boom” generation once replaced World War II's “Class of '46” in leadership positions, the generation born after John F. Kennedy's presidency now replaces the “baby boomers.” Supervisors whose average age is rapidly climbing, often indicate a preference for taking an early out or retiring as soon as they are eligible. How supervisors are selected, developed and have their performance managed will drive federal government performance for the next generation. There is no time to delay efforts to improve these processes.

THE PRICE OF POOR SUPERVISION

It is difficult to quantify the precise cost of supervisory deficiencies, but even a small deficiency could result in a loss of billions of dollars. Data indicate that this problem involves more than “a small percentage” and real costs could be considerably larger. Without solid programs for identifying, developing, and managing first-line supervisors, agencies pay an enormous price in several ways:

Job performance suffers. As key managers where the work gets done, supervisors are critical to agency mission accomplishment. They may be the most important factor in their individual work unit’s performance and productivity.³

Poor supervision drives good employees away. Reports from OPM, MSPB, and others have noted the impact of poor supervision on morale and turnover. Also, undesired turnover also adds recruitment and training costs.

Problems that require third-party intervention increase. Supervisory behavior impacts the number of grievances and complaints filed by non-supervisory employees. The cost for resolving these issues can be very significant.

Federal executives should consider their supervisory cadre as a driving force for organizational outcomes. They should plan and resource this group just as they would any other critical part of their agencies’ infrastructure. While there are costs involved in starting and maintaining programs to strengthen the performance of supervisors, they pale in comparison to the price paid for inaction.⁴

RECOMMENDATIONS

Government-wide priority should be placed on improving supervisor selection, development, and performance management. Today’s extraor-

³The Office of Management and Budget’s 2002 Executive Management Scorecard shows that agencies received 96 Red Lights, 32 Yellow Lights, and only 2 Green Lights for performance. See Appendix D.

⁴Quantifying the specific effects of supervision on organizational performance, including the measurement of return on investment for programs to improve the selection, development and performance management of supervisors would be a worthwhile topic for review by the Office of Management and Budget or the General Accounting Office.

dinary pace of change and the enormous challenges faced by the federal government make this a vital task at a critical time. Recommendations for doing so are:

Agencies must move quickly to strengthen supervisor performance and apply a level of attention to supervisory resources that is comparable to that for executive resources. Specific recommendations include:

- Balancing technical competencies with managerial or leadership competencies when selecting and developing supervisors.
- Identifying potential leaders and developing candidates using practical assessment tools.
- Integrating supervisory development with other leader development levels.
- Developing leadership competencies.
- Holding executives and managers accountable for managing supervisors.
- Providing modern systems and tools to help supervisors manage human resources.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) should require each agency to include in its strategic plan supervisory selection, development and performance management programs, including expected goals, milestones, and performance measures.

The President's Management Council should help to ensure top-level agency commitment to improving supervisory capabilities.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) should:

- In partnership with the Human Resources Management Council (HRMC), establish minimum standards and guidelines for agencies to recruit, develop, and manage first-line supervisor performance.
- In cooperation with the Office of Management and Budget, develop guidelines to perform periodic reviews and evaluate the effectiveness of agency programs.
- Assist agencies' human resource leaders in developing strong programs for enhancing supervisory performance.
- Develop an ongoing mechanism such as an organizational climate survey, for determining the performance and capabilities of the supervisory cadre.
- Develop a government-wide mechanism to recognize and reward first-line supervisors.

Study Overview and Methodology

The Academy created a Panel, composed of 12 Fellows and two non-Fellow experts on human resources management issues to direct and oversee this study and others in the Human Resources Management Consortium for FY03. Brief biographical sketches of the members appear in Appendix E. The Panel discussed information gathered by the project staff; reviewed findings and recommendations emerging from the work; and approved this report.

This report is the second of five studies in the Academy series: *The 21st Century Federal Manager: A Study of Changing Roles and Competencies*. The first report, published in July 2002, provided preliminary research findings. Subsequent reports will provide insight into the types of competencies and job preparation needed for managerial development efforts. The *Managers and Executives Report* will be issued in early Spring 2003. The *Management Development Issues Report* will be released in late Spring 2003. The *Final Report* will be issued in Summer 2003. It will include key research findings, a bibliography, conclusions, and recommendations.

These reports examine the experiences, programs, and policies facing all levels of managers: first-line, middle, and executives. Common elements exist across the three levels, but each also has unique needs and characteristics.

First-line supervisors are defined as individuals responsible for the work of non-supervisory employees. Among the central questions to be answered in this report are:

- How effective are agencies in attracting and selecting the best candidates for first-line supervisory jobs?
- How well are first-line supervisors trained and developed?
- How well is first-line supervisor performance gauged and managed?
- In what ways have and will first-line supervisory job responsibilities, expectations, and competencies change?
- How do first-line supervisors view their responsibilities?
- What initiatives should be undertaken or supported given the information gleaned from the above?

The report is organized into four sections and five appendices:

- Section 1—The Challenge to Build Leaders
- Section 2—Identifying and Selecting First-Line Supervisors
- Section 3—Preparing and Developing First-Line Supervisors
- Section 4—Managing the Performance of First-Line Supervisors
- Appendix A—The Academy On-Line Survey
- Appendix B—Interview Tools for Agency Executives and Human Resources Professionals
- Appendix C—Focus Groups of Supervisors and Managers
- Appendix D—Office of Management and Budget's 2002 Executive Management Scorecard
- Appendix E—Human Resources Management Panel Biographical Sketches

This report drew on a variety of sources, many of which are focused on the views, attitudes, and opinions of first-line supervisors. They include:

- an Academy on-line survey conducted from August through October 2002. Fifty-eight percent of the 1,500 respondents were first-line supervisors, team leaders, or coaches. The complete survey results for supervisors are shown in Appendix A.
- interviews conducted with key agency executives and senior human resources managers. The purpose was to gauge the efforts of some federal agencies in the selection, development, and performance management of first-line supervisors. Information from these interviews has been incorporated into this report. The templates used to conduct the interviews are included in Appendix B. Each agency was

also asked to provide pertinent studies, reviews, surveys or materials.

- twenty-one focus groups involving 265 supervisors and managers, three fourths of which were conducted using interactive groupware technology. Most participants were first-line supervisors. The sessions were held in a variety of settings with staff from a number of different agencies. Appendix C gives interactive groupware focus group responses as well as a summary of non-groupware focus group responses.
- reviews, reports, and studies by federal agencies, including OPM, MSPB, and GAO.
- earlier Academy studies, including *The 21st Century Federal Manager: A Study of Changing Roles and Competencies*

SECTION ONE

The Challenge To Build Leaders

“Where the rubber meets the road.”

Firestone Tire Company Advertisement

First-line supervisors deal with agency policies as they are exposed to workplace realities. Their primary focus is to ensure that the organization’s technical and mission-oriented work gets done. They should provide guidance and direction to their staff, reward and encourage good performance, and handle performance and other problems that inhibit productivity. Supervisors also should be involved in recruiting and selecting employees that are adequately trained to meet job demands, especially when the demands change.

Supervisors must master many capabilities to successfully manage work, people, and processes. These include understanding structure and interrelationships; skilled decision-making; developing and using work plans and workload measures; time management; planning and delegation; interest-based problem-solving; managing effective and secure systems; and coaching and mentoring a diverse workforce.

Workforce issues present special challenges, such as different generational attitudes about balancing work and family; continuous learning and professional development; building a career that involves moving from one employer to another; flexible hours and telecommuting; and the

mix of non-federal contractors and fulltime, part-time, and intermittent federal employees.

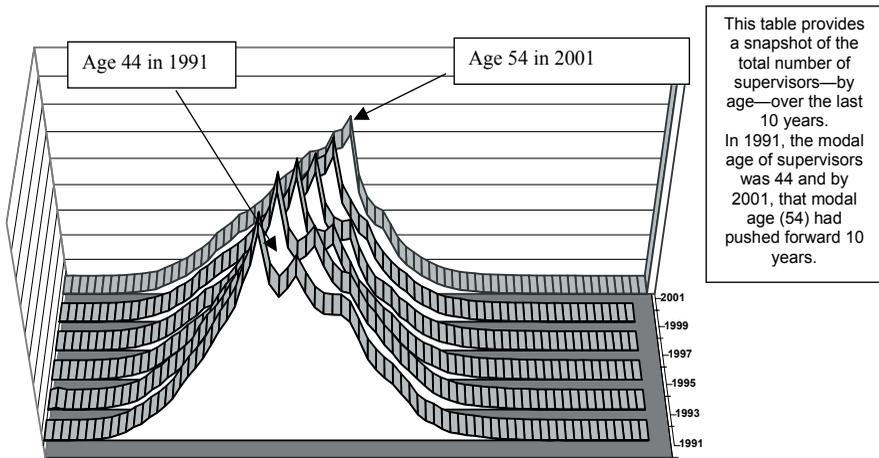
Span-of-control also plays a role in shaping the supervisory experience. From 1991–2001, 1.5 supervisor and manager jobs were lost for every non-supervisory job, expanding the employee-to-supervisor ratio from 7:1 to 8:1.⁵

Decline in Number of Managers and Supervisors

	1991	2001	Change	Rate of Reduction
Supervisors	272,689	195,555	77,134	28%
Non-Supervisors	1,926,797	1,576,978	349,819	18%

There are also enormous demographic implications in the make-up of the current federal leadership cadre. Since 1991, the modal age of federal supervisors and managers⁶ increased from 44 to 54, while the number of supervisors and managers 44 years old and younger being developed dramatically declined.

THE WAVE—The Aging of Federal Supervisors



⁵The 21st Century Federal Manager: A Study of Changing Roles and Competencies. Preliminary Research Findings. National Academy of Public Administration. July, 2002. pp.15&16.

⁶The information, which was extracted from OPM’s Central Personnel Data File, does not distinguish between supervisors and managers.

The following retirement eligibility data highlight the significance of this challenge.

Retirement Eligibility of Federal Supervisors

GS/GM Grade Level	Percent of Total Supervisors
11	37.14
12	40.25
13	43.70
14	48.39
15	53.44

Source: OPM’s Central Personnel Data File as of 06/99

In the 21st Century, first-line supervisors must do more than manage a budget, review work for technical accuracy, and analyze programs. They also must communicate their organization’s vision, lead change, build high-performing work teams, and coach and mentor employees—all while coping with enormous challenges and change.

Many supervisors struggle with these responsibilities. Consider what OPM has found:

“First-line supervisors are critical to the success of the federal government because they are on the front lines. They have a difficult job that is becoming more challenging. They are supervising greater numbers of employees, using broader delegations of authority, helping more employees balance work and family demands, responding to increasing demands for customer service, and handling more instances of violence in the workplace. Past studies have shown that supervisors often bring technical knowledge to the job, but not necessarily the broad array of interpersonal and management skills that are needed to lead people. Unprepared or untrained leaders can damage employee morale and lower productivity. At the same time, the government faces the potential loss of large numbers of experienced supervisors who will soon be eligible to retire, which makes it more critical than ever to focus on developing new supervisors.”⁷

A Merit Systems Protection Board study indicates how supervisor shortcomings can lead to more significant consequences for agencies:

“...many employees believe their supervisors and managers lack the necessary competence to carry out their managerial responsibilities.

⁷*Supervisors in the Federal Government: A Wake-Up Call*. Office of Personnel Management, January 2001.

This is a particular problem because many studies have found that the most common reason employees leave an organization is because of poor supervisors or managers.”⁸

In addition, there exists a significant gap between how supervisors see themselves and how non-supervisory staff view them. In a recent Academy survey,⁹ 81% of managers and supervisors indicated that they are enthusiastic and proud of their performance. In contrast, 47% of non-supervisory employees agree with a statement from an MSPB survey that, “My supervisor has good management skills”¹⁰

Supervisors are concerned about their current responsibilities and their capacity to deal with a changing world. They considered “resilience” to be the competency for which they needed the most improvement.¹¹ Their comments in surveys and focus groups illustrate other frustrations and anxieties. For example, 44% indicated that they would take a non-supervisory job if they could “save pay”¹² and 45% would opt to take an early out or retire on their earliest eligibility date.¹³

A Washington Post columnist recently wrote:

“If I could make a bar graph to chart the subjects on which I get e-mail every week, one subject would tower over the others: managers. You have bad managers, you could do a better job than your own manager. You are a new manager and don’t know what you’re doing. You are a new manager and just want a little respect. You are a new manager and you miss your old non-managerial job. You wish your company offered your managers some training. You wonder whether training would actually help. You want to go home and hide under the covers.”¹⁴

⁸*Making the Public Service Work—Recommendations for Change*. Office of Policy and Evaluation, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, September 3, 2002

⁹See Appendix A.

¹⁰*Merit Principles Survey 2000*. U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 2001.

¹¹The Office of Personnel Management’s definition of resilience is: “Deal effectively with pressure; maintain focus and intensity and remain optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recover quickly from setbacks. Effectively balance personal life and work.”

¹²See Appendix A.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*Lessons for a Command Performance. Training Programs Help New Managers Avoid the Pitfalls of Taking Charge*. Amy Joyce, Washington Post Staff Writer, washingtonpost.com, Sunday, January 5, 2003. Page H5.

The federal government is the largest and most powerful economic entity in the world. With a more than \$2 trillion annual budget and 1.8 million employees, it directly touches the lives of Americans in countless ways. Its work determines the physical security, economic well-being, health, and quality of life for untold millions of people. Leadership at every level, but particularly where agency missions get accomplished, is critical.

Given its enormous responsibilities, the federal government must explicitly and systematically focus on acquiring, developing, and managing the largest segment of its leadership cadre: first level supervisors. This should take place with leaders at several levels, including:

- OMB, OPM, and GAO officials as they set standards and provide resources within the context of the President's Management Agenda and the special priority given to human capital management
- The President's Management Council, in its role of leading implementation of the President's Management Agenda.
- individual agency leaders as they develop agency performance plans, strategic plans for human capital management, and other initiatives to ensure that agencies achieve their mission objectives and performance goals
- individual executives and managers as they provide leadership and support to their first level supervisors through specific and sustained activities related to making selection decisions, setting performance expectations, providing compensation and recognition, maintaining accountability and discipline, and ensuring resources and support

There are significant indications that the need for this focus is increasingly understood and addressed at the government-wide and individual agency levels. The revised "Human Capital Standards for Success," a collaborative effort by OMB, OPM, and GAO, include "leadership and knowledge management" as a critical success factor. This demonstrates an understanding that effective leadership does not only mean paying attention to executives, but supervisors as well. As discussed later, several agencies have undertaken leadership development programs that extend from non-supervisory employees through top executives, and encompass recruitment, selection, performance management, and related supportive measures.

At the same time, much work must be done to translate goals and standards into specific programs, systems, and behaviors to ensure that every agency has adequate resources to achieve success. Federal agencies are largely on their own to develop systems for making first-line supervi-

sors successful. Agencies can, and often do, “reinvent the wheel” when it comes to these critical processes. Although some agencies succeed, very few do a good job in all three areas of supervisor selection, development, and performance management.

Ultimately, strengthening first-line supervisors will require a strong system of accountability (i.e., what are the consequences for agencies or individual leaders who don’t provide the “focus”), clear guidance, and resources for those willing to get the job done. This report outlines the nature and extent of this challenge and some recommended approaches for meeting it.

SECTION TWO

Identifying and Selecting First-Line Supervisors

INTRODUCTION

The President's Management Agenda calls on agencies to "reshape their organizations to meet a standard of excellence in attaining the outcomes important to the nation" and "to reduce the number of managers, reduce the number of organizational layers... [and] change the span of control." This directive instructs agencies to place greater emphasis on identifying the right people for a reduced number of managerial positions and recruiting for their next generation of leaders.

Managing succession is much more than developing a slate of replacements for specific positions. It is a deliberate and systematic effort to project leadership requirements, identify a pool of high potential candidates using intentional learning experiences, and select leaders from the pool.¹⁵

This section focuses on how well agencies are planning for, identifying, and staffing first level supervisory positions. Key elements for doing this effectively are examined and recommendations for enhancing agency efforts are offered to ensure that first level supervisors consistently contribute to the leadership corps.

¹⁵*Managing Succession and Developing Leadership: Growing the Next Generation of Public Service Leaders.* National Academy of Public Administration, August 1997.

AGENCY EFFECTIVENESS IN STAFFING SUPERVISORY POSITIONS

Based on assessments of agency practices, focus groups sessions, and executive interviews at selected agencies, serious deficiencies exist with regard to supervisor identification and selection.

MSPB and OPM Studies

MSPB studies have shown serious shortcomings in how agencies identify and select supervisors. For example, a 1989 report, *First-level Supervisory Selection in the Federal Government*, found that most agencies use the same general approach for selecting supervisors and non-supervisors, even though the skills required for each are quite different. Similarly, a March 1992 report, *Federal First-line Supervisors: How Good Are They?*, encouraged agencies to focus on leadership qualities and technical skills when making supervisory selections. More recently, MSPB's 1999 report, *Federal Supervisors and Poor Performers*, urged agencies to do a better job of selecting people who have the competencies for the human relations aspects of supervisory work. People who do not perform well as supervisors can cause serious problems for mission accomplishment and workforce morale.¹⁶

More recently, an OPM study, *Supervisors in the Federal Government: A Wake-Up Call*, found that:

- Agencies must do a better job of selecting and developing first level supervisors. OPM has identified the competencies that successful supervisors need. Agencies should tailor their efforts around these competencies, especially during the selection process.
- Most agencies do not identify employees who possess supervisory potential and develop them for future leadership positions. As a result, supervisory selections primarily emphasize technical expertise without adequate attention to leadership competencies.¹⁷

Academy Survey and Focus Group Results

In each Academy focus group, managers were asked whether their agency did a good job selecting new supervisors and managers. Of the participants, 38% agreed, 34% disagreed, and 28% were neutral.

¹⁶*Supervisors in the Federal Government—A Wake-Up Call*. U.S. Office of Personnel Management, January 2001, p. 2.

¹⁷*Ibid*, p. 1.

As to the statement, “My agency does a good job of selecting new supervisors and managers,” 29% of the supervisors who participated in the Academy’s survey agreed, 32% disagreed, and 38% were undecided.

The Academy’s interviews with agency executives and human resources professionals suggest that they believe their organizations should do a better job selecting first-line supervisors. One official said, “The (agency) does a fair job of recruiting and selecting in our career occupations, but overall, for first-line supervisors, this is not done well.” Another commented that “The (agency’s) recruitment program is about average for most federal agencies. They do end up with the right person in the right job but it is often by accident.” Still another stated that, “We have a hard time attracting employees to GS13 first level supervisory jobs.”

In a focus group conducted with members of the Federal Executive Board in Philadelphia, an executive said, “First-line supervisors and leaders do not have the communication, teambuilding, or general technical knowledge needed. Communications skills, both written and verbal, are below par with the private sector.” Another executive observed that, “The level of respect and trust for managers and supervisors has declined substantially in our agency. There are only one or two applicants for first-line supervisors in the last four positions filled.”

FPMI Survey

Eight hundred people in a recent FPMI FedPoll survey responded to whether their agency does a good job selecting individuals for supervisory positions. Of these, 54 percent said their organizations did not, 38 percent said they did about half the time, 7 percent said their agency did all the time, and the rest were unsure.

As part of the Academy focus groups and survey, respondents were asked whether agencies spend enough resources to locate good candidates for job openings. One third of the focus groups participants thought their agencies did, but 43% did not and 24% were undecided. Of the supervisors who completed the online survey, 45% disagreed, 28% agreed, and 28% were neutral.

MAJOR FACTORS AFFECTING SUPERVISORY STAFFING

When examining the major factors affecting supervisor staffing, one can identify some causes of the overall low marks given to supervisory selection. These factors are sources of candidates and scope of recruitment, competencies emphasized, and methods for selecting supervisors.

Sources of Candidates and Scope of Recruitment

Most frequently, agencies appear to recruit and select as first-line supervisors those non-supervisory employees who are doing the work to be supervised. One human resources director stated, “The focus on technical competency is driven by the need to ensure that the staff is able to achieve the agency’s programmatic goals.” This sentiment was echoed by an agency executive who observed, “The lower the supervisory position in the hierarchy, the more technical a candidate’s qualifications need to be.”

Selected senior executives and human resources professionals reported that first-line supervisory positions almost always are “filled from within.” That is a selecting official works with the servicing personnel office to determine the supervisory knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to fill a vacancy. An announcement is then developed and posted, though less than 50% of the announcements are open to applicants outside government. Executive search firms generally are retained to assist agencies identify candidates for high-level executive positions, rather than first-line supervisory or mid-manager positions.

The Partnership for Public Service’s 2002 report on mid-career hiring supports the finding that agencies almost always restrict the quest of recruitment for supervisory positions to within their organizations.¹⁸ The report noted that federal agencies have the authority to hire new employees from outside government, but they primarily do so at the entry-level (GS 5–7). The proportion declines noticeably at each grade level above GS 11. In FY 2001, approximately 48,000 vacancy announcements were for the mid-career (GS 12–15) level, but only 53% of these were open to external applicants. Moreover, of the more than 60,000 federal positions filled at GS 12–15 in FY 2000, only 13% of competitively selected new hires came from outside government.

Competencies Emphasized

OPM’s *Supervisors in the Federal Government—A Wake-Up Call* asked whether agencies are doing a better job than in the past of selecting employees for supervisory positions who are technically competent and who also have strong leadership competencies. This question is important because a person is unlikely to be a good supervisor without both kinds of competencies.

¹⁸*Mid-Career Hiring in the Federal Government: A Strategy for Change*. A Report by The Partnership for Public Service, February 22, 2002.

OPM found technical knowledge to comprise most rating factors. Supervisory competencies only are addressed through a generic rating factor like “ability to supervise.” As a result, people skills are often neglected and since technical skills are often given the most weight, technical experts are usually ranked highest.

A good supervisor possesses a dual competency base—both technical credibility and leadership capabilities or potential. In addition to understanding the work being supervised, the supervisor should be able to manage human and financial resources efficiently. For example, the performance management processes include setting employee performance measures, monitoring performance, developing employees, rating performance, and rewarding good work. Yet, the people skills needed to carry out these functions are not used as a basis for selecting first level supervisors.

OPM’s report also notes that USDA Graduate School development participants agreed that leadership skills should receive greater emphasis. When asked “What makes an individual a successful supervisor?” they ranked leadership competencies before technical experience and years of service.

The FPMI Survey asked what competencies were most important when selecting supervisory positions. Supervisory potential was not the main factor. Only four percent responded that it was. Twenty-three percent indicated that the most competent technical people are selected, five percent said leadership potential generally, and 60% said that “another factor” is involved.

To discern the skills that federal agencies seek in first-line supervisors, the Academy reviewed sample of vacancy announcements posted on OPM’s USAJOBS bulletin board during FY 2002. There were two types: those with significant emphasis on technical competencies with little emphasis on managerial or leadership competencies; and those requiring a balance of technical and leadership competencies.

An example of the former is a posting for a GS 12/13 Supervisory Biologist with the Department of the Interior’s U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The announcement clearly emphasizes knowledge and skills related to biology and such technical aspects as:

- knowledge and mastery of the principles of fish and wildlife biology and related disciplines such as agriculture and farming
- skill in designing programs that enhance fish and wildlife habitats
- knowledge of habitat management techniques on private lands

- skill in effective oral and written communications used in developing written implementation plans
- reporting problems, documenting needs, coordinating activities, and preparing summaries and interpretations of findings or proposals

Similarly, a vacancy announcement for a GS 12 Supervisory Financial Specialist in OPM's Retirement and Insurance Service Office of Systems, Finance and Administration lists the following competencies:

- knowledge of the laws, policies, and contracts that govern federal receivables management
- knowledge and understanding governing receivables management policies, precedent setting decisions, methods, procedures, and regulations to project and oversee program goals and objectives
- knowledge of the laws, regulations and policies governing federal retirement systems and the way retirement benefits are administered
- skill in oral and written communication in order to prepare reports and make presentations and briefings

Some vacancy announcements reflect agencies' attempts to pay closer attention to leadership competencies and balancing leadership and technical competencies. One example is the posting for a GS 13 Supervisory Adjudications Officer with the Department of Justice's Immigration and Naturalization Service. The announcement includes a host of technical competencies needed, but does require applicants to demonstrate the following leadership abilities:

- communicate effectively in performing supervisory or leader work
- meet and deal with others in performing supervisory or leader work
- ability to analyze organizational and operational problems and develop solutions
- ability to integrate the activities of collaborating law enforcement or regulatory agencies into law enforcement, inspection, or compliance operations
- knowledge of program management concepts and methods
- ability to apply automated technology to law enforcement, inspection, or compliance operations

A vacancy announcement for a GS 12 Supervisory Clinical Nurse with the Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Service also represents a more balanced approach. It requires applicants to have the ability to:

- assign and review work of subordinates
- train and work effectively with subordinates from a variety of backgrounds and with different levels/areas of training

- communicate with others effectively, both orally and in writing, in working out solutions to problems or questions relating to the work
- establish program objectives and performance goals and assess progress toward their achievement

This vacancy announcement also sets forth personal attributes that the agency has deemed are important to success. It requires applicants to demonstrate the following personal qualities:

- objectivity and fairness in judging people on their ability, and situations on the facts and circumstances
- capacity to adjust to change, work pressures or difficult situations without undue stress
- willingness to consider new ideas or divergent points of view; and capacity to “see the job through”

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are piloting a new format to recruit and select managers based on OPM’s executive core qualifications for senior executive service members. Every management job has a set of management competencies that are applied in the selection process. Working from a list of 28 competency-related knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), selecting officials select those most important for the position. The competencies are then incorporated into the vacancy announcement along with the technical KSAs specific to the program.

A senior executive noted during one of the Academy’s focus groups, “Supervisors were selected years ago because of their ability to get production out; not for their people skills. We are asking them now to do both.” This emphasis on balancing technical requirements and managerial and leadership competencies compares favorably with some private sector job announcements. Those announcements specify that the incumbent will function as a recognized technical expert within the team, be a role model for the organization’s core values, and play a significant role in:

- recruiting and developing technical staff and capabilities
- leading, coaching, and developing junior staff
- delivering quality technical work that ensures client satisfaction
- managing client assignments, technical/functional content, budgets, and staff resources
- developing intellectual capital and technical approaches that differentiate the organization¹⁹

¹⁹Vacancy announcement for Booz Allen Hamilton during October–November 2002.

How Competencies are Changing²⁰

During the Academy's focus groups, supervisors said they needed additional information technology skills such as being able to use various software programs and manage information that flows to them in paper form, electronically and telephonically. They reported needing additional budget, financial analysis, and forecasting skills; and the ability to make the business case for their programs; and the ability to define the return on investment for their programs. In addition, they said they need:

- more analytical skills particularly for workforce planning and anticipating future work and job competencies; determining current workforce competencies; defining the skill gaps, and developing strategies for closing that gap
- more help with succession planning and identifying and developing leadership potential in their subordinates. They would like to be more involved in "building capacity" for their work unit. They also requested instruction in team building and creating a commitment to a common goal or purpose.

Supervisors said they need help with:

- making better employee selections
- improving their interview skills
- defining job requirements
- improving their skills in developing meaningful performance measures
- linking individual performance to organizational performance
- communicating "bad news" to poorly performing subordinates
- learning how to hold employees accountable for their performance
- learning how to build coalitions and partnerships with their peers, colleagues, and superiors
- learning how to develop relationships outside their organizations
- learning how to benchmark best practices, particularly when trying to design innovative solutions to problems
- managing cultural diversity
- with foreign language competencies
- learning how to deal with a younger generation with very different

²⁰OPM is working to review the current validity of its 27 managerial competencies. It also plans to delineate which competencies are most appropriate for first-line supervisors, mid-level managers, and executives; and it hopes to define which competencies are most important for selection, and which are appropriate for developmental purposes.

attitudes about work and family, professional development, rewards and entitlements

- becoming more agile
- managing change
- learning how to better manage a virtual workforce that works from home, the road, and from remote locations
- developing better skills in managing a contractor workforce
- becoming better managers of intellectual property or capital
- preserving institutional memory
- time management

Methods for Selecting Supervisors

During its assessment of supervisors OPM found that agencies typically promoted them from within and on the basis of an application for a specific position. Personnel specialists rate applicants' experience, education, development, and performance against a job-crediting plan. Managers may also conduct interviews and reference checks. Personnel officials told OPM that these methods have produced successful supervisors, but the basis for their perception was lack of complaints, not formal analysis.

There is nothing inherently wrong with this approach, provided that job requirements and assessments include the necessary leadership competencies, and consistent methods for assessing them. OPM and the Academy both found that assessment and selection methods used to fill individual vacancies might be inconsistent within an agency and not effectively applied. For example, one selecting official may concentrate on candidates' interpersonal skills while another may consider specialized knowledge to be most important.

Another issue is whether an internally-focused, position-specific approach can meet today's challenge of selecting supervisors. Is succession planning effective when choosing supervisors solely from those who apply for a specific advertised vacancy? Or, should agencies do more to identify and develop potential supervisors?

Supervisors interviewed by OPM answered "yes" to the latter question. One said, "We select people for supervisory jobs and then send them to development. This is backward. They should be prepared beforehand." Nothing can fully prepare a person for the challenges of leadership, but tools are available that can identify and develop individuals with leadership skills. OPM's Leadership Competency Model is one example. Other options include assignments to high profile projects, presentations to top

management, experience as an executive officer or staff assistant, and short-term rotations to other program areas or agencies.²¹ Allowing non-supervisors greater access to supervisory development courses could also help develop the pool of potential supervisory talent.

OPM's report notes that a significant number of managers and some personnel officials were concerned about being accused of pre-selection. One manager said, "Assisting an individual to develop supervisory skills outside the formal system would contradict the concept of fair and open competition, (and would) ...be unequal treatment, and would expose managers to lawsuits." OPM points out that this is a misconception that must be dispelled. Merit system principles do not preclude identifying and developing potential supervisors so long as agencies use competitive methods to select candidates based on their having, or their potential to have, leadership competencies. The key to offering pre-supervisory development programs is ensuring that open and fair competition is followed for selection.

OPM asked supervisors in USDA Graduate School's Introduction to Supervision course how they were identified as having supervisory potential. Most were selected based on their technical expertise and considered only after applying for a vacancy. Few indicated that they were identified early in their careers and given structured assignments to hone their leadership talents, as commonly done in large private sector companies. Personnel officials, supervisors, and managers echoed these sentiments. OPM found that only four of 20 agencies surveyed had formal internal leadership development programs that prepare employees to become first level supervisors.

The Academy's findings, based on interviews with 15 agencies, are basically consistent with OPM's. The Academy found that some agencies are enhancing their selection program for supervisors. OPM did as well, and identified the following agencies:

- The Treasury Department's Financial Management Service offers a six-month Leadership Enhancement Program and a two year mid-level Management Preparatory Program. Both are geared toward non-supervisory staff.
- At the Immigration and Naturalization Service, candidates complete four assessments that measure critical competencies: thinking skills,

²¹For more ideas, see the National Academy of Public Administration report, *Managing Succession and Developing Leadership: Growing the Next Generation of Public Service Leaders*. August 1997.

administrative skills, writing skills, and job skills. Assessments include a decision-making situational assessment, in-basket job simulation, managerial writing skills exercise, and job experience test.

- The Drug Enforcement Administration uses a supervisory aptitude test to fill operational first level supervisory positions. Ratings are given on seven abilities needed for successful performance: oral communication, interacting with others, gathering information and making judgments/decisions, planning and coordinating, monitoring and guiding, acting as a model, and written communication. The selection process also includes an assessment center experience with nine hours of such exercises as writing, in-basket simulation, and role-playing.
- First level supervisory candidates at the U.S. Marshals Service complete an “open season” application. Peers rate such factors as job knowledge, experience, education, and development. Candidates apply during the year and lists are developed from open season scores. The best-qualified candidates are sent to a structured interview and rated on the following competencies: organizing and planning, leadership, interpersonal skills, adaptability, problem solving, decision-making, and oral communication. A career board evaluates the results and submits its recommendation to the agency director for final selection.

The Academy identified agencies with similar approaches. They include:

- The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which developed a leadership model that includes five core leadership responsibilities and 21 leadership competencies crucial for transforming the organization. IRS believes that leaders at every level require development to see that high potential individuals are prepared to assume increasingly responsible and demanding positions. IRS has developed a core leadership curriculum that uses classroom and electronic education, planned developmental assignments, a coaching and mentoring process, business-related challenges, and leadership simulations. Rather than a collection of courses, the curriculum offers a continuous developmental life cycle, from employee to executive. The leadership development curriculum begins with the Front-Line Readiness Program which targets interested and motivated employees who demonstrate serious interest in becoming an IRS leader. Individuals compete for this 12-month program and selectees participate in competency-based blended classroom and web-based development

in communication, team-building and interpersonal relations; acting manager assignments; business-related challenges; and self-study.

- The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has developed a leadership development strategy focused on a competency-based model that uses the five executive core qualifications as a basic foundation. It also has two change requirements: Professional and Personal Growth and Customer Service. The VBA leadership succession program is composed of five leadership development phases from initial high-potential management candidates to SES development. This approach emphasizes continuous and progressive leadership development and features individual and team action learning projects; formal classroom training; cross-functional and shadowing assignments; mentoring and self-development action. Its Leadership Enhancement and Development program is for selected high-potential employees at the GS 9–12 level; it exposes them to major strategic issues and uses action learning team projects as a cornerstone. The selectees meet three times for a week during the nine-month program.
- The Social Security Administration (SSA) developed a strategy for growing leaders following its transition into an independent agency in 1994. It began with a focus on SES candidates and senior leaders at the GS 13–15 levels. The initiative later progressed into a program for recruiting and developing future leaders and developing first-line supervisors and potential supervisors (GS 9–12). Four programs comprise SSA’s national succession and leader development process: the Presidential Management Intern Program for initial accession to the GS 9 level; Leadership Development Program for GS 9–12; Advanced Leadership Program for GS 13–15; and SES Candidate Development Program. Each program takes two years and involves an orientation to the particular career stage and developmental challenges; core training components geared to the level of need; developmental experiences where individuals are placed in challenging on-the-job assignments for leadership learning; and the use of senior mentors for coaching and advice.
- The Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) offers opportunities for staff to learn leadership skills because it believes that cultivating skillful leaders throughout the workforce will enhance its ability to monitor and improve business functions. Its Non-Managerial Leadership Development programs include New Perspectives, which includes temporary developmental assignments with external organizations; Problem-solving and Decision-Making, which includes training in quantitative and qualitative decision-making and

risk analysis techniques; Proactive Leadership Skills which involves individual and group leadership skills that enable team members and leaders to work together and collaborate with other parts of the organization; Management and Technical Career Paths, where experienced managers and technical advisors describe how they really spend their time; and Leadership Development Program, a two year internship to provide leadership training and rotational assignments to a selected group of candidates chosen for their leadership potential.

These promising approaches reflect progress made in integrating leadership competencies into identifying and selecting potential supervisors more systematically and prospectively. However, compared with what private companies and state governments report in research conducted by the Corporate Leadership Council, the federal government is not as far along in using selection assessment tools that determine whether individuals possess supervisor-critical competencies.

Innovative companies use such tools as behavioral interviews that use a consistent set of questions to find out how candidates have addressed previous situations, and situational interviews, where candidates explain how they would react in given scenarios. Some companies use assessment center exercises to measure behavioral competencies. Based upon this study, most federal agencies have not progressed to this point when selecting first level supervisors.

Most effective leadership development programs have a systematic and strategic combination of challenging, varied job experiences and coaching to learn leadership. Some agencies send non-supervisory employees to external leadership programs offered by the USDA Graduate School, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and universities. However, these programs are limited in scope and number. Furthermore, field employees told OPM that they are unable to participate in these programs, due to travel limitations and the lack of information about available programs.

The assessment center concept was introduced in 1956 by AT&T as a way to evaluate the executive potential of their employees. It involves the use of multiple assessors (people who evaluate a candidate's behavior) on multiple exercises simulating the types of work activities found in a manager's job. The assessors pool their judgments by discussing the candidate's performance and rating them on their competencies. The assessment center approach gained wide acceptance in the private sector as it was viewed as a realistic job preview enabling more accurate and valid

selection and promotion decisions, and providing diagnostic information about the candidate's strengths and weaknesses.

In 1969, the Internal Revenue Service became the first federal agency to adopt the assessment center process, which later spread throughout federal, state and local governments. At one point, the U.S. Civil Service Commission sponsored a Federal Executive Development Program with an assessment center for high potential candidates throughout the federal government.

In time, assessment centers began to disappear, largely because of the costs. Recently, there has been an attempt to replicate assessment center-type exercises using the computer and the telephone. Such approaches might be useful for agencies to identify potential supervisors for inclusion in a "pool" or for selection.

CONCLUSION

To be successful in the 21st Century, first-line supervisors must master a broad array of technical and leadership skills. Given fewer managerial positions, it has become increasingly important to identify the right people for them. Federal agencies must do better of making these selections. One of the most common reasons for leaving an organization is "poor supervisors and managers." So, as the federal government struggles to confront its human capital crisis through targeted recruitment and innovative retention strategies, it must ensure that it has an effective leadership cadre. Doing so means that agencies must pay closer attention to the selection processes and tools used for making selections.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Agencies should balance technical competencies with managerial and leadership competencies when identifying and selecting first-line supervisors.**
- 2. Agencies should identify potential leaders and develop a candidate pool used for current and future vacancies. External candidates may supplement pool candidates, as appropriate.**
- 3. Agencies should use as many assessment tools as practical, from conducting structured interviews to automated simulation.**

SECTION THREE

Preparing and Developing First-Line Supervisors

“Two things seem pretty apparent to me. One was that in order to be a (Mississippi River) pilot, a man has got to learn more than any man ought to be allowed to know; and the other was, that he must learn it all over again in a different way every 24 hours.”

Mark Twain

INTRODUCTION

Developing top-notch supervisors is a difficult task. While there are some excellent agency programs underway, many agencies have programs that turn out supervisors who are poorly prepared and not well supported to carry out the very difficult role in which they find themselves. OPM’s report, *Supervisors in the Federal Government: A Wake-up Call* was a sobering reminder to agencies that much needs to be done in this area.

This OPM report was soon followed by the release of the 2002 President’s Management Agenda. The first of five government-wide goals cited in the agenda is the strategic management of human capital. This goal cannot be accomplished without first addressing the first-line supervisor issues previously identified. Given the growing replacement needs for strong leaders, many agencies—but not all—are acting to fill the demand.

Ray Blunt, Leadership Coach at the Council for Excellence in Government, articulated this challenge in *Organizations Growing Leaders: Best Practices and Principles in the Public Service*. Blunt writes, “Currently, leaders at all levels of government are often selected using criteria that are completely at odds with the new leader competencies needed today and in the future—flexibility/adaptability, accountability, strategic thinking/vision, and customer service.”²² He then lists proven principles for growing leaders:

1. challenging, job-based experiences selected by senior leaders as a development strategy
2. the involvement of future leaders in a substantial way, with senior leaders in the organization’s strategic agenda as mentors and through real action learning team projects
3. the use of executive core qualifications competencies as a template for leadership development—the same competencies by which senior leaders are selected and held accountable.

Based on this list, recommendations from Academy-convened expert panels, and promising public and private programs, one critical fact stands out: Excellent development programs for first-line supervisors are integrated into overall leader development programs that support mission accomplishment.

This section:

- Provides information about the progress that agencies have made toward improving skills and first-line supervisors’ management.
- Identifies areas where major problems remain unaddressed.
- Provides information where significant progress has been made and can be furthered.
- Gives insight on how to assess the strengths and weaknesses of existing programs.

As noted earlier, most agencies recognize that they do an inadequate job of selecting new supervisors and managers. In the Academy survey, only 29% of supervisors agreed that their agencies did a good job selecting new supervisors and managers.

Fortunately, the area of supervisory and leader development presents a brighter picture where agencies have made considerable progress. Many

²²*Organizations Growing Leaders: Best Practices and Principles in the Public Service*. IBM Endowment for the Business of Government. Ray Blunt, December 2001.

agencies have directed their planning and resources at leader development of both the supervisory cadre they have already selected and groups of employees from which they plan to select future leaders. (Efforts above the first-line supervisory level will be addressed in later reports.)

Major agencies have invested heavily in early leader development because failing to do so costs even more. Consider the following:

“When someone assumes a new or different leadership role today, he or she has about a 40% chance of demonstrating disappointing performance, voluntarily leaving the position, or being terminated within 12 to 18 months.”²³

The authors mention several reasons:

- 82% percent fail to build partnerships and teamwork with subordinates and peers;
- 58% are confused or unclear about what is expected of them.
- 50% lack the required internal political savvy.²⁴

Here, the cost to organizational performance is incredibly high, while the return on investment for programs that successfully reverse these shortcomings is significant.

Quantification of these returns remain fairly rare, but a recent article in Chief Learning Officer²⁵ cites one customer as reporting savings of \$1,400 per person per training session. Another saved an estimated \$175,000 per 125 learners. These numbers may be unique to a particular product, but being able to actually quantify return on investment (ROI) is exciting.

Many federal and private sector organizations understand that leadership development is not just training, but a way to get results and shape change. For example, the IRS and Defense Logistics Agency have been driving significant change in how they organize and operate to carry out their respective missions.

Excellent leader development programs exist in the public and private sectors. First, consider what makes an excellent program. An Academy

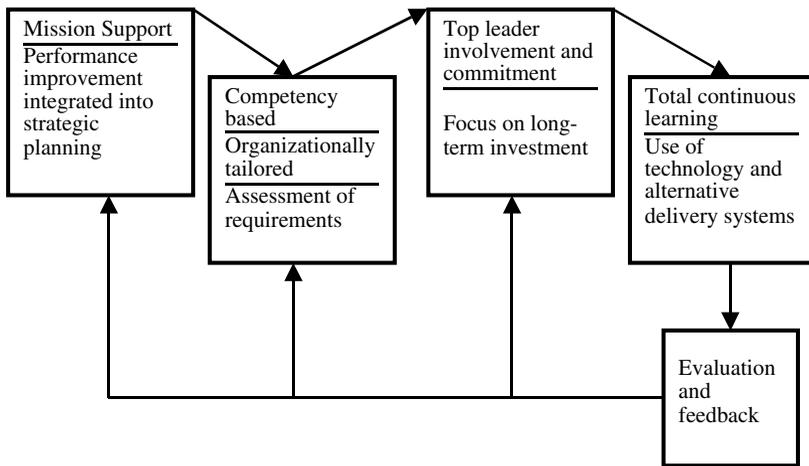
²³*Coaching for Leadership: How the World's Greatest Coaches Help Leaders Learn.* Marshall Goldsmith, Laurence Lyons and Alyssa Freas. Josey Bass/Pfeiffer, San Francisco, 2000. P.10.

²⁴Office of Personnel Management defines political savvy as: “Identify the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Approach each problem situation with a clear perception of organizational and political reality; recognize the impact of alternative courses of action.”

²⁵*Building Leaders and Driving Change.* Albert A. Vicere, Dr. Ed., November 2002.

report defined nine practices as critical to a successful developmental program.²⁶ These practices can be a model for assessing where federal leader development programs are today and for identifying areas where agencies may want to take action. The nine critical practices are outlined in the figure below.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT CRITICAL PRACTICES



These practices may be grouped into five major categories:

1. Achieving the performance linkage/integrating development in strategic planning.
2. Developing competency-based programs/assessing multi-dimensional requirements.
3. Involving top leadership/investing for the long-term.
4. Instituting a continuous learning approach/using technology and alternative delivery methods.
5. Establishing an extensive evaluation process.

For analysis and organizational purposes, this report assesses critical development practices as they relate to developing first-line supervisors. Fitted into this broad framework are (1) the research questions guiding the study, (2) specific questions used in focus groups with supervisors and managers, and (3) interviews with agency leaders and human resources executives. In many cases, specific answers will be quoted.

²⁶*Investment in Productivity*. National Academy of Public Administration, Washington, DC, October 1996.

Achieving the Performance Linkage/ Integrating Development in Strategic Planning

The most progressive agencies start developing and selecting their leadership teams during the college recruitment and entry selection process. These organizations include problem solving assessment, interpersonal, teamwork, and technical skills in their selection processes. However, these practices are not the norm for most federal agencies.

Entry into the organization is the point when prospective leaders start to learn about the mission, values, and opportunities in the organization. Important to the accomplishment of the mission is an agency environment in which everyone understands the mission, values, and challenges of accomplishing the mission for their direct customers and the American people at large. A positive environment builds a team that feels good about accomplishment of the mission, which understands how the agency operates and as a result, understands the individual opportunities and requirements to compete and advance in the organization.

Given the looming retirement wave, agencies are attentive to the need to focus on primary mission areas, where most first-line and other leaders will be drawn. In many cases, this attention means building new and more robust first-line supervisory development programs and, in some cases, college recruitment efforts.

Continuous intake of quality people affects agency performance and serves as an important aspect of strategic planning. Excellent examples of long-term agency action are the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of State. There also are good examples of small agencies, such as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), that view leader development programs as mission-oriented. CMS expresses its Leadership and Management Development Strategy this way: "The aim of the strategy is to increase the effectiveness with which CMS fulfills its organizational mission: To assure health care security for beneficiaries. Introducing new systems and practices that promote high standards of leadership can help us achieve this outcome. As our proficiency in the disciplines of management and leadership grows, we will become better stewards of the programs entrusted to us by the public."

Summary of comments from focus groups

First-line supervisory training is not an integral part of agencies' leadership development programs. Agencies are not communicating the prerequisite for advancement and/or promotion.

“Is the training and development you receive sufficient?”

- Getting training is very much an individual initiative, rather than a planned organization requirement.
- Many do not know what type of training is available or how to access it.
- There is no specific link between employees’ self-development efforts and promotion selection. The groups questioned the “quality” of those selected and felt that “who you know”—not job qualifications—often influenced selection.

This last observation illustrates the lack of an integrated plan, even at the supervisory level. If employees believe that training sessions are the only prerequisite for promotion, real requirements and competencies surely are not being communicated effectively.

Agencies have much to do in linking leader development to mission. This includes developing better recruitment processes that use line managers to give realistic previews of the organization and job; building more formal and systematic intern programs; and focusing selection and development on competencies that go beyond the technical. The Academy’s interviews with senior leaders showed the need for a stronger focus on teamwork. This focus was emphasized even more during leader development discussions held at the Academy which involved participants from NASA, the Department of Energy, U.S. Geological Survey, Social Security Administration, and Department of Health and Human Services.

To shorten the leader development process, several agencies have begun to consider ways to bring mid-level private sector employees into supervisory and leadership roles. Intaking more experienced individuals is based partially on the portability aspects of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). As mid-level intake occurs, the somewhat weak mission link to leader development may be further strained unless agencies put in place support systems that can provide these new leaders with the mission and culture knowledge necessary to be effective (this assumes critical skills are covered). Agencies should consider higher-level orientations on their mission, values, and “how they work,” with presentations given by senior level leaders.

The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) is doing innovative work in building a strong mission link. In an interview with Major General Mary Saunders, its Vice Director emphasized several efforts in this area:

“In DLA, first-line supervisors often feel that decisions are made above their organizational level and that they have little opportunity to influence those

decisions. DLA is looking at new employee orientation programs, supervisory training, and even teaching interview skills for first-line supervisors. It also has a robust system for communications flow up and down the chain of command."

"DLA is changing its whole approach to performance management for supervisors. It is requiring 'evidence' of successful performance by linking the performance plan to agency organizational objectives. It is requiring metrics and clear linkages to objectives so that appraisal ratings will be 'obvious' by comparing achievements with objectives. It drills the metrics down to team, directorate levels so that responsibility is clearly identified and each person's role in achieving objectives is clear. It is enforcing accountability and entering into 'social contracts' with the supervisory workforce that include agency expectations (is the supervisor living up to the agency culture and values, for example), not just performance outputs."

"DLA is pursuing different training strategies for 'old' and new supervisors, e.g. (bringing in first-line supervisors to listen to them concerning ongoing initiatives and to get their input on these). It also uses these sessions to 'sensitize' supervisors, e.g. (to the capabilities of disabled workers/applicants)."

"DLA uses its Executive Resources Board to look at what kind of training, development, and progress supervisors are getting and making. It takes a 3-year look at what development each supervisor needs to get (including operational assignments and temporary change of duty assignments from field to HQ and vice versa). It is moving people to different assignments as part of the developmental process. It encourages self-development, and mobility (new supervisor selections sign mobility agreements) and encourages external selection to improve quality/diversity."

"It also is working on DLA culture (using the Dennison model) to build a better/stronger organizational culture. The model includes 360-degree assessments and uses employee input on how well DLA management is emulating the objective culture. They do a lot of work to keep the field and non-supervisory employees apprised of how DLA is doing in achieving organizational objectives and implementing the many initiatives that came from climate surveys conducted throughout the agency. The information flow includes information for employees on how to get ahead in the agency. The initiatives include an effectiveness assessment piece that allows DLA to make course corrections as needed."

Developing Competency-Based Programs/ Assessing Multi-Dimensional Requirements

The best leader development programs reviewed had defined competencies for each component. Many used OPM-identified ones as most important for first-line supervisors. Yet the programs were flexible enough to allow for tailored learning experiences using individual development plans or other means.

Several agencies are adopting formal processes, such as military-style central selection or promotion boards, assessment processes and centers, higher headquarters panels, and reformed performance management systems. These are used to identify individuals and create their competency profiles for middle and senior supervisor development. Because of the large numbers of first-line supervisory positions and potential replacements, this careful selection and development planning is not always used. In many large organizations, selection of first-line supervisors is done at the local level without headquarters guidance or review. New on-line competency assessment tools offer considerable promise for expanding more controlled and systematic simulation assessment processes.

The OPM supervisory competencies have excellent research credibility, but they do not reflect agency-specific mission challenges, values, and leadership environment. This lack of organizational tie can lead to frustration when program participants and leaders find that development does not match organizational leadership expectations. In the recent Chief Learning Officer article, three of the four leading private sector models were based on internally developed competency models. In the words of Cisco's Mary Eckenrod, Director of Executive Development and Talent Resource, "We wanted relevance to our business and culture." Another model was tailoring its commercially developed competency model to better fit its business and cultural needs. Similarly, many government agencies tailor the OPM competencies to better assure the mission link and encourage top leadership support and long term funding. Agencies may want to consider this step to be top priority.

Where are federal agencies on having competency based programs? The Academy's data suggest a mixed but encouraging picture.

Approximately half of those who responded to the Academy survey believed that they received training to stay current with the technical and the managerial aspects of the job. An encouraging 62% agreed they were able to apply principles learned from training.

The responses from the Academy focus groups (listed below) indicate that supervisors are receiving training that addresses relevant competencies needed for their job performance.

"Is the training and development you receive sufficient?"

- *"In my area yes."*
- *"It is always ongoing but is very good here."*
- *"Training is good."*

- *“Never have been refused, but only request pertinent courses.”*
- *“Training for supervisors is excellent.”*

Further, supervisors generally are confident regarding their level of competency. For example:

- 81% of the focus group participants agreed that, “I am basically satisfied that I have the competencies I need to fully meet my supervisory responsibilities.”
- Assessing their level of competence with respect to 26 management competencies, a substantial majority of survey respondents considered themselves competent (“very competent” or “somewhat competent”) in all competencies.
- Regarding competencies that most directly relate to the first-line supervisor responsibilities, those who considered themselves “very competent” were in the 80 percent range. Specifically, “Flexibility” 83%; “Integrity and Honesty” 96%; “Team Building” 81%; “Accountability” 87%; “Customer Service” 88%; “Decisiveness” 86%; “Problem Solving” 88%; “Interpersonal Skills” 86%; and “Written Communications” 87%

However, focus group answers (below) suggest that the competencies are not always clearly articulated and a mission link may be unclear:

- *“Training is provided, but execution of skills is not often evident.”*
- *“Sometimes there is too much training.”*
- *“There is no perceived direct link between training and promotion; those that have had training don’t always get the promotion. The lack of such a link acts as a disincentive to applying for training.”*

Competency models can be transferred from one agency to another, so it is useful to consider the following questions when deciding which of the other agency programs would be a good fit.

- Is the leader development program based on competencies that are translated into job-specific skills and knowledge sets, with learning experiences devised to transfer the skills and test for competencies?
- Are the competencies tailored so that the agency mission link is obvious?
- How are the participating individuals selected and their performance and development assessed?

For this report, focus groups of federal first-line supervisors and managers were used extensively. The following summarizes the most common themes voiced concerning the current environment and skill bases. These

themes also address the adequacy of agency development programs, the varied suggestions for improving training and development, and the skill competencies required for first-line supervisors.

Perceived Environment and Current Skill Base

- supervisors lack communications skills, both written and oral
- lack of team building skills
- have general technical knowledge
- first-line supervisors are not chosen for their “people skills”
- not well trained in supervision
- do not know how to deal with people issues and lack sensitivity
- lack listening skills
- no early/pre-selection training for supervisors
- minimal and dated supervisory training
- lack of resources and time for development

Perceived (Emerging) Requirement

- need topnotch, relevant supervisory training on an ongoing basis
- plans must include development assignments and cross training
- need more “impersonal skills” due to technology and need to accomplish work at an accelerated pace
- how to manage technology, funding, communication, and quality
- need mentoring and coaching skills (as well as opportunities to use those skills)
- need core leadership training aligned with an agency’s strategic plan
- technical skills training in certain administrative areas (e.g., budget and development management, legislation and regulation writing, and personnel management)
- need continuing education to include academic education
- training in managing a diverse workforce
- need systems to evaluate skills and abilities

A more complete review of focus group comments in this area can be found in Appendix C.

Department of Defense components and IRS have excellent competency models. Several other agencies are building them. Still others have excellent plans, but need to implement the programs.

Involving Top Leadership/Investing For the Long Term

During interviews with senior level leaders, the Academy project team found especially strong support for leader development at the Depart-

ment of Defense components, IRS, VBA, Social Security Administration, and numerous small agencies. It is not surprising that these organizations had excellent integrated mission-linked leader development programs. Other agency executives had excellent plans in the implementation phase, which will require continued top leadership involvement and funding. This can be difficult given changes in political leadership. The contribution to agency mission must be readily apparent and demonstrated through improved performance measures.

When programs are not well-defined or systemic, leadership turnover can be very disruptive. Of those who responded to the Academy survey, only 31% believed that turnover at political levels positively influenced organizational outcomes. In the federal sector, it is important to build a program that is fully integrated throughout the organization and viewed as vital to the agency mission.

To achieve continued support, senior leaders must own the process and be actively involved. Based on senior level interview responses, agencies that coupled senior involvement in training, planning, and delivery with active coaching and mentoring programs had better senior support and program expectations.

Focus group and survey responses suggest concerns about the level of involvement in developing future leaders. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement that, "I am able to spend an appropriate amount of time coaching, teaching and supervising my staff." Of the focus group respondents, 29% agreed, 51% disagreed, and 20% were neutral. Responses to the Academy survey were somewhat more favorable but still with 46% agreeing, 38% disagreeing and 16% neutral.

As to the statement, "I have sufficient time to satisfactorily perform my supervisory duties," 49% of the focus group participants disagreed, 32% agreed, and 19% were neutral. This question was not asked in the Academy survey, but as to the related statement, "I have sufficient control and influence over my organization's outcome," 38% disagreed; 37% agreed; and 25% were neutral.

Absent significant senior leader involvement and ownership, the chances for adequate long term funding are not good. In a political environment where funding and budget issues continue to remain difficult, systemic integration and senior involvement and ownership cannot be over-emphasized.

Instituting a Continuous Learning Approach/ Using Technology and Alternative Delivery Methods

Are lifelong learning and continual self-development part of the agency's imperatives/vision? Given the rapid continual changes of the Information Age, this is a vital question for agencies.

The answer must be yes. Public and private sector employees are embracing lifelong learning and continual self-development. The emphasis on continued learning is so dramatic that agencies that have not developed such a culture may hurt their ability to recruit quality future staff. For example, the DLA training program for new supervisors has not only a two-year, phased, multi-delivery mandated training program but also a follow-on 40-hour requirement for bi-annual continuing education.

More progressive federal leader development programs include a mix of coaching, leader led development, actual on-the-job experience, formal classroom, and active and web-based learning. The Academy's three expert panels used during the information gathering process recommended this approach.²⁷ The difficulty for many agencies in using this approach is the perceived or actual mobility required for such a program. There is a fear that they will lose good employees or that they, the leaders, will also have to move. Several agencies are looking at adapting the military model of continual training, on-the-job experience and assessment. This takes advantage of new electronic capabilities for remotely located assignments and projects and team participation for future programs. A number of "old line" and regulatory agencies have used this approach for years; the State Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and National Credit Union Administration are examples. For the most part, the employees understand the programs are part of the job and important for the mission and career progression. Where mobility is required, the programs must address the needs of dual-career families and the cost of housing. The military services are working to address these issues, through such programs as family member employment and logistical support to separated family members.

Establishing an Extensive Evaluation Process

Evaluating the leader development process likely is the weakest area of all the critical practices. This stems in part from the fact that many of the

²⁷*The 21st Century Federal Manager: A Study of Changing Roles and Competencies. Preliminary Research Findings.* National Academy of Public Administration. July 2002.

better programs are relatively new and lack conclusive performance data for individuals and the organization. Further, many agencies still struggle with defining and tracking good performance measures to link the development programs to improved performance.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has done some innovative work evaluating its leadership program. USGS believes everyone is responsible for leadership and can be a leader. It undertook a formal evaluation of their Leadership Development Program, whose goal is to create a leadership-centered culture that emphasizes the importance of people to ensure high-quality science for society's benefit. It developed an evaluation process to study the diffusion of leadership behavior throughout the organization.

USGS' evaluation model is rather simple: KNOWLEDGE-PERSUASION-DECISION-CONFIRMATION-IMPLEMENTATION. Fundamentally, people must gain exposure to and learn about an idea to develop awareness—the knowledge stage. They must be able to try it out and gain some level of comfort to build their interest—this is persuasion. At some point, they must decide whether they want to adopt it, considering its convenience, risks, and probability of success. They then confirm their decision through continued use. They reach implementation when the innovation has become part of the fabric of their lives. Thus, USGS evaluation methodology looks at motivation (the underlying reason for involvement in leadership activities); context (the gender, seniority, position type, year of birth, years in current position; knowledge (formal learning through classes and materials); experience (informal learning by watching and doing); familiarity (degree of comfort and confidence with leadership); behavior (intentional leadership activity); and adoption (ultimate decision and implementation).

Following a one-year evaluation, USGS determined that the diffusion of leadership is moving in the right direction. After attending courses, participants are extremely positive about their experience which has had an effect on their attitudes and behaviors. They are integrating leadership qualities into their workplace behavior.

The increased use of 360-degree appraisals for performance management or development planning is another bright spot. Aggregate data can provide information on the development program's overall effectiveness and areas that should be strengthened. On-line administration has made these instruments available at a reasonable cost for first-line supervisors, managers, and executives.

These instruments may provide an answer to why 82% of managers and supervisors surveyed felt enthusiastic and proud of their performance as a manager. Only 47% of non-supervisory employees, however, agreed with the statement, "My supervisor has good management skills."²⁸

CONCLUSION

Many agencies have quality first-line supervisor development programs. Those that do not can find many excellent models subject to minor modifications. It is possible to contract out much of the program to private sector vendors and/or other federal agencies, provided that senior leadership maintains ownership and that mission link is assured.

Primary problems relate to supervisor programs that are not part of an overall leader development program. These problems include the lack of funding or time to accomplish training and development and different expectations among team players and leaders. Supervisors report that they receive adequate development and do their job well. Meanwhile, employees report that supervisors do not lead well and that they leave organizations due to poor leadership.

The solution is an integrated leader development and team building program that starts with an agency's mission and links all parts of the team building and leader development process. Currently, this is not happening in many agencies. First-line supervisors competencies have not been linked to mission, nor have leader development and formal training portions of it been linked to competencies. As a result, supervisors and employers have a gap in their understanding of roles and mission accomplishment.

Feedback from supervisors in focus groups, the online survey, and other sources indicate that leader development is a positive part of the overall supervisory intake and management program. Employee surveys still find perceptions, however, that supervisors are much more skilled in functional mission area than in dealing with and leading people. Technical competencies are very important to lead, but so too is a clear understanding of culture, roles, and communications in a mission context. This underscores the need to tie the overall leader development program together. It is the senior leader's role to establish the playing field, support the supervisor, and facilitate communications.

²⁸*Merit Principles Survey 2000*. U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, January 2000.

All players must have a common view of the agency's mission, challenges, team roles, and expectations. If leaders and team members do not share an understanding of how the game is played, there will be conflict or a perception that people are not performing to expectation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Integrate first-line supervisory development with all other levels of leadership development.

Senior leadership should see the total program as a tool for leading the agency's long-term mission.

2. Ensure that technical competencies continue to be developed and are considered to be a critical need.

One key role for a first-line supervisor is to "provide tangible immediate solutions to specific work challenges in order to improve the performance of their employees."²⁹ Leadership and people skills are important, but that does not mean technical competencies should be lost.

3. Focus on developing leadership competencies.

First-line supervisors must have the leadership and people skills, as well as the technical competencies, to be successful. This will be difficult if a candidate has not had an opportunity to demonstrate those skills in a work situation. A successful first-line supervisor development program must focus on this issue.

4. Provide management adequate tools for assessing leadership competencies.

At whatever level selections of first-line supervisors are to be made, adequate assessment tools must be available. Many agency and vendor tools are available, the GSA Schedule being one good source for vendor candidates. Agencies should consider their specific needs and select and fund the right system to work for them.

5. Listen to supervisory needs and concerns.

First-line supervisors can improve or hurt productivity, and attract or drive away excellent employees. Their ability to do positive things depends significantly on how higher level management listens to them, understands their needs, and provides the support for them to do the job right.

²⁹*Redefining Performance*. Corporate Leadership Council, 2002–2003 Members Meeting Series.

6. Focus on teamwork at all levels.

Today's work world has changed. Cooperation, coordination, and teamwork are now a necessity. Successful organizations focus on teamwork as a part of the first-line supervisor's development.

7. Recognize the critical role of first-line supervisors.

Top managers and leaders must recognize first-line supervisors as members of the total leadership team and ensure that they are properly included.

SECTION FOUR

Managing the Performance of First-Line Supervisors

INTRODUCTION

As Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman write in *First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently*, first-line supervisors set expectations and select, motivate, and develop persons.³⁰ This section focuses on how well agency executives and managers manage supervisor's performance including performance management responsibilities. This is important as there is a correlation between management of a supervisor's performance and the supervisor's management of employee performance. Jeffery Pfeffer, Professor of Organizational Behavior at the Stanford School of Business Administration, points out, "...putting people first entails ensuring that those in leadership positions have people-oriented values and manage in ways consistent with building high performance work environments."³¹ The "ensuring" part of this statement relates to how the organization manages its leaders so that they can function as leaders.

³⁰*First, Break All The Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently*. Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman, Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 1999.

³¹*The Human Equation: Building Profits by Putting People First*. Jeffery Pfeffer, Harvard Business School Press, 1998, p. 297.

The Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) presented the challenge as follows:

“Even with adequate tools and systems, agencies still need supervisors and managers who have the capacity and will to manage their human capital resources. Unfortunately, too many employees believe their supervisors and managers lack the necessary competence to carry out their managerial responsibilities. This is a particular problem because many studies have found that the most common reason employees leave an organization is because of poor supervisors or managers. Therefore, ensuring high quality federal supervisors and managers is very important.”

“Even if agencies succeed in improving their ability to hire and retain the right people with the right skills, they still must be able to manage their employees effectively to get the work done. Managers and organizations need to be able to define and forecast work as well as determine and anticipate the skills needed to do the work. They also need the capability to ensure that employees have these skills and the authority to assign work based on employee competencies. Managers also need better incentives for rewarding excellent performance and disincentives for mediocrity. To carry out these management tasks, managers need effective tools and systems as well as the capacity and will to manage well.”³²

MANAGING SUPERVISORY PERFORMANCE

To consider this challenge fully, it is important to first address how well supervisors carry out their performance management responsibilities vis-à-vis the employees they supervise. Four related questions deserve careful consideration, as well:

1. How well do agencies set performance expectations for supervisors, provide performance feedback to them and assess their performance, including the use of the probationary period for first time supervisors?
2. To what extent and in what ways does compensation, including awards and recognition, affect supervisor performance and retention?
3. To what extent and in what ways do time and workload affect supervisor capacity and the performance of supervisors?

³²*Making the Public Service Work—Recommendations for Change*. The Office of Policy and Evaluation, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, September 3, 2002.

4. To what extent do supervisors have or lack effective management tools and systems, management support, and resources?

How Well Do Supervisors Carry Out Their Performance Management Responsibilities?

This section examines what supervisors have said about their ability to manage the performance of employees they supervise; and what their employees and various studies and evaluations have reported about how well supervisors manage employee performance.

Supervisor Self Evaluation

How supervisors feel about their overall performance can indicate how well they believe they are meeting their performance management responsibilities. Responses to the following statements indicate a reasonably high level of satisfaction.

1. I feel enthusiastic and proud of my performance as a manager.
 - 80% of the Academy focus group participants agreed while 20% disagreed or were neutral.
 - Responses to the on-line survey essentially were the same as 79% agreed, and 21% disagreed or were neutral."
2. I am doing a good job for the most part.
 - 91% of the focus group participants agreed.
 - 77% of the survey participants agreed.

Supervisors generally are confident about their competency. For example:

- 81% of the focus group participants agreed that, "I am basically satisfied that I have the competencies I need to fully meet my supervisory responsibilities."
- Assessing their level of competence with respect to 26 management competencies, a substantial majority of the Academy survey respondents considered themselves competent ("very competent" or "somewhat competent") in all competencies.
- Concerning competencies most directly related to the first level supervisor responsibilities, the percentages of those who considered themselves "very competent" was in the 80s.
- The percentage of supervisors who rated themselves "very competent" declined for those competencies that were more closely related to higher management levels. For example, less than 60% considered

themselves “very competent” with respect to “External Awareness,” “Strategic Thinking,” “Vision,” “Entrepreneurship,” “Financial Management,” “Technology Management,” and “Political Savvy.”

- With respect to human resources management competence, supervisors and team leaders gave themselves relatively low marks, with 66% rating themselves as “very competent.”

However, when asked, to react to more specific statements about how well they carry out their performance management responsibilities, supervisors were less sanguine.

1. I am able to spend an appropriate amount of time coaching, teaching and supervising my staff.
 - Of the focus group respondents, 29% agreed, 51% disagreed, and 20% were neutral.
 - Responses to the on-line survey were somewhat more favorable with 46% agreeing, 38% disagreeing and 16% neutral.
2. I have sufficient time to satisfactorily perform my supervisory duties.
 - Of the focus group participants, 49% disagreed, 32% agreed, and 19% were neutral.
 - This question was not asked in the Academy survey, but in responding to the related statement, I have sufficient control and influence over my organization’s outcome,” 38% disagreed; 37% agreed, and 25% were neutral.

Employee Evaluation of Supervisors

Considerable data indicate that employees generally do not give their supervisors high marks for their supervisory capabilities. In the 1999 NPR Employee Survey, only half of the respondents reported that their immediate supervisor or team leader did a good or very good job. Some agency surveys reveal much the same. For example, responses from employees at one cabinet level agency indicate some concern about supervisory practices:

- 40% said information about what is happening in their organization was communicated to their work group in a very timely or generally timely manner.
- 47% said that when performance is discussed, work group members are either almost always or usually told of ways to improve their performance.
- 34% said that wasted effort seldom, if ever, occurs in their work unit due to poor planning.

At another agency, the percentage of positive employee survey responses to the supervisory dimension rose from 44% in 1997 to 58% in 2001, a notable change yet leaving considerable room for improvement.

The recently administered OPM Government Wide Survey on Human Capital should shed considerable light on this question. Responses to such questions as the following will be especially informative:

- In my organization, leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
- Supervisors/team leaders are receptive to change.
- I hold my organization's leaders in high regard.
- My organizations leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.
- My supervisor supports my need to balance work and family issues.
- I am held accountable for achieving results
- Discussions with my supervisor about my performance are worthwhile.
- Employees are rewarded for providing high quality products and services to customers.
- I have sufficient resources to get my job done.
- I am kept informed about changes in personnel policies and goals.
- I know how my work relates to the agency's mission and goals.

The Brookings's Institution's June 2002 report, *The Troubled State of the Federal Public Service* further indicates how employees feel about their supervisors. Based on its surveys of a randomly selected sample of federal employees, the report found:

"... Federal employees grew less satisfied with their jobs over the past year. They also reported lower morale among their co-workers, continued difficulty securing the resources they need to do their jobs well, growing uncertainty regarding the link between their work and the mission of their agencies."³³

More specifically, the Brookings survey found:

- Federal employees were less likely to come to work in 2002 for the chance to accomplish something worthwhile. The percentage of federal employees who said they come to work solely for the paycheck increased from 31% in 2001 to 41% in 2002.
- Substantial numbers of federal employees believe their organizations do not provide essential tools to do their jobs well. Forty percent said

³³*The Troubled State of the Federal Public Service*. Paul C. Light, The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, June 27, 2002, p. 3.

their organizations only sometimes or rarely provide access to sufficient training to allow them to do their job well.

- Substantial numbers rate their coworkers' overall morale as somewhat or very low—46% in 2002 and 42% in 2001.³⁴

These negative findings cannot be attributed solely to the quality of supervision, but it is not unreasonable to place some responsibility with first level supervisors.

A substantial portion of supervisors clearly are not perceived as effectively carrying out their performance management responsibilities. This was recognized in MSPB's June 1998 report, *Federal Supervisors and Strategic Human Resources Management*, which stated:

"Our research has led us to conclude that most federal supervisors do a commendable job of performing the technical work of their units, but have a much harder time with the human resources management tasks that are necessary to the ongoing effectiveness of the organization...Our research has noted at least three specific areas of human resources management in which such problems exist for supervisors—staffing, training, and performance management."³⁵

With regard to performance management, the Board's report notes data that indicate employees' dissatisfaction with the way supervisors manage performance. Employees are especially critical of supervisors unwillingness to take action against poor performers and provide employees with frequent or constructive feedback.³⁶ OPM's 1999 review of first-line supervisors concluded that, "Past studies have shown that supervisors may not be prepared to meet these demands because they are often selected solely on their technical knowledge with little attention paid to their ability to lead people."³⁷

Performance Expectations, Feedback, and Appraisal

Selection is the cornerstone of building a strong and effective supervisory corps. The next key element is setting expectations, providing feedback on how well supervisors meet expectations, and appraising performance.

³⁴Ibid, pp. 6 and 33.

³⁵*Federal Supervisors and Strategic Human Resources Management*. U. S. Merit Systems Protection Board, June 1998, p. 2

³⁶Ibid, pp. 4-5.

³⁷Op Cit, p.2.

This includes two consequences of appraisal: removing a first time supervisor for failing to satisfactorily complete the probationary period and disciplining supervisors for conduct or performance problems.

In its 1999 study of supervisors, OPM found that:

“Most agencies rate the performance of first level supervisors in much the same way as they do non-supervisors. Leadership responsibilities are not assessed extensively. Most agencies simply add a generic element covering supervisory responsibilities to the technical work elements. While technical competence is critical at the first-line level, the ability to get work done through others is vital as well.”

“While agencies may tailor performance appraisal systems to meet organizational needs, we found few innovations in evaluating supervisory performance. Some use 360° feedback processes, which have produced good results in terms of assessing the leadership qualities of supervisors from the employees’ point of view. A couple of agencies are in the early stages of implementing pass/fail systems, but have not done formal assessments of their effectiveness. The flexibility exists under current regulations for agencies to do more experimentation with systems that reinforce desired supervisory behaviors.”

Supervisors reported that their performance evaluations focus on the technical aspects of their work or on employee complaints, rather than on their positive achievements as leaders. The following are representative opinions of the supervisors we interviewed:

- (Our) pass/fail system relies on continuous face-to-face contact, which we are not getting, and the de facto appraisal is based on the number and types of complaints received by our managers.
- We are evaluated based on the morale of our subordinates and the lack of problems. If there are no problems, management feels there is no need for an appraisal.
- There isn’t much feedback; supervisory duties are less important than our non-supervisory work, which takes up most of the performance evaluation.
- Management’s concern is that nothing goes wrong, not that a job is particularly well done.³⁸

MSPB’s survey presents a mixed picture of how supervisors feel about this matter and indicate that improvement is needed.

- 84% agreed with the statement, “I know what is expected of me on the job.”

³⁸*Supervisors in the Federal Government: A Wake-Up Call*. OPM, 2001 pp. 16–17.

- Only 59% agreed with the statement, “My performance standards are clearly linked to my organization’s goals.”
- With respect to fairness, 58% agreed that, “The standards used to evaluate my performance are fair.”
- 19% agreed that, “The performance appraisal system motivates me to do a better job.” Only 21% agreed that, “The performance appraisal rating system has helped [me] communicate about my job with my supervisor.”
- 47% agreed that, “My supervisor keeps me informed about how well I am doing,” and 32% disagreed.

As for on-line survey responses, a substantial number of supervisors/team leaders found shortcomings with the performance planning and appraisal process.

- 51% disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, “I receive adequate guidance from those above me.”
- The response to the statement, “I am encouraged to be creative in approaching work.” was more positive as 57% agreed, yet 18% disagreed and 25% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Concern about the quality of setting expectations, providing feedback, and appraising raises the question: Are higher level managers and executives held accountable for how well they manage their supervisors? Responses by SES members in OPM’s 1999 SES survey shed some light:

- “To what extent are your SES pay level increases linked to the performance of your organization?”: 40% responded “not at all” or “did not know. Only 28% responded, “A great deal.”
- “To what extent are your SES pay level increases linked to employee input?”: 62% responded not at all or did not know.
- “To what extent are your SES pay level increases linked to customer satisfaction?”: 41% responded not at all or did not know.

As for the basis for performance bonuses, a substantial portion of respondents responded “not at all” or “did not know” about whether bonuses were linked to organizational performance, customer satisfaction, and employee input. These responses indicate that a significant number of executives are not assessed on factors that directly relate to how well they have managed the supervisors, offices and programs for which they are responsible.

The OPM survey also indicated that only a minority of SES members believe their own performance evaluations are useful. Specifically, the OPM survey found:

- 29% agreed that, “My last performance evaluation helped me to identify areas for improvement.”
- 34% agreed that, “My last performance evaluation helped me to identify my strengths.”
- 18% received feedback on their performance more than semi-annually.

Use of Probationary Period

The probationary period is a potentially powerful tool for managing the performance of first time supervisors. Federal personnel law (5 U.S.C. 3321) provides for “a period of probation...before initial appointment as a supervisor or manager becomes final.” It also says that a supervisor or manager “who does not satisfactorily complete the probationary period... shall be returned to a position of no lower grade and pay than the position from which the individual was transferred, assigned or promoted.” Agencies determine the length of the probationary period, and may establish different probationary periods for different occupations or a single one for all agency employees.³⁹

The Academy’s findings indicate that the probationary period is rarely used and probably not thoroughly understood and applied.

- OPM’s Central Personnel Data File data show that from 1990 through 2001:
 - 33 supervisors and managers resigned during their probationary period in lieu of involuntary removal from their supervisory positions.
 - 2 supervisors and managers were reassigned to non-supervisory positions.
 - 25 supervisors and managers were changed to lower-graded non-supervisory positions.
- Among the agencies contacted, none could provide data on the use of the probationary period and most officials could not recall it ever being used. Further, there was virtually no indication that agencies take active steps to ensure that managers and executives are fully aware of this authority or have a system for ensuring that it is considered.

This finding is supported by the significantly larger number of supervisors and managers who are separated, changed to lower grade, or resign for reasons related to unsatisfactory performance and conduct but following the probationary period. The data below from OPM’s database are for

³⁹5 CFR, Part 315, Subpart I—Probation on Initial Appointment to a Supervisory or Managerial Position.

“Supervisor or Manager/Code 2,” which is defined as: “Position requires the exercise of supervisory or managerial responsibilities that meet, at least, the minimum requirements for application of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide or similar standards of minimum supervisory responsibility specified by position classification standards or other directives of the applicable pay schedule or system.”⁴⁰ The OPM data do not distinguish between first level supervisors and managers, a distinction made for this report.

Fiscal Year	Change to Lower Grade	Resignation	Separation
1990	34	634	167
1991	27	1032	118
1992	26	550	134
1993	31	779	168
1994	35	366	127
1995	26	321	128
1996	21	304	127
1997	21	319	132
1998	29	289	119
1999	15	386	109
2000	16	866	207
2001	4	683	107
TOTALS	264	6529	1643

In its 1999 report on supervisors; OPM concluded:

“Supervisors and managers told us that the usual scenario is to shuffle poor supervisors to where they can do the least harm. The probationary period does not appear to weed out those supervisors who are not performing well.”⁴¹

Summary of Performance Management Responsibilities

One basic cause of less than satisfactory management of supervisory performance appears to be a lack of clear expectations in the performance plans of executives and their subordinate managers. Agencies appear not to have developed an integrated and consistent set of management and leadership competencies for higher level managers, executives, first level supervisors.

⁴⁰*The Guide to Personnel Data Standards.* (Update 11, 3/00), Office of Personnel Management, p. 2.

⁴¹*Ibid*, p. 17.

Fortunately, there are indications that agencies have begun to establish a clear chain of performance management accountability from executive through supervisor:

The recently issued “Human Capital Standards” (an OPM, OMB, and GAO joint product) include the following elements that point to such a change:⁴²

- The Standards ask: *Are managers held accountable for effective implementation of human capital plans and overall human capital management?* **Elements of “Yes” are:** There are established mechanisms to communicate human capital plans to all levels of management. Managers understand their role in implementing these plans. Agency policy places responsibility for effective implementation and overall human capital management on supervisors, managers, and leaders. Where appropriate, individual performance plans and evaluations address the accountability for successful implementation of human capital strategies. **Elements of Success are:** Agency policy, programs, and planning documents communicate accountability and responsibility for human capital strategies and human capital management. Human capital partnering is considered in senior leaders’ and managers’ annual performance reviews. Management performance evaluations contain measurable objectives and evidence of success in the management of human capital.
- The Standards ask: *Is there a direct line of sight between employee performance expectations and recognition systems and the agency mission, and are these links communicated and understood?* **Elements of Yes are:** Employees understand their agency’s vision and goals, how their work fits into the organization, and how they contribute to mission accomplishment. Employee performance elements and standards are clearly aligned with the agency mission and goals. Performance expectations for senior executives, managers, supervisors, and employees are based on job analysis; clear, specific, and understandable; reasonable and attainable; measurable, observable or verifiable, and results oriented; communicated in a timely fashion; and foster continual improvement in productivity.

Each member of the workforce is held accountable through individual performance evaluations for achieving results that support the agency strategic goals and objectives. The agency develops supervisory competencies in performance management, and senior

⁴²Draft Human Capital Standards for Success <http://www.opm.gov/humancapital>

executives, managers, and supervisors are evaluated on how fairly and effectively they manage employees' performance. The agency's recognition system is clearly defined, transparent, and has results-oriented criteria in place to reward employees, as individuals or members of groups, at all levels.

- Suggested Performance Indicators are:
 - All employee (non-supervisory, supervisors, managers, SES) performance plans are aligned with agency strategic planning initiatives.
 - Work units have documented performance goals and standards.
 - Agency tracks performance through regular reporting of results.
 - GWS and/or other climate survey results reflect that employees understand what their performance expectations are and how their efforts contribute to mission accomplishment.
 - Manager and leader training courses address performance management and coaching techniques.
 - Review of a sample of performance appraisals shows performance management is a part of supervisors' and managers' appraisal criteria.
 - GWS and/or other employee surveys reflect confidence that awards are based on contribution to mission accomplishment.
- The Standards include the following performance indicators for the question, "Do supervisors and managers use performance results to identify developmental needs and address poor performance?":
 - Agency policy factors performance management into supervisory and management performance plans, including management of poor performance.
 - Agency policy requires corrective action when supervisors or managers fail to address poor performance. Agency managers or leaders enforce agency policy.
 - Agency leaders support and encourage managers and supervisors giving frank and constructive feedback on performance and taking performance actions where appropriate.

OPM has drafted, and hopes to publish soon, a new handbook focused on appraising managerial performance for results.

Certain agencies also are developing new performance appraisal systems for executives, managers, and supervisors that focus on expectations or standards related to leadership and people skills:

- The Small Business Administration's new performance appraisal system for SES and supervisory employees includes, "People Management Responsibilities" as one of the five critical elements. It has

14 performance standards that apply to executives, managers and supervisors. With respect to managing supervisors performance, managers are expected to appraise their supervisors on such matters as “recognizes and rewards superior accomplishment,” “establishes and communicates performance plans...and provides ongoing constructive feedback,” “evaluates performance fairly, equitably, and timely,” and “identifies and works toward resolving performance/conduct problems and takes timely action to remove poor performers or correct misconduct.” Appraising managers on this element would reflect how well supervisors met the element and how well managers met it vis-à-vis their supervisors.⁴³

- The Internal Revenue Service’s (IRS) Manager Performance Agreement includes two critical performance expectations, “Leadership” and “Employee Satisfaction,” that have performance management responsibilities applicable to executives, managers and supervisors. They include: “successfully leads organizational change,” “effectively communicates the Service’s mission, core values and strategic goals to employees...;” “creates and sustains a positive workplace that inspires others to support the IRS mission and goals;” “motivates employees to achieve high performance through empathetic, open and honed communication, by involving them in decision making and ensuring that they have the tools and training to perform their jobs;” “develops and recognizes employees so that they realize their full potential as members of the Service,” and “effectively uses ongoing feedback, coaching, and timely evaluations of performance to promote cooperation, teamwork, knowledge/skill sharing and goal accomplishment.”⁴⁴ IRS also evaluates the managerial potential of employees, front-line managers, and higher-level managers and executives with respect to leadership and employee satisfaction.⁴⁵
- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has developed a CMS Managers’ Performance Appraisal Program as part of its Leadership and Management Development Strategy to help build leadership and management proficiency. The program serves to communicate and clarify agency goals and objectives related to performance expectations of individual managers and to monitor

⁴³Small Business Administration Policy Notice, Control No: 3000-2238, Implementation of a New Performance Appraisal System, Effective: 11-5-2002

⁴⁴Internal Revenue Service, Performance Management System, Manager Performance Agreement, Form 12450-A (Rev. 10-2000)

⁴⁵Internal Revenue Service, Evaluation of Managerial Potential, Form 13236, 9-2002.

performance with respect to management skills and behaviors. To this end, the program includes mandatory performance elements for “Managing Resources” (including financial and human) and “Leading People” that includes “Managing Conflict,” “Managing Differences,” “Interpersonal Skills,” “Team Building,” and “Managing Performance”). The program includes a training course and reference manual. The Program’s three rules for success are: involve the rated manager in setting expectations and allow them to rate themselves; encourage dialogue between the rated manager and rating manager; and maintain and/or enhance the rated manager’s self esteem by providing specific feedback in a constructive manner.⁴⁶

- The Defense Logistics Agency is implementing a performance appraisal and recognition program to “improve the quality of supervision.” The current system does not adequately encourage open communication regarding performance, distinguish exceptional performance, or emphasize management competencies. The new system will contain two performance areas: Management Competencies and Mission Accomplishments. Management Competencies include “Leadership,” “Teamwork,” “Oral and Written Communications,” “Strategic Focus,” “Responsibility/Accountability,” “Customer Service,” “Professionalism,” “Resource Stewardship,” and “Innovation and Initiative.”

Supervisory Compensation, Awards, and Recognition

To what extent does compensation, including awards and recognition, affect supervisor performance? To what extent are supervisors satisfied with the awards and recognition they receive? To what extent and in what ways do agencies recognize and make awards for quality supervision? These questions relate to reinforcing what the organization values and expects from the supervisor.

OPM’s report, *Supervisors in the Federal Government: A Wake-Up Call*, found:

- In most agencies, supervisors receive performance awards, special awards, and quality step increases just like non-supervisory employees.
- Several agencies have created special awards to recognize supervisors. For example, the U.S. Customs Service created Leader of the

⁴⁶Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Managers Performance Appraisal System, Participant Guide, undated.

Year and Manager of the Year Awards. The U.S. Marshals Service has a Distinguished Service Supervisory Personnel Award; and NASA centers have local initiatives, such as Creative Management and Supervisor of the Year Awards.

- Supervisors generally feel that far greater weight is given to technical work than supervisory responsibilities in terms of what agencies recognize and reward.
- Many supervisors voiced frustration about being underpaid and unappreciated for doing a tough job. They are no longer employees, but executives do not view them as part of the management team.⁴⁷

Are supervisors satisfied with the awards and recognition they receive? Responses to MSPB survey responses indicated the following:

- A large majority of supervisors, 78%, agreed that, "I am treated with respect in my work unit."
- Only 42% agreed that, "I am satisfied with the recognition I receive for my work" Meanwhile 38% disagreed, and 21% responded as "Neither."

Supervisors gave very similar responses to the on-line survey statement, "I am adequately rewarded to my work." Here "49%" agreed, 29% disagreed and 22% responded "Neither."

Supervisory Compensation

Basic federal employee compensation is a continuing and controversial issue. Several issues are perceived as a problem affecting supervisor retention and performance. However, the extent and severity of this problem is unclear. The findings are:

- According to the MSPB Survey, a slight majority of supervisors are satisfied with their basic compensation. In response to the statement, "Overall, I am satisfied with my current pay," 54% of the supervisors agreed, while 40% disagreed.
- Participants in the on-line survey seemed to be almost as satisfied, with 49% agreeing that "I am adequately rewarded for my work."
- Participants in the Academy focus groups were considerably less satisfied, with only 17% agreeing that "I am adequately rewarded for my work."
- Among the agencies contacted, several are experiencing two specific problems with supervisory compensation:
 - Non-supervisory staff at the same grade level as their supervisors

⁴⁷Op Cite, p. 18

is the subject of some criticism and may contribute to a diminished interest in supervisory positions.

- Not paying supervisors overtime, despite staff regularly working it, is a policy issue.
- The Federal Manager’s Association believes there are specific problems with supervisor compensation. It recommends:
 - Develop a new pay system that provides a premium pay status for federal managers and supervisors that will amount to a minimum of a 10% increase in supervisor/manager pay over and above those supervised by that individual.⁴⁸
 - Congress should pass legislation to increase the cap on overtime pay for managers, supervisors, and other employees exempt from coverage of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
 - Congress should address pay disparity issues for FAA managers, supervisors, and specialists that resulted from FAA’s 1998 collective bargaining agreement with the National Air Traffic Controllers Association.

Summary of Supervisory Compensation, Awards and Recognition

Significant evidence indicates supervisors are not adequately recognized and, to some extent, are not fairly compensated. The Academy project team did not find significant agency actions to specifically address whether there is a need to improve supervisory recognition or rewards. OPM’s Human Capital Standards do not specifically address whether recognition systems should focus on supervisor achievements as such.

In terms of agency actions related to supervisory compensation:

- One agency is addressing the lack of supervisory differential by placing some supervisors in excepted service positions compensated under pay authority that permits the agency to compensate above Title 5 levels.
- Another agency is developing a demonstration project proposal that would authorize it to establish pay bands for supervisors and apply a performance based compensation system.
- Several agencies have compensation systems developed under a demonstration project that enable them to maintain a compensation differential for supervisors.
- The CMS Managers Performance Appraisal System, discussed above, acknowledges a link between that program and the awards for man-

⁴⁸Federal Manager’s Association, “Executive Summary, 2002 Legislative Recommendations—March 2002,” www.fedmanagers.org.

agers. It notes that managers who receive a performance rating of “fully successful” or above will be eligible for a performance award.

Time and Workload Management

Excessive workload and inadequate time can negatively impact various facets of a supervisor’s role. For example, it can affect the supervisor’s ability to lead change and facilitate the development of strategies for addressing difficult problems that require focused inquiry, analysis and reflection—in short, an action-learning process. Discussing the learning organization, Peter Senge asks, “How can we expect people to learn when they have little time to think and reflect, individually and collaboratively? I know of few managers who do not complain of not having enough time.”⁴⁹ He maintains that future managers will spend a great deal more time engaged in the learning process. Dealing with this issue might entail changing the organizational climate, taking a close look of what is required of supervisors, and changing personal habits.

The loss of experienced supervisors is directly related to the time and workload issue. From September 1993 to March 1999, the number of supervisors and managers declined from 268,498 to 195,900. The average age increased from 47.6 to 48.7, and the average length of service rose from 12.6 years to 14.7 years. Many are or soon will be eligible to retire.

Downsizing as a means to reduce employment and “de-layer” an organization can leave remaining supervisors with more work and unclear responsibilities, impacting negatively on productivity.⁵⁰

Specific findings related to this issue are:

- As indicated earlier, supervisors see lack of time to coach, teach, and supervise staff as an issue. Only 29% of the participants in the Academy focus groups believed they had sufficient time to carry out these responsibilities, less than half of the on-line survey respondents thought they had enough time.
- Most agencies contacted indicated that supervisors lack time to adequately carry out their supervisory responsibilities, often due to an increased span of control. In addition to this diminishing capacity,

⁴⁹*The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of The Learning Organization*. Peter M. Senge, Doubleday, New York, NY, 1990, p. 302.

⁵⁰*Reengineering Performance Management: Breakthroughs in Achieving Strategy Through People*. Tracey B. Weiss, Ph.D. and Franklin Hartle. St. Lucie Press, Boca Raton, Florida, 1997, p. 150.

some are discouraged from aspiring to a supervisory position. At least one agency has created deputy positions, although they believe a smaller span of control with more supervisors and no deputies would be preferable.

- In a staffing survey report, the National Council of Social Security Management Associations expressed concern about a significant decline in service capacity within the Social Security Administration. Two factors have contributed to this decline: a dramatic decrease in staff over the past two decades and the loss of more than 1,000 front line in SSA's field offices and teleservice centers. The factors have reduced the support structure that employees need to learn their jobs. Supervisors rarely have time to do the quality reviews to identify training needs. Nor do they have the time for coaching employees.⁵¹
- In *Federal Supervisors and Strategic Human Resources Management*, MSPB expressed concern that the downsizing of personnel staff and decreased supervisory positions "...are likely also to mean that the remaining supervisors will have many more personnel management decisions to make. This, for many supervisors will translate into 'more work in less time.'"⁵²

Summary of Time and Workload Management

With respect to "Workforce Planning and Deployment" the OPM Human Capital Standards ask: "Do human capital strategies ensure that the organization has the right balance of supervisory and non-supervisory positions to better meet customer needs?" Elements of "Yes" are that the "Agency has analyzed the nature of customer needs, distribution of work, and the costs and benefits of supervision to determine the best supervisory ratio to support agency mission." Suggested Performance Indicators are:

- Agency has a staffing plan that indicates the necessary number of supervisors by functional area.
- Supervisory needs are clearly tied to workflow process and organizational initiatives.
- Agency has documented the need to redirect supervisory positions, of program design to support the redeployment, and of implementation plan and assessment of the outcome.

⁵¹*Staffing Survey*. National Council of Social Security Management Associations, undated, (www.ncssma.org), pp. 2-3.

⁵²*Federal Supervisors and Strategic Human Resources Management*. U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, June 1998, p. 10.

- Analysis of data includes statistics related to the number of supervisors, their geographical and organizational location, their series and grades, the ratio of supervisors to employees, percent of supervisors in grades GS-12–15 or equivalent, etc.

This report does not ascertain the extent to which agencies have met this standard. As indicated above, there are some concerns that they do not have the appropriate supervisory ratio, thus adversely impacting employee performance management and program accomplishment. This deserves further attention.

Providing Supervisors with Effective Management Tools, Systems, Support, and Resources

Supervisors need effective communication and guidance regarding their performance expectations; appropriate awards, recognition and compensation; and sufficient time to handle the work for which they are responsible. They also need support to enhance their performance and to help them avoid decisions that could impair it. A variety of issues are related to this dimension.

Basic Management Support

The MSPB survey provides information on the extent to which supervisors believe they receive sufficient management support:

- 56% of supervisors agreed that, “My supervisor looks out for the personal welfare of members of my work unit.” However, a quarter disagreed.
- 60% agreed that, “Overall, I am satisfied with my supervisor,” but fewer, 40%, were satisfied with managers above their immediate supervisors.
- 58.4% agreed that, “I have the resources to do my job well,” but 29% disagreed. Further, only 39% agreed that, “My work unit has a sufficient number of employees to do its job.”

Two on-line survey statements address the degree of organizational support that supervisors receive. The responses reveal some cause for concern.

- In response to “I receive adequate support from those above me,” 52% of supervisors and team leaders agreed and 27% disagreed.
- Somewhat more positive responses were given to the statement “My supervisor supports enhancing my performance,” as 63% agreed, and 15% disagreed.

- When asked, “I feel like I am part of a team,” 65% agreed and 18% disagreed.

Supporting Supervisors When Taking Difficult Actions

Numerous focus groups participants found dealing with difficult employees and poor performers to be one of their major supervisory responsibilities. One supervisor put it this way:

“I need help in dealing with problem employees, especially those who have years of practice in being problem employees. They seem to know all the loopholes in getting out of doing work, without being penalized in an effective manner. Many employees feel they can’t be touched no matter how atrocious their work habits are.”

The MSPB Survey included a number of items that reflect on this issue:

- Supervisors’ responses to “Corrective actions are taken when employees do not meet performance standards” could reflect on the extent to which management provides support when dealing with performance standards, as well as supervisors’ actions. Supervisors were divided on this issue, with 40% agreeing with the statement and 40% disagreeing.
- With respect to the statement, “In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with poor performers,” 39% agreed and 40% disagreed. In addition, 41% of supervisors disagreed that, “My supervisor deals effectively with poor performance.”
- There appears to be more support with conduct issues, as 47% agreed that “My supervisor deals effectively with misconduct on the job.”

In *Federal Supervisors and Poor Performers* MSPB found that “...inadequate upper-level management support of supervisors who are trying to deal effectively with poor performers is a valid issue, and one that needs the attention of agency leaders.”⁵³ Further, it suggested that agencies might have incentives and disincentives that result in supervisors tolerating poor performance. For example, the agency may not actively encourage or support supervisors in taking performance based actions. It might not assess supervisors on how they handle performance problems. Or, it might not assist the supervisor with the outplacing or reassigning an employee with performance problems.⁵⁴

⁵³*Federal Supervisors and Poor Performers*. U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, July 1999, p. 23.

⁵⁴*Ibid*, p. 32

An earlier MSPB study found that nearly six in 10 supervisors and managers believed their organizations often failed to separate poor performers. Further, 62% of supervisors who chose not to take an adverse action despite good reason cited “concern that upper-level management would not support my actions,” as a reason for their inaction.⁵⁵

Management Tools and Systems

With respect to management tools and systems, MSPB recently recommended two major changes to improve a supervisor’s resources and authority to manage human capital:

1. Adopt a more flexible classification system that is simpler and easier for managers to use. Such a classification system should permit managers to easily group jobs in occupational categories that are linked to ranges in pay based on occupation and local market factors. It should also permit managers to assign work and set pay based on the competencies and performance of the candidate or employee.
2. Authorize pay banding in all agencies. This will allow managers to set competitive entry-level pay, base pay raises on performance, and reward technical and managerial expertise and promote employees more easily.

In addition, MSPB recommended that agencies should select and assess supervisors and managers based on their managerial aptitude and accomplishments, less on technical ability. This should include:

- Using appropriate, flexible probationary periods
- Giving agencies discretion to establish appropriate probationary periods, including those longer than one year for supervisory or managerial positions.⁵⁶

Support from the HRM Function

In 1997, the Academy, in association with the MSPB, asked federal managers to identify their most important human resources management roles and whom they think is accountable for good management.⁵⁷ Managers

⁵⁵*The Changing Federal Workplace: Employee Perspectives*. U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, March 1998, p. 14. See also MSPB’s “Adherence to the Merit Principles in the Workplace: Federal Employees’ Views,” September 1997, pp. 6–7.

⁵⁶*Making the Public Service Work—Recommendations for Change*. The Office of Policy and Evaluation, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, September 3, 2002. p. 20.

felt accountable for every element of human resources management. More specifically, the research showed:

- Managers accept accountability for human resources management as a central component of their management role.
- Managers think developing good staff, providing feedback and counseling, and creating a positive work environment are the most important aspects of their human resources management responsibilities.
- Managers want help in developing competencies that enable them to do the things they think are most important.
- Managers want to better understand the rules and regulations that help define the environment in which they have to manage people.

The Academy found that federal managers encountered many barriers they thought prevented them from being as effective in their human resources management role as they would like to be. Federal managers said:

- Procedures that implement the federal system often are abstract and not directed toward achieving the mission.
- Information technology used for federal human resources management tends to be focused on processing actions, not providing tools that enable line managers to perform their duties efficiently.
- Lack of clarity regarding mission makes it difficult to align human resources with issues relevant to the mission.
- Centralized control of most substantive human resources policy makes it difficult to tailor human resources management to mission needs and utilize other organizations' best practices.
- Managers have not received sufficient training on human resources principles and techniques.
- The federal culture discourages risk taking.
- Leadership lacks continuity due to frequent turnover of top managers.

In short, managers' human resources management role often gets lost in rules and regulations. Their primary task is seeking approval and authorizations from human resources offices that function more as regulatory bodies than helpers and advisors.

⁵⁷*Human Resources Management Responsibilities of Line Managers*. National Academy of Public Administration, December 1997.

An Academy panel recommended that federal agencies recognize the line manager as the primary human resources manager in any organization, and that human resources units should take the lead in establishing a new partnership with them. This partnership would emphasize strategic approaches and rely on improved technology to provide managers better tools and services for effective management. This study supports this recommendation in the context of this report's focus on managing the performance of first level supervisors. More specifically, we find that the following actions are needed to support supervisors and help them effectively manage employee performance:

1. **Managers must understand how human resources strategies support their mission.** In collaboration with HR offices, managers should develop strategies that are consistent with their central role in human resources management.
2. **Human resource systems should support the manager's human resources role.** Human resources offices need to work with managers to design and implement human resource systems (including the policy structure and the processes for managers to get things done) that help managers carry out their roles and clarify their accountability.
3. **Managers must know human resources rules and regulations.** Human resources offices need to provide line managers all the information they need about rules and regulations in a user-friendly form.
4. **Managers need to be more skillful in the things they think are most important.** HR offices need to help managers understand how to do the things they think are most important—developing good staff, providing feedback and counseling, and creating a positive work environment.

Supporting and partnering with supervisors concerning their human resources responsibilities and performance management challenges are increasingly critical as agencies acquire human capital flexibilities. More flexible systems include greater supervisor discretion in carrying out human resources responsibilities. As GAO has pointed out, this requires agencies to demonstrate key practices for effective use of the flexibilities. These include:

- Ensure supervisory input in developing new policies and procedures on the scope and direction of change.

- Educate supervisors on the availability and use of flexibilities to help ensure their skill and appropriate use.
- Provide supervisors with clear and transparent guidelines for using flexibilities and hold them accountable for fair and effective use.
- Address supervisors' concerns that employees will view flexibility as unfair by supporting supervisor efforts to take creative approaches and appropriate risks.
- Ensure that the administrative approval process is not so complex and time consuming that it outweighs its presumed benefit.⁵⁸

Meeting this challenge has become more difficult yet critical in light of the downsizing of federal personnel operations that occurred during the 1990s, beginning with the NPR initiative. A 1998 MSPB study found that downsizing personnel office staff accompanied a reduction in the level of support available to managers. For example, of the supervisors surveyed by MSPB:

- 55% said fewer people were available to assist them on personnel issues.
- Less than 40% said there were enough personnel staff to help them do their jobs.
- Almost 40% said that the quality of personnel assistance had gotten worse.⁵⁹

Avoiding and Preventing the Inappropriate, Illegal, and Unethical

Given that their responsibilities directly affect employee careers and general welfare, supervisors, as well as managers and executives, often face allegations of various misconduct, such as illegal discrimination, prohibited personnel practices, whistleblower and other forms of reprisal, and unethical conduct. The great majority of such allegations are not substantiated, if officially investigated and adjudicated. Nevertheless, they can significantly impact supervisors performance in several ways:

- They might indicate a problem with the supervisor's performance even though there is no legal basis action.
- They consume the time and energy of the supervisor, managers, human resources management staff, attorneys, and executives.

⁵⁸*Effective Use of Flexibilities Can Assist Agencies in Managing Their Workforces.* United States General Accounting Office, GAO-03-2, December 2002, pp. 5 and 37.

⁵⁹*The Changing Federal Workplace: Employee Perspectives.* U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, March 1998, p. 8.

- They contribute to negative perceptions about, and detract from the attractiveness of, the supervisory function.
- Substantiated allegations, though relatively few, often significantly impact the victim, the responsible supervisor and the organization.

Attorneys from a law firm specializing in representing managers and executives point out:

“The fact is, a visit from an Office of Special Counsel (OSC) investigator is a frightening prospect. Managers may be investigated because of allegations of misconduct related to work or mismanagement, and an investigation could destroy a career. OSC investigates charges that federal employees have committed prohibited personnel practices. By law, a federal manager subjected to an OSC prosecution may, if the charges are substantiated, be removed from federal employment, debarred from future federal employment for a period up to five years, fined, demoted, suspended or reprimanded. OSC can initiate these adverse actions against a manager even if the manager’s agency disagrees with OSC’s action. Note that federal employees are required to cooperate with an OSC investigation and any federal employee who does not provide information or documents requested by OSC may be subjected to disciplinary action for failing to cooperate.”⁶⁰

Little specific data exist on the extent to which supervisors are alleged to have discriminated, violated a collective bargaining agreement, reprised against whistleblowers, or committed prohibited personnel practices. OPM’s 1999 survey of SES members indicates that a substantial number face risks related to negative perceptions and allegations about their performance. As such, it is reasonable to expect that supervisors experience a similar level of adverse charges. Specifically:

- 59% of SES members have been the subject of a grievance.
- 27% have been the subject of an IG or OSC investigation
- 30% have been the subject of an anonymous allegation to an IG or OSC.
- 55% have been the subject of an EEO complaint.

EEOC data on discrimination complaints provide some indication of the level of discrimination charges made against supervisors. In FY 2001, 23,301 EEO complaints were filed, 11,203 of which were in the U.S. Postal Service. Almost all of the issues presented in those complaints reflected such supervisory responsibilities and authorities as non-selection for promotion, conditions of employment, assignment of duties, termination,

⁶⁰Excerpt from the “Federal Managers’ Liability Handbook,” a handbook available at <http://www.FederalHandbooks.com>

time and attendance, appraisal, reprimand, duty hours, and awards. Some of those complaints are about non-supervisors. Nevertheless, it appears highly likely that the vast majority of complaints implicate one or more supervisors and managers.

What Agencies Can Do

What is the appropriate agency response to allegations of supervisor wrongdoing? First, the agency is responsible for investigating the charges and, if appropriate disciplining the supervisor. There are additional kinds of responses related to prevention and support. Agencies should make efforts to ensure that supervisors have the knowledge and the skills to avoid getting in trouble. They should be considerate and fair in dealings with supervisors accused of wrongdoing since the majority of such allegations are found to be non-meritorious.

Agencies can take various measures to help supervisors avoid or deal with allegations of wrongdoing:

- To help them avoid allegations of prohibited personnel practices and whistleblower retaliation, agencies can participate in OSC's recently initiated government-wide whistleblower education and information program. The program is designed to assist agency heads in meeting the statutory obligation of the Whistleblower Protection Act. Under the Act, agency heads are responsible for informing employees about the rights and remedies available to them under the prohibited personnel practices and whistleblower retaliation provisions. This statutory obligation has existed since 1994, but OSC has found that many agencies are unsure how to meet their obligation. Compliance with the Act has not been widespread.

OSC's 2302(c) Certification Program offers guidance on compliance with the Whistleblower Protection Act and provides easy-to-use methods and training resources. These include: placing informational posters about protections at agency facilities; providing information on protections to new employees as part of the orientation process; giving periodic information to current employees about their rights and remedies training for supervisors; and creating a hyperlink from agency websites to OSC's. Once these steps are completed, OSC issues a certificate of compliance, good for three years, and reports an agency's compliance on its website and to Congress.

Last spring, OSC invited ten of the largest federal agencies to participate in the program. Eight have enrolled and several others have joined at their own initiative.⁶¹ Participation will satisfy the require-

ments of the recently enacted Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act (No FEAR), namely that federal workers be notified of their retaliation rights.

With regard to supervisory training, OSC recommends that each agency provide training to managers and supervisors every three years to ensure their understanding of the merit system principles and whistleblower protection provisions and how to avoid prohibited personnel practices. OSC has developed several options to aid agencies in fulfilling this requirement such as: providing speakers for satellite training or to address large groups, a slide presentation, and a one-hour videotape training session.

OPM's Human Capital Standards include as a performance indicator related to "Integrity and Inspiring Employee Commitment." It holds that an agency be certified as compliant by the OSC with respect to the requirement that the workforce be informed of whistleblower rights and other personnel protections.

- Agencies can conduct vigorous educational, informational and counseling programs that will help supervisors demonstrate ethical leadership and avoid violating ethical standards. The importance of the supervisor in maintaining the ethical integrity of an agency was highlighted by Amy L. Comstock, Director of the Office of Government Ethics (OGE), at the 11th Annual Government Ethics Conference in 2002:

"I want to offer you my view that leadership comes in many packages and that in a Government agency, leadership is not just the Secretary and the new group of Senate-confirmed appointees that arrive with a new Administration. Leadership is the most senior career management, and *all* supervisors. It is very important here that I mentioned all supervisors. For the average employee, they are their primary leader. I believe OGE needs to do more to target this group and this level of leadership. We are working on training targeted towards first-line supervisors and their responsibility for the ethics programs. But this shouldn't just be OGE's issue. I would encourage all of you, as you plan your training for the coming year, to consider reaching out to supervisors with specially designed training."⁶²

⁶¹A list of agencies participating in the program can be found at OSC's website: www.osc.gov under the 2302(c) Certification Program's button.

⁶²Amy Comstock, Office of Government Affairs at the 11th Annual Government Conference, 2002.

OGE hopes to deliver this program for supervisors in the near future as both on-line and instructor-led training.

- To help supervisors deal with the financial impact of investigations and allegations, agencies may reimburse them for one-half the cost of liability insurance. One plan currently available to federal supervisors covers the full cost of legal defense and pays covered damages (up to the selected policy limit), even if the Justice Department refuses to defend the supervisor.

The policy offers \$500,000 or \$1 million of professional liability coverage for judgments arising from acts, errors, or omissions committed by the supervisor while acting within the scope of his or her employment. It also provides up to \$100,000 to pay the costs of defense and monetary penalties during administrative proceedings for acts committed or alleged under similar circumstances. Coverage is provided for internal agency disciplinary proceedings, criminal proceedings, and judicial sanctions imposing monetary penalties.

Summary of Providing Supervisors with Effective Management Tools, Systems, Support, and Resources

Agencies can help supervisors do a better job by supporting them in basic approaches to development, performance planning, and rewards and recognition. To varying degrees, agencies are doing this now. On the other hand, this study has not found that agencies overall make a concerted and systematic effort to fully support supervisors in appropriate and useful ways. Notwithstanding increased emphasis on supervisor training and development, agency support must extend beyond this dimension.

The Food and Drug Administration's efforts illustrate a broader and systematic approach to supervisory support. Based on a commitment to "Leadership Development" in its Strategic Workforce Planning document, this agency does the following:

- Provides supervisors with adequate administrative support so they can meet their management responsibilities effectively and pursue hands-on scientific work.
- Permits supervisors, managers, and executives to participate in the agency's alternative work schedule program which helps them balance work obligations with family and personal needs.
- Maintains a "Supervisor's Tool Box" on a secure website that provides supervisors with confidential management advice, a checklist for taking disciplinary actions, and a "Users Guide for Taking Appropriate Disciplinary Action."

- Fully supports supervisors in dealing with problem employees.
- Helps supervisors protect themselves from discrimination or prohibited personnel practice charges by providing them training to “Do the Right Thing at the Right Time for the Right Reason and in the Right Way.”

CONCLUSION

Strengthening the performance management of supervisors—and their own performance—is a multi-faceted effort that deserves and requires top-level leadership and support. Executives, managers, and supervisors must go beyond rhetoric, good intentions, and well-designed plans. They must have more than policies, systems, and programs aimed at performance improvement. At the end of the day, these activities, as needed and useful as they might be, will not result in better performance. Also needed are specific and sustained activities, and behavior that use and implement objectives, plans, systems, and programs. Studies, surveys, and reported experiences consistently show the necessity of “walking the talk.” That is, executives, managers, and supervisors must:

- Hold themselves and their subordinates accountable for improving the performance of those for whom they are responsible.
- Provide the needed tools and resources for effective performance.
- Execute the organization’s systems and programs to improve performance using performance appraisal, development plans, and award and recognition programs.
- Behave in ways that exemplify key performance indicators such as:
 - Communicating the organization’s mission, vision, and values.
 - Telling employees how their work contributes to the organization’s mission and goals.
 - Following up on employee suggestions for improvement.
 - Setting clear and challenging performance goals.

The following recommendations flow from this conclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Apply to supervisory resources a focus and level of attention comparable to those applied to executive resources.**

The government’s program guidance for the Senior Executive Service specifically focus on selecting, developing, and managing executive resources. This focus is based on the need for leaders who can help

the government face the 21st Century. It aims at making effective and efficient use of resources to ensure the success of public programs and a results-oriented government. It recognizes the central importance of evaluating executive performance, paying and rewarding appropriately, and using and supporting resources as skillfully as possible.

2. Hold executives and managers accountable for managing the organization's supervisory resources.

Performance expectations for executives and managers should be clearly linked to the performance of their supervisors. Executives and managers should have a central performance requirement which ensures that supervisors have clear performance objectives, are carefully selected, systematically trained and developed, provided sufficient feedback and coaching, appraised fairly and meaningfully, rewarded and disciplined appropriately, and supported and developed as needed.

GAO's September 2002 report, *Results-Oriented Cultures: Using Balanced Expectations to Manage Senior Performance*, provides some indication of the extent to which this is being done and how it might be done. GAO reviewed an initial set of balanced expectations for senior executives in four agencies: the Bureau of Land Management, Federal Highway Administration, Internal Revenue Service, and Veterans Benefits Administration. These agencies' executive performance appraisal systems provide the framework for specific expectations regarding an executive's responsibility for managing the performance of subordinate managers and supervisors. They have developed sets of expectations according to organizational results, customer satisfaction, and employee perspectives.⁶³ These categories can and should directly relate to managing supervisor performance.

3. Hold supervisors accountable for managing performance.

Supervisors and team leaders must receive expectations that reflect their supervisory responsibilities as a central role, not a collateral duty. Supervisor and team leader excellence in performance management must be expected, developed, assessed, and recognized—at least as much as technical excellence. Agencies should make “managing performance effectively” a central factor in evaluating managerial and supervisory performance.

⁶³*Results-Oriented Cultures: Using Balanced Expectations to Manage Senior Executive Performance*. United States General Accounting Office, GAO-02-966, September 2002, pp. 2–3.

4. Make effective use of the probationary period for first time supervisors. Consider making it longer than one year where appropriate.

OPM and agencies should ensure that executives, managers and supervisors fully understand their probationary period authority. Specific policy and procedures should be established to ensure that its use is considered along with the timely review of a first time supervisor's performance. OPM should develop guidance for agencies to use in establishing appropriate use of the period.

5. Provide specific awards and recognition programs for supervisors focused on supervisors and leaders accomplishments.

Supervisors are distinguishable from other employees given their special and critical responsibilities. This is being recognized with agency efforts related to supervisor development and appraisal. However, there does not appear to be a clear application to awards and recognition. Award and recognition programs could help to accomplish this. A more significant approach may be to create an integrated awards and recognition system for supervisors, managers, and executives. This would require that executives and their subordinate managers and supervisors receive awards that are clearly linked to their accomplishment of organization objectives.

6. Enhance support provided to supervisors in taking performance-based actions. Most supervisors are not practiced hands at dealing with the full set of procedures involved in addressing performance problems. They require support from several perspectives:

- They are expected to deal with the problem and expect that senior management will support them.
- Sufficient human resources management and legal resources and support are available to them.
- There are answers to their concerns about personal liability stemming from taking action.
- Their managers will provide moral support to help them get through what will never be a pleasant part of their job.

7. Provide supervisors with modern systems and tools to manage their human resources. Action at two levels is needed for this. As MSPB recommended, supervisory performance would benefit from more flexible human resources management systems especially related to hiring, classification, and compensation. Academy panels have long recommended such system changes.

Second, agencies can provide supervisors with various tools to help them be more effective. A recent example is the Department of Defense's initiative to give front line supervisors the ability to manage their staff with desktop, automated systems and tools. When fully implemented, Defense Department supervisors and front-line managers will be able to use their computers to assess their employees' skills, write job announcements, and generate performance appraisal criteria. For the first time, supervisors and managers will have details on the workforce skills and capabilities of their employees at their fingertips.

8. Measure organizational climate regularly and use the results to help improve supervisory performance.

Some federal and private sector organizations use organizational climate data to gauge supervisory and managerial effectiveness, and other factors. OPM's Human Capital Standards use climate surveys as a method to gauge success.

Climate data and other information together can help determine the effectiveness of improvement efforts, to identify areas where improvements are needed, and to stimulate and plan improvement strategies. For example, survey results can be broken down by organizational elements. Individual organizations can be required to develop action plans to address areas that have unfavorable ratings. Results also can be used to assess the effectiveness of executive, managerial, and supervisory performance. Organizations that take the time and effort to conduct these surveys should ensure they assess ongoing improvement efforts, identify where improvements are needed, and plan for new improvement initiatives. Not all organization we surveyed were doing this, thus denying their executives, managers, and supervisors a valuable resource.

9. Assess the adequacy of overall support given to supervisors. Take action to comprehensively and systematically address supervisors' needs.

In addition to effective programs for selecting and developing supervisors and appraising and recognizing their performance, agencies should ensure that:

- The human resources function supports and partners with supervisors.
- Human resources programs, systems, and policies provide the flexibility needed to enable supervisors to meet their human

resources responsibilities and provide them with clear guidance and information.

- Full use is made of the computer, Internet, and software programs to help supervisors carry out their human resources responsibilities.
- Supervisors are informed and supported with respect to preventing, avoiding, and dealing with such risk areas as unethical conduct, discrimination, reprisal, prohibited personnel practices, and unfair labor practices.
- Supervisors are equipped and supported with respect to dealing with employees who have performance and other problems.
- Compensation problems affecting supervisory recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction are identified and addressed.

APPENDIX A

The Academy On-Line Survey

The Academy, in partnership with the Merit Systems Protection Board and the AVUE Corporation, conducted an on-line survey to gauge the attitudes and opinions of federal supervisors, managers, and executives. The survey was conducted from August to October 2002. During this period, 1,500 employees from 23 federal agencies completed the survey. The findings are consistent with other information and data sources examined for this study.

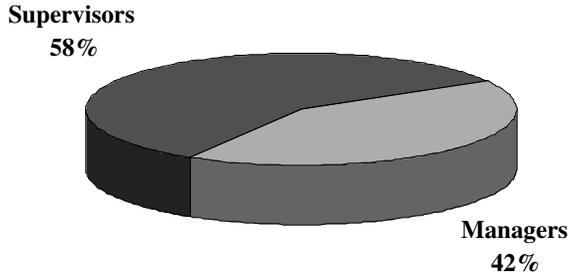
In addition to demographic and attitude questions, survey respondents were also asked to comment on 26 competencies⁶⁴ that the Office of Personnel Management has identified as important to leadership success in the federal government. There were paired questions that asked respondents to indicate the importance of each competency and estimate how skilled they were in it.

Responses from Senior Executive Service members have been incorporated with “manager” responses due to the low number of the former. Respondents who identified themselves as team leaders or coaches were included in the “supervisor” category given the similar nature of their responsibilities.

⁶⁴OPM has identified 27 competencies. “Oral Communication” was inadvertently deleted from the final survey form.

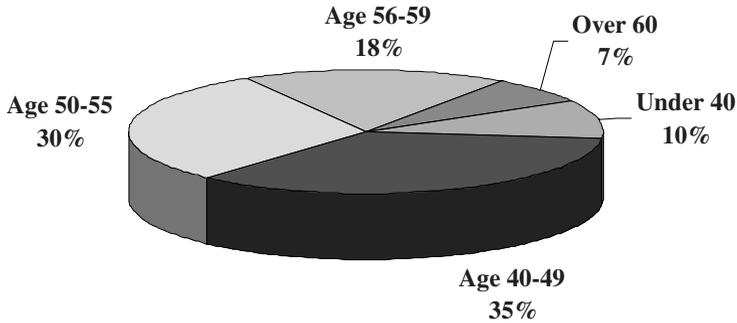
CHARTS AND GRAPHS OF SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS

Who Completed the Survey?



As noted in the first report for this study (August 2002), federal leaders are a rapidly aging segment of the federal workforce.

Age of Supervisor Respondents



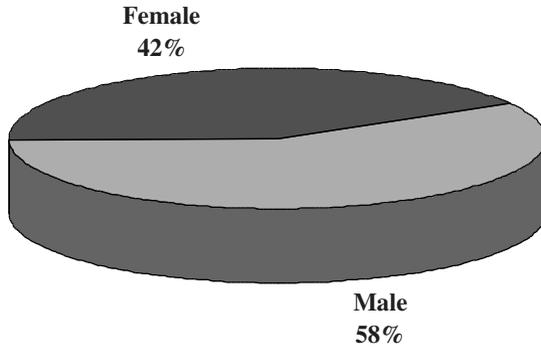
The percentage of minority supervisors and managers who completed the survey is somewhat below their percentage in the federal workforce (22%).

Minority vs. Non-Minority Supervisor Respondents

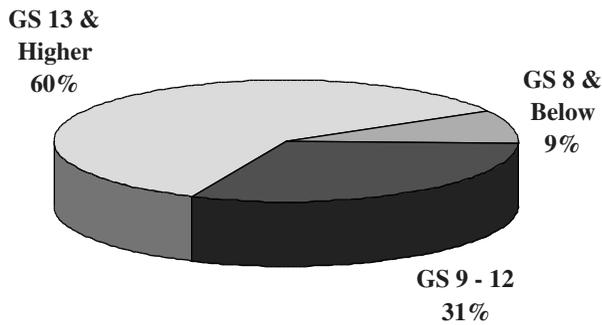


The percentage of female supervisors who completed this survey is significantly higher than their percentage in the federal workforce (30%).

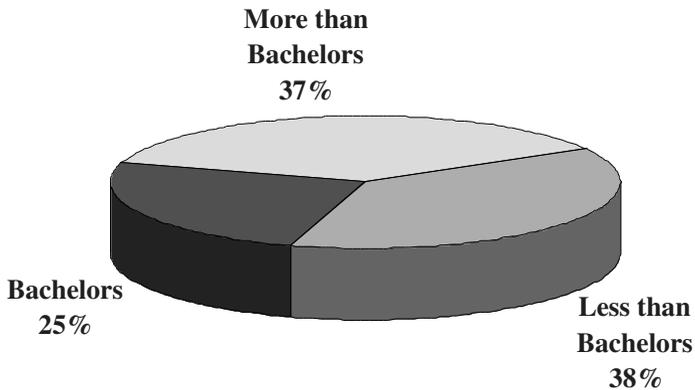
Gender of Supervisor Respondents



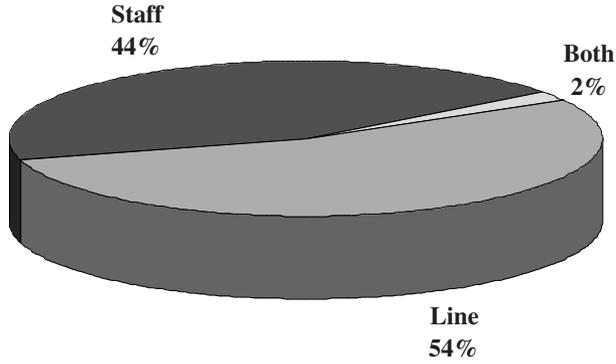
Grades of Supervisor Respondents



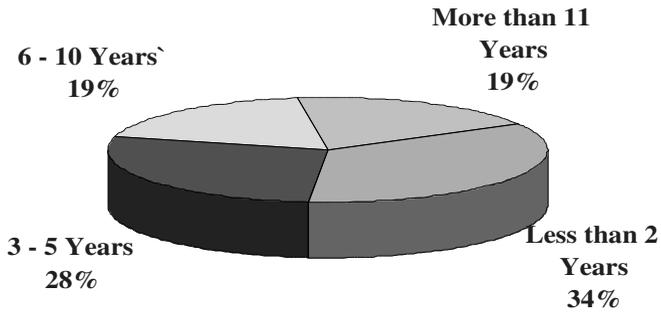
Education Levels of Supervisor Respondents



Type of Management Responsibilities of Supervisor Respondents

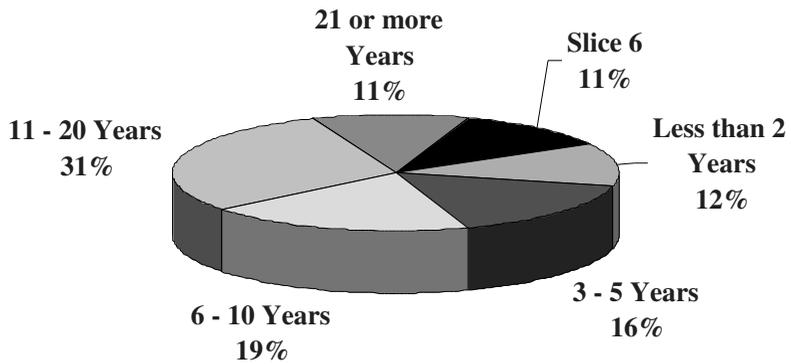


Length of Time Supervisor Respondents Have Been in Current Job

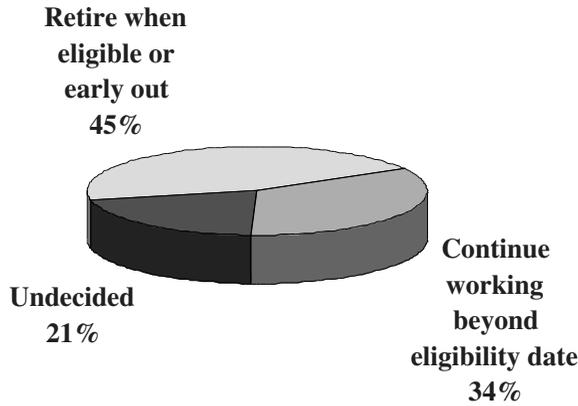


Federal managers and supervisors are, as a group, “well-seasoned.”

Total Management Experience of Supervisor Respondents

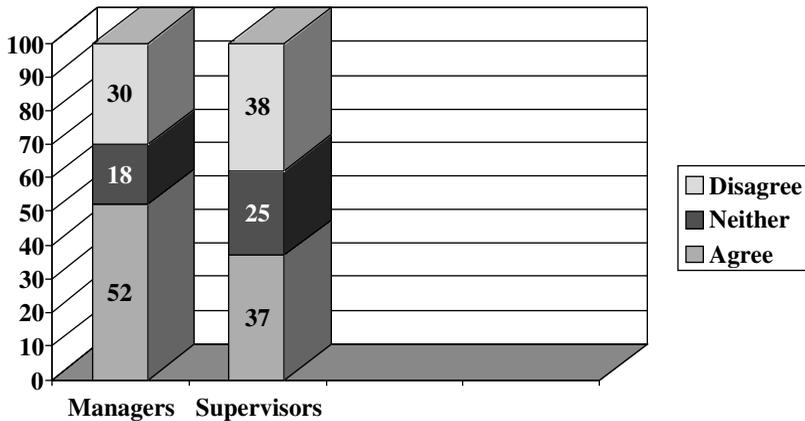


Retirement Plans of Supervisor Respondents



Less than half of all respondents felt they had sufficient control over organizational outcomes. One of the major thrusts of management reform over the last decade has been to empower employees to do their jobs. Much remains to be done in this regard.

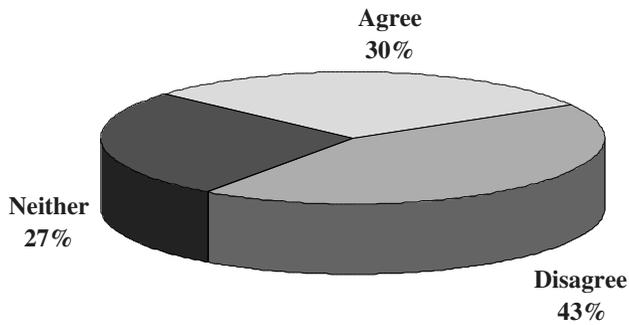
“I have sufficient control over my organization’s outcomes.”



There is dissatisfaction with the efforts made to attract and hire good candidates for jobs.

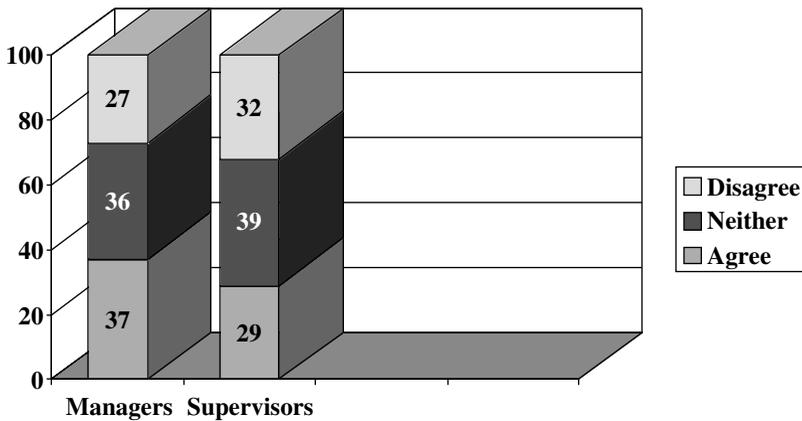
“My organization spends sufficient resources locating good candidates for jobs.”

Supervisor Respondents



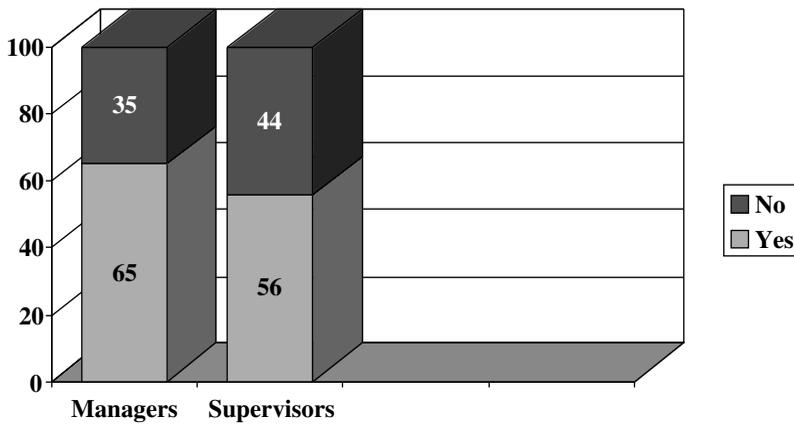
There does not seem to be widespread confidence with the current system for selecting leaders.

“My organization does a good job selecting managers and supervisors”



A high percentage of respondents would opt-out of their managerial responsibilities if their pay were protected.

“Even if I could earn the same pay as a non-supervisor, I would still remain a manager.”



Supervisors assigned relatively high values to their own perceived skill levels in the competencies. With the exception of “Entrepreneurship” and “Financial Management,” each of which had a low importance rating, respondents indicated that there is a gap between the importance placed on the skills versus their own attainment levels.

SUPERVISORS’ ASSESSMENT OF OPM COMPETENCIES

“How important is each competency?”

“How skilled are you in the competency?”

(Scale of 1–5 with 5 being “very important/very skilled.”)

Competency	Importance	Rank	Skill	Rank	Delta
Integrity/Honesty	4.50	1	4.40	1	-0.10
Accountability	4.44	2	4.21	4	-0.23
Customer Service	4.42	3	4.26	2	-0.16
Decisiveness	4.41	4	4.15	7	-0.26
Team Building	4.36	5	4.07	9	-0.29
Interpersonal Skills	4.36	5	4.21	5	-0.15
Resilience	4.35	7	4.02	11	-0.33
Problem Solving	4.35	7	4.19	6	-0.06
Written Communication	4.32	9	4.22	3	-0.10
Flexibility	4.31	10	4.08	8	-0.23
Service Motivation	4.26	11	3.96	12	-0.30
Technical Credibility	4.22	12	4.04	10	-0.18
Continual Learning	4.18	13	3.88	14	-0.30
Conflict Management	4.17	14	3.85	15	-0.32
Influencing/Negotiating	4.12	15	3.94	13	-0.18
Creativity Innovation	3.97	16	3.81	18	-0.16
Leveraging Diversity	3.95	17	3.84	16	-0.14
HR Management	3.94	18	3.79	19	-0.15
Partnering	3.92	19	3.84	16	-0.08
Technology Management	3.79	20	3.51	22	-0.28
Vision	3.79	20	3.60	20	-0.19
Political Savvy	3.73	22	3.48	24	-0.25
Strategic Thinking	3.72	23	3.58	21	-0.14
Financial Management	3.51	24	3.51	22	0.00
External Awareness	3.46	25	3.44	25	-0.02
Entrepreneurship	3.13	26	3.34	26	+0.21

SURVEY QUESTIONS AND SUPERVISOR RESPONSES

1. AGENCY NAME % of Respondents

Agriculture	1.3
Commerce	2.5
Defense	4.2
Air Force	23.2
Army	12.1
Navy	1.7
Energy	1.5
HHS	.1
Interior	1.6
Justice	.2
Labor	1.6
State	.1
Transportation	.1
Treasury	14
VA	7.4
EPA	.6
FCC	2.3
GSA	0.0
NASA	3.4
NSF	.1
RRB	3.2
SBA	15.6
SSA	1.1
Other	1.9
TOTAL	99.8

2. AGE:

AGE	less than 40 yrs	40-49 yrs	50-55 yrs	56-59 yrs	60 yrs or more
	10.4%	34.6%	29.5%	17.6%	7.9%

3. GENDER:

Male: 58.1%
Female: 41.9%

4. RACE/ETHNICITY:

Non-minority: 82.6%
Minority: 17.4%

5. PAY PLAN:

General Schedule:	89.5%
Wage Grade:	10.1%
SES:	.4%

6. PAY GRADE:

Grades 1-4:	4.4%
5-8:	4.3%
9-12:	31.2%
13-15:	59.8%
16-19:	.2%

7. EDUCATION:

Less Than a Bachelors Degree:	38.2%
Bachelors Degree:	24.5%
More Than a Bachelors Degree:	37.3%

8. PLEASE CHOOSE ONE OR MORE ORGANIZATIONS OF WHICH YOU ARE A MEMBER: (Note: percentages reflect only those who indicated a membership)

Federal Managers Association:	46.9%
Professional Managers Association:	48.0%
Senior Executives Association:	.8%
Multiple Memberships:	4.3%

9. I am a:

- Manager—supervisors and/or managers report to me.
- Supervisor—only non-supervisory employees report to me.
- Team Leader/Coach—I lead work activities but have no other formal supervisory role.

10. I am a:

<i>Line Manager</i> —I manage an organization that provides products and/or services to the agency’s external clients and customers:	53.6%
<i>Staff Manager</i> —I manage an organization that supports those agency organizations that provide products and/or services to the agency’s clients and customers:	44.5%
Both:	1.9%

11. I am a...

Career Federal Employee:	97.5%
Uniformed Military Officer:	.4%
Political Appointee:	.1%
Foreign Services Officer:	0%
Public Health Services Officer:	0%
OTHER (please specify):	2.0%

12. My immediate supervisor is a:

Career Federal Employee:	89.4%
Uniformed Military Officer:	7.3%
Political Appointee:	1.2%
Foreign Services Officer:	0%
Public Health Services Officer:	0%
OTHER (please specify):	2.1%

13. My immediate supervisor reports to a:

Career Federal Employee:	72.0%
Uniformed Military Officer:	16.8%
Political Appointee:	10.0%
Foreign Services Officer:	0%
Public Health Services Officer:	0%
OTHER (please specify):	1.2%

14. How many of the people that you directly supervise are:

Full-time permanent federal employees

5 or less	6-10	11-20	21-50	51 or more
40.0%	29.5%	24.0%	6.4%	.1%

Federal employees other than full-time permanent

0 None	1-5	6-20	21 or more
50.3%	39.4%	8.8%	1.6%

Contract personnel (you monitor)

None	1-5	6-20	21 or more
52.9%	31.0%	9.9%	6.3%

Other (please specify)

None	1-5	6-20	21 or more
47.2%	36.0%	13.2%	3.6%

15. How many of the employees you supervise telecommute?

None	1-3	4-6	7 or more
78.9%	11.7%	5.1%	4.3%

16. Regarding your Supervisory and Management Experience

Number of years in current position:

2 yrs or less	3-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11 yrs or more
34.8%	27.5%	18.6%	19.1%

Total years as a manager or supervisor:

2 yrs or less	3-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11-20 yrs	21 yrs or more
13.5%	17.5%	22.3%	33.7%	13.0%

Number of years as a manager/supervisor in other agencies:

None	1-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11 yrs or more
63.8%	18.9%	7.0%	10.4%

17. Please click on the box that best describes your supervisory/leadership goals:

I would like to advance to the Senior Executive Service:	26.5%
I would like to advance to a manager or equivalent position:	41.8%
I would like to advance to a supervisory position (team leaders and coaches):	2.9%
I do not wish to advance past my current level of responsibilities:	28.9%

18. Please click on the response which most closely describes your retirement plans:

- 1. I plan to continue working beyond my retirement eligibility date: 34.4%
- 2. Undecided: 20.5%
- 3. I would take an early out, if offered: 16.7%
- 4. I plan to leave government service before retirement: 2.5%
- 5. I plan to leave on my retirement eligibility date (not an early out): 26.0%

19. The next question is to be completed only if you selected answers 3, 4 or 5, above. Please click on the reasons that most closely match your reasons for your retirement plans.

- a. It was always my plan to retire (or leave) at this point
- b. I have an opportunity which interests me more
- c. I've accomplished all that I hoped to or have achieved my career goals
- d. I no longer enjoy my work
- e. The compensation is not adequate
- f. I don't feel appreciated
- g. The job has gotten too complicated
- h. I don't work well with my management
- i. I don't like my working environment
- j. OTHER

20. All questions in the following section should be answered in terms of the organization you supervise or manage.

The organization I supervise or manage achieves its goals.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
2.2%	9.2%	11.3%	61.9%	15.4%

21. Please specify what factors contribute to your organization’s not achieving all its goals. Please check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Inadequate support from my superiors: | 8.4% |
| b. Budget/Staffing shortfalls: | 13.9% |
| c. Inadequate training for myself: | 17.3% |
| d. Unrealistic or inappropriate goals/objectives: | 14.7% |
| e. Unclear goals/objectives: | 13.3% |
| f. Changing goals/objectives | 9.4% |
| g. Changing program requirements | |
| h. Inadequate information technology | |
| i. Ineffective tools and equipment | |
| j. Poor working environment or physical plant | |
| k. Inadequate or untimely directives | |
| l. Inadequate rewards and recognition | |
| m. Not given enough authority | |
| n. Given too much responsibility | |
| o. Difficulty coordinating alternative work schedules | |
| p. Poor performing staff | |
| q. Weak agency support on human resources issues | |
| r. Insufficient personal knowledge for dealing with human resource issues | |
| s. Unwanted turnover/attrition | |
| t. Poor selection of candidates for jobs | |
| u. Personal shortcomings | |
| v. Other | |

Listed below are leadership competencies developed by the Office of Personnel Management that represent typical responsibilities of supervisors and managers. Please indicate on the upper bar your judgment as to the importance of the competency in your current job. Use the lower bar to indicate how skilled you feel you are in that competency. (NOTE: results are summarized in a table following this competency listing)

23. Continual Learning—Grasp the essence of new information; master new technical and business knowledge; recognize my own strengths and weaknesses; pursue self-development; seek feedback from others and opportunities to master new knowledge.

24. Creativity and Innovation—Develop new insights into situations and apply innovative solutions to make organizational improvements; create a work environment that encourages creative thinking and innovation; design and implement new or cutting-edge programs/processes.
25. External Awareness—Identify and keep up to date on key national and international policies and economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization. Understand near-term and long-range plans and determine how best to be positioned to achieve a competitive business advantage in a global economy.
26. Flexibility—Am open to change and new information; adapt behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles. Adjust rapidly to new situations warranting attention and resolution.
27. Resilience—Deal effectively with pressure; maintain focus and intensity and remain optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recover quickly from setbacks. Effectively balance personal life and work.
28. Service Motivation—Create and sustain an organizational culture that encourages others to provide the quality of service essential to high performance. Enable others to acquire the tools and support they need to perform well. Show a commitment to public service. Influence others toward a spirit of service and meaningful contributions to mission accomplishment.
29. Strategic Thinking—Formulate effective strategies consistent with the business and competitive strategy of the organization in a global economy. Examine policy issues and strategic planning with a long-term perspective. Determine objectives and set priorities; anticipate potential threats or opportunities.
30. Vision—Take a long-term view and act as a catalyst for organizational change; build a shared vision with others. Influence others to translate vision into action.
31. Conflict Management—Identify and take steps to prevent potential situations that could result in unpleasant confrontations. Manage and resolve conflicts and disagreements in a positive and constructive manner to minimize negative impact.

32. **Leveraging Diversity**—Recruit, develop, and retain a diverse high quality workforce in an equitable manner. Lead and manage an inclusive workplace that maximizes the talents of each person to achieve sound business results. Respect, understand, value and seek out individual differences to achieve the vision and mission of the organization. Develop and use measures and rewards to hold myself and others accountable for achieving results that embody the principles of diversity.
33. **Integrity/Honesty**—Instill mutual trust and confidence; create a culture that fosters high standards of ethics; behave in a fair and ethical manner toward others, and demonstrate a sense of corporate responsibility and commitment to public service.
34. **Team Building**—Inspire, motivate, and guide others toward goal accomplishments. Consistently develop and sustain cooperative working relationships. Encourage and facilitate cooperation within the organization and with customer groups; foster commitment, team spirit, pride, and trust. Develop leadership in others through coaching, mentoring, rewarding, and guiding employees.
35. **Accountability**—Assure that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Hold myself and others accountable for rules and responsibilities. Can be relied upon to ensure that projects within areas of my specific responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget. Monitor and evaluate plans; focus on results and measuring attainment of outcomes.
36. **Customer Service**—Balance interests of a variety of clients; readily re-adjust priorities to respond to pressing and changing client demands. Anticipate and meet the need of clients; achieve quality end products; am committed to continuous improvement of services.
37. **Decisiveness**—Exercise good judgment by making sound and well-informed decisions; perceive the impact and implications of decisions; make effective and timely decisions, even when data is limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; am proactive and achievement oriented.
38. **Entrepreneurship**—Identify opportunities to develop and market new products and services within or outside of the organization. Am willing to take risks; initiate actions that involve a deliberate risk to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage.

39. **Problem Solving**—Identify and analyze problems; distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information to make logical decisions; provide solutions to individual and organizational problems.
40. **Technical Credibility**—Understand and appropriately apply procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise. Am able to make sound hiring and capital resource decisions and to address training and development needs. Understand linkages between administrative competencies and mission needs.
41. **Financial Management**—Demonstrate broad understanding of principles of financial management and marketing expertise necessary to ensure appropriate funding levels. Prepare, justify, and/or administer the budget for the program area; use cost-benefit thinking to set priorities; monitor expenditures in support of programs and policies. Identify cost-effective approaches. Manage procurement and contracting.
42. **Human Resources Management**—Assess current and future staffing needs based on organizational goals and budget realities. Using merit principles, ensure staff are appropriately selected, developed, utilized, appraised, and rewarded; take corrective action.
43. **Technology Management**—Use efficient and cost-effective approaches to integrate technology into the workplace and improve program effectiveness. Develop strategies using new technology to enhance decision-making. Understand the impact of technological changes on the organization.
44. **Influencing/Negotiating**—Persuade others; build consensus through give and take; gain cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals; facilitate “win-win” situations.
45. **Interpersonal Skills**—Consider and respond appropriately to the needs, feelings, and capabilities of different people in different situations; am tactful, compassionate and sensitive, and treat others with respect.
46. **Partnering**—Develop networks and build alliances, engage in cross-functional activities; collaborate across boundaries, and find common ground with a widening range of stakeholders. Utilize contacts to build and strengthen internal support bases.

- 47. Political Savvy—Identify the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Approach each problem situation with a clear perception of organizational and political reality; recognize the impact of alternative courses of action.
- 48. Written Communication—Express facts and ideas in writing in a clear, convincing and organized manner.

Supervisors’ Responses to the Above Questions

(Scale of 1–5 with 5 being “very important/very skilled.”)

Competency	Importance	Rank	Skill	Rank	Delta
Integrity/Honesty	4.50	1	4.40	1	-0.10
Accountability	4.44	2	4.21	4	-0.23
Customer Service	4.42	3	4.26	2	-0.16
Decisiveness	4.41	4	4.15	7	-0.26
Team Building	4.36	5	4.07	9	-0.29
Interpersonal Skills	4.36	5	4.21	5	-0.15
Resilience	4.35	7	4.02	11	-0.33
Problem Solving	4.35	7	4.19	6	-0.06
Written Communication	4.32	9	4.22	3	-0.10
Flexibility	4.31	10	4.08	8	-0.23
Service Motivation	4.26	11	3.96	12	-0.30
Technical Credibility	4.22	12	4.04	10	-0.18
Continual Learning	4.18	13	3.88	14	-0.30
Conflict Management	4.17	14	3.85	15	-0.32
Influencing/Negotiating	4.12	15	3.94	13	-0.18
Creativity Innovation	3.97	16	3.81	18	-0.16
Leveraging Diversity	3.95	17	3.84	16	-0.14
HR Management	3.94	18	3.79	19	-0.15
Partnering	3.92	19	3.84	16	-0.08
Technology Management	3.79	20	3.51	22	-0.28
Vision	3.79	20	3.60	20	-0.19
Political Savvy	3.73	22	3.48	24	-0.25
Strategic Thinking	3.72	23	3.58	21	-0.14
Financial Management	3.51	24	3.51	22	0.00
External Awareness	3.46	25	3.44	25	-0.02
Entrepreneurship	3.13	26	3.34	26	+0.21

Please answer the following questions by choosing a selection from each.

49. I have sufficient control and influence over my organization's outcomes.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
37.7%	25.1%	37.2%

50. I am able to spend an appropriate amount of time coaching, teaching and supervising my staff.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
37.6%	16.0%	46.4%

51. I receive the training I need to stay current with the technical and administrative aspects of my work.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
29.3%	20.6%	50.1%

52. I receive the training I need to stay current with the managerial aspects of my work.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
27.9%	23.2%	48.9%

53. I am able to apply the principles I learn in training to my work.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
11.7%	26.0%	62.3%

54. I receive adequate guidance from those above me.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
27.3%	23.2%	49.6%

55. I receive adequate support from those above me.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
26.7%	21.2%	52.1%

56. I feel like I'm part of a team.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
18.4%	16.9%	64.7%

57. I am adequately rewarded for my work.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
28.9%	22.0%	49.1%

58. I believe my organization spends enough resources to locate good candidates for job openings.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
44.6%	27.5%	27.9%

59. I am encouraged to be creative in approaching work.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
18.0%	25.3%	56.7%

60. I am directly involved in recruiting candidates when I have vacancies on my staff.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
27.9%	18.1%	54.0%

61. My organization spends enough resources to locate good candidates for job openings.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
44.6%	27.5%	27.9%

62. My agency does a good job of selecting new supervisors and managers.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
32.3%	38.3%	29.4%

63. My supervisor supports enhancing my performance.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
15.2%	22.0%	62.8%

64. Turnover at the political job level positively influences my organization's outcomes.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
32.9%	37.5%	29.6%

65. I am able to balance my work life and home life.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
11.7%	12.3%	76.0%

66. I feel enthusiastic and proud of my performance as a manager.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
5.4%	15.1%	79.5%

67. I would urge friends and family to consider working for the federal government.

Disagree	Neither	Agree
18.7%	21.4%	60.0%

68. If I could do it all over, I would still seek a supervisory or management position.

Yes	No
83.2%	16.8%

69. Even if I could earn the same pay in a non-supervisory job, I would remain a manager.

Yes	No
55.9%	44.1%

- 70. The most rewarding part of my job is: (free text response)
- 71. The most frustrating part of my job is: (free text response)
- 72. Is there anything you think we should know about that we haven't asked? (free text response)

APPENDIX B

Interview Tools for Agency Executives and HR Professionals

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION— PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT— LEADER DEVELOPMENT FOR FIRST-LINE SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS, AND SES MEMBERS

Agency Executive Interview

Recruitment and Selection

- Does your agency do a good job of recruiting and selecting leaders?
- How have you involved yourself in these processes?
- How do these processes differ for First-line Supervisors vs. Managers vs. SES?
- Can you identify any changes in these processes in the last five years in terms of competencies sought?
- What about the future—should you be seeking different competencies? Should the recruiting and selection process be handled differently?
- Do you now attract good-quality applicants? If so, why?

- What additional information, beyond what is provided in a resume, do you hope to learn about a person's managerial competencies from the interview and reference checking processes? Are there other ways you use to obtain such information?
- Forgetting established HR processes, if you could suggest good ways to identify and select leaders, what would they be?

Performance Management

- How do you link the performance evaluation process for all supervisory levels to your organization's strategic plan and objectives?
- How specifically are leaders held accountable for meeting performance commitments?
- How useful is your performance evaluation system in helping you to achieve organization success?
- Does your agency's performance management system and culture allow you to make rating distinctions that are meaningful at all supervisory levels?
- Is there a useful link between performance appraisal and performance-based decisions (e.g., recognition, promotion, pay determinations)?
- How have you personally influenced your agency's performance management system for supervisory level personnel (e.g. during your tenure did you cause any changes in the system? provide supplementary guidance?)
- Forgetting established HR processes, what process would you use to assess managers?

Leader Development

- Does your agency do a good job of developing leaders? Why do you think so? How do you know?
- Which senior agency leaders are involved in the process? If no senior leaders are involved, why not?
- What resources are required/devoted to the leader development process?
- Do you have a leader development program for each management level (i.e. first-line to SES)?
- Are all jobs filled through leadership development programs?
- How does your agency manage leadership succession?
- Does your agency have a link between its leadership vision and its leadership development program?

- Are full operational assignments included in the program (i.e. details to established leadership positions)?
- What about the future? Should you change your leadership development approach?
- Forgetting current practices, if you could develop leaders in any way, what would you do?

HR Manager Interview(s)

Recruitment and Selection

- How does your agency recruit for and select for positions at all supervisory levels? How well do you do this? Are the processes different than those for non-supervisory employees?
- In seeking and selecting leaders, what emphasis placed on technical skills? On leadership competencies?
- Does your agency have a common set of behaviors, skills, mindsets, attitudes that you seek in first-line supervisors, 2nd level managers, SES?
- What recruitment initiatives and sources do you use to identify candidates for supervisory, managerial, executive staff? (e.g. Agency-wide or in-service placements; frequency of internal vs. external hires; frequency of inside vs. outside gov't. hires, use of search firms, direct involvement of selecting officials in the recruitment process)?
- Does your agency select first-line supervisors, managers, and/or SES from an internal development program that certifies a pool of potential leaders? If so, describe the program.
- Is the use of supervisory/SES probationary periods effective in your agency? How many probationary period removals in the last five years? Does your agency take advantage of the managerial probationary period option?
- How do diversity goals impact recruitment and selection processes?
- How have the recruitment and selection processes changed in the last five years?

Performance Management

- In what ways and how well do your agency managers manage the performance of first-line supervisors, second level managers and executives? How well do leaders carry out their performance management responsibilities? (For this section, performance management does not include training and leader development programs.)

- Describe agency performance management system(s) used for supervisory personnel and components (planning, setting standards, counseling and feedback, appraising, etc). If different systems are used for different levels, describe each.
- What do agency policies say about probationary period for first time supervisors/managers/SES.? How well are they communicated? What is the extent of its use? What are your experiences and lessons learned?
- To what extent does the performance planning process provide a clear understanding of agency objectives and the leadership role in meeting those objectives?
- To what extent do performance plans reflect leadership competencies? Which ones?
- How does your agency handle leadership performance problems?
- Besides use of the supervisory/managerial probationary periods, to what extent has your agency taken corrective performance based actions?
- What evidence is there that those rated believe their performance is appraised fairly?
- To what extent and in what ways does your agency make awards for or otherwise recognize quality supervision?
- What do you think is needed to strengthen recognition and awards programs for all levels of supervisors?
- What evidence exists to indicate that supervisors and their managers and employees are satisfied/dissatisfied with the supervisor's ability, from the standpoint of time and workload, to adequately perform their supervisory duties?
- To the extent time and workload management is a problem, how have supervisors and the agency attempted to address it?
- Are there additional performance management complexities created by leading a mixed workforce (temporary and permanent employees, telecommuting staff, contractor employees, foreign nationals, etc.)?
- What are the primary barriers to effective supervisory performance? (e.g. Third party allegations of misconduct, EEO, special conduct, etc.)
- What are the primary facilitators of and incentives for supervisory performance?

Leader Development

- How does your agency develop and select its leadership team? Do you have a complete Leader Development approach or do you treat

each hire of a supervisor, manager, or executive position as an individual action? Or are the agencies efforts somewhere in between those ends? Do they have various parts of a Leader Development Program and how well do those parts operate for the agency? How are senior agency leaders involved in the program and how are the efforts resourced?

- Interview note: Not all agencies will fit the complete Leader Development model. Even so they may have bits and parts of a total program that are best practices for that part. Please collect information on any parts of an overall program that sound as if they are effective and could be useful to others in building a total Leader Development Program that would fit the unique requirements of a specific agency.
- Is training and leader development for the management members of the agency centrally funded? What percent of payroll budget? What parts of the program are decentralized (selection for training, etc.)? Does agency policy include the new flexibilities of the Government Workforce Restructuring Act that allows paying tuition for courses leading to academic degrees?
- Is there an internal program for supervisory training and leader development or does the agency exclusively use external sources? If there is an internal program, what leadership competencies do they use and how were they developed and kept current? What training/development delivery methods are used (e.g., classroom, web-based, distance learning, partnering with universities, etc.)?
- What criteria are used for selecting supervisors for training and leader development (e.g., grade, time in position, mobility, etc)?

Initiating early career development and setting the environment for teamwork in the agency

- Is there a college recruitment program at the entry level? Are key functional and program managers involved in determining intake and developmental requirements? Are individuals specifically recruited for leadership positions or are they (mostly/all) grown internally?
- Are the mission, values, and “how this agency works” orientation consistent with what is also presented at supervisor and senior level development programs?
- Does development at this level focus on teamwork in carrying out the agency’s mission?
- Are there mid-career development opportunities such as ‘training with industry’; sabbaticals; etc?

- Are new entry employees provided information on career paths and developmental opportunities and requirements?
- Are lifelong learning and continual self-development part of the agency's imperatives/vision?

Integrating education and on-the-job development

- Does the Leader Development Program include both formal education of various types, and on-the-job experience and development? What formal education programs are used? How are such programs selected, presented and evaluated? Are short-term developmental experiences used or actual job assignments?
- How are such programs and the individuals participating selected and their performance and development assessed?
- Are 360 appraisals and/or other assessment methods used?
- How are selections for the on-the-job development made and what follow on results can the participant anticipate? What happens to them next and how and why? Are team leaders included in the supervisory training and development program?
- Do you have a formal Candidate Development Program for SES positions within the agency?
- Is a post-training utilization plan required and used as part of the selection for training/development program?
- What are the supervisor/manager obligations once training or education has been provided (e.g., obligated period of service; geographic mobility, self-development activities, etc.)?

Deliberate selection of high potential talent

- How are participants selected for the Leader Development Program? What forms of assessment used? Who is involved? Can individuals self nominate?
- Do individuals not selected for the program get useful feedback?
- What understanding are individuals selected for the programs given about their future?
- *Linking succession planning and development—*
- How do selecting officials for supervisor and leader positions use leadership development programs? Are they free not to use the program?
- Does the agency have a formal succession plan? How does it work?
- Does development continue at the highest levels? Is any development at the very senior levels integrated with agency operations?

Utilization of mentoring and coaching programs

- Are mentoring and coaching used? How do they operate?
- From where are mentors and coaches selected or obtained? How are they developed?
- How do these programs integrate with the rest of the leader development program?
- *Connecting the dots*—
- Are all of the parts of the leader development program integrated and connected? Do the various parts support each other?
- Who is involved in the program and who is the most senior manager concerned with the results of the program?
- How are results measured?
- How are resource requirements determined?

Agency Data To Review/Obtain

1. Policies and regulations related to the above areas, especially:
 - a. use of probationary period
 - b. performance planning, appraisal and problems
 - c. supervisory conduct and ethics
 - d. awards and recognition
 - e. compensation
 - f. recruiting and selection (e.g. sample vacancy announcements)
 - g. leadership development programs
2. Studies, surveys and the like, related to all of the elements of the above areas.
3. Statistical data (if available) related, individually to first-line supervisors/managers/SES:
 - a. number on probationary period over past years; number removed during probationary period
 - b. number of performance based actions based on supervisory performance over past years; by kind of action
 - c. number of cases of misconduct over past years by category (e.g. discrimination; whistleblower reprisal; other reprisal; ethics violations); disposition of action by category
 - d. measures of award and recognition activity over past years such as number of awards; average dollar amount; percent of supervisors receiving awards on annual basis; comparison of

these measures to same measures for non-supervisory employees

- e. number who are in pay compression situation; i.e. who receive very little more than, the same as, or less than subordinates; change in this number over past years. How many are capped?
- f. number who have resigned retired or requested reassignment because of time and workload issues
- g. Is there statistical information for a.-f., e.g., grade, gender, RNO, etc?

APPENDIX C

Focus Groups of Supervisors/Managers

RESPONSES TO SCALED QUESTIONS

Group	Date Conducted	Number of Participants
Associations**	3/19/02	
NIST (2 groups)	5/15/02	20
VA in DC	6/13/02	15
SSA DC	6/17/02	13
SSA Baltimore	6/25/02	12
Passport #1	6/27/02	15
Passport #2	7/11/02	13
VA Baltimore	7/26/02	15
DOE (2 groups)	7/30/02	19
NOAA	7/31/02	14
SBA	8/20/02	12
Army-Tobyhanna (2 groups)**	10/16/02	29
Philadelphia FEB**	10/23/02	19

**Did not use scaled questions

RESPONSES TO SCALED QUESTIONS

(146 participants)

ANSWER
number of people who gave that answer

1. I have sufficient control and influence over my organization's outcomes.

SA	A	N	D	SD
20	59	25	31	11

2. I am able to spend an appropriate amount of time on coaching, teaching and supervising my staff.

SA	A	N	D	SD

3. I receive the training I need to stay current with the technical aspects of my work.

SA	A	N	D	SD
9	60	29	44	4

4. I receive the training I need to stay current with the management aspects of my work.

SA	A	N	D	SD
7	15	27	34	4

5. I am able to apply the management principles I learn in training to my work.

SA	A	N	D	SD
24	83	25	12	2

6. I receive adequate guidance from those above me.

SA	A	N	D	SD
14	68	30	24	10

7. I receive adequate support from those above me.

SA	A	N	D	SD
16	70	27	26	7

8. I feel like I'm part of a team.

SA	A	N	D	SD
27	71	6	16	7

9. I am adequately rewarded for my work.

SA	A	N	D	SD
9	5	32	33	4

10. I believe my organization spends enough resources to locate good candidates for job openings.

SA	A	N	D	SD
3	45	35	47	16

11. I am encouraged to be creative in approaching work.

SA	A	N	D	SD
20	79	19	24	4

12. I am directly involved in recruiting candidates when I have vacancies on my staff.

SA	A	N	D	SD
30	47	23	26	20

13. My agency does a good job of selecting new supervisors and managers.

SA	A	N	D	SD
3	51	40	36	14

14. My supervisor supports enhancing my performance.

SA	A	N	D	SD
36	74	23	10	3

15. Turnover at the political job level positively influences my organization's outcomes.

SA	A	N	D	SD
29	27	51	14	25

16. I am able to balance my work life and home life.

SA	A	N	D	SD
24	75	20	16	11

17. I feel enthusiastic and proud of my performance as a manager.

SA	A	N	D	SD
41	75	22	7	0

18. I would urge friends and family to consider working for the federal government.

SA	A	N	D	SD
23	70	20	15	54

19. My job as a first level supervisor is very challenging.

SA	A	N	D	SD
6	63	6	2	0

20. My job as a first level supervisor is becoming increasingly challenging.

SA	A	N	D	SD
62	66	15	2	1

21. I am doing a good job for the most part.

SA	A	N	D	SD
58	77	8	32	0

22. I am basically satisfied that I have the competencies I need to fully meet my supervisory responsibilities.

SA	A	N	D	SD
37	77	17	8	2

23. I have sufficient time to satisfactorily perform my supervisory duties.

SA	A	N	D	SD
7	39	27	44	27

24. If I had it all to do over, I would seek a supervisory/management position.

Yes	No
119	27

25. Even if I could earn the same pay in a non-supervisory job, I'd remain a manager.

Yes	No
89	57

DEMOGRAPHICS

29. Age

Mean 47.4

30. Gender

M 50
F 96

31. Race/Ethnicity

White	86
Black/African-American	47
Latino or Spanish origin	5
Asian	3
Alaskan or American Indian	0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0
Other (please specify)	5

32-3. Pay Plan and grade (some participants double-reported their actual grade and the GS equivalent)

GS-4	1
GS-6	3
GS-8	1
GS-10	4
GS-11	2
GS-12	35
GS-13	29
GS-14	27
GS-15	20
Title 38 (Nurse) IV (equivalent to GS-14)	3
Title 38 VM (equivalent to GS-15?)	2
WS-15	1
ES-1	1
ZP-V (NIST)	6
ZP-IV (NIST)	2
ZA-IV (NIST)	5
ZA-V (NIST)	3
ZS-V (NIST)	2

34. Education

PhD or higher	14
some graduate work	21
master's degree	36
bachelor's degree	34
associates degree	15
high school diploma	25
11th grade or lower	0
GED	1

35. Please indicate if you are a member of one or more of these organizations.

Professional Managers Association	6
Senior Executives Association	3
Federal Managers Association	9

36. I am a:

Manager—supervisors and/or managers report to me	40
Supervisor—only non-supervisory employees report to me	94
Team leader/coach—I lead work activities but have no other formal supervisory role.	12

37. I am a:

Line manager—I manage an organization that provides products and/or services to the agency’s external clients and customers	99
Staff manager—I manage an organization that supports those agency organizations that provide products and/or services to the agency’s external clients and customers.	49

38. I am a:

Career or Career Conditional Federal Employee	146
Uniformed Military Officer	
Political Appointee	
Foreign Service Officer	
Public Health Service Officer	
Other (please specify)	

39. My immediate supervisor is a:

Career or Career Conditional Federal Employee	133
Uniformed Military Officer	5
Political Appointee	5
Foreign Service Officer	
Public Health Service Officer	
Other (please specify) SES	3

40. My immediate supervisor reports to a:
- | | |
|---|-----|
| Career or Career Conditional Federal Employee | 139 |
| Uniformed Military Officer | |
| Political Appointee | 7 |
| Foreign Service Officer | |
| Public Health Service Officer | |
| Other (please specify) | |
41. How many of the people that you directly supervise are Full time permanent Federal employees?
- Responses ranged from 0 to 275* mean response: 10.5
mode: 9
42. How many of the people that you directly supervise are Federal employees other than full time permanent?
- Responses ranged from 0 to 25* mean response: 0
mode: 0
43. How many of the people that you directly supervise are Contract personnel (you monitor)?
- Responses ranged from 0 to 40* mean response: 2.1
mode: 0
44. How many of the people that you directly supervise are Other? (please specify)
- Responses ranged from 0 to 15, including*
DOE laboratory personnel
Students
College Students (Freshmen)
Welfare to Work employees
Research associates
Security guards
Interns (college and fed. service from other agencies).
45. How many of the employees that you directly supervise telecommute?
- Responses ranged from 0 to 40* mean response: 2.5
mode: 0

46. Number of years in your current position
Responses ranged from 0 to 30 mean response: 5.5
mode: 3
47. Number of years as a manager/supervisor
Responses ranged from 0 to 37 mean response: 7.5
mode: 5
48. Number of years as a manager/supervisor in other agencies (Enter 0 if none)
Responses ranged from 0 to 22 mean response: 1.6
mode: 0
49. If you are not now in the SES, please select the item that best describes your supervisory/leadership goals.
- | | |
|--|----|
| I would like to advance to the Senior Executive Service | 67 |
| I would like to advance to a Manager or equivalent position (if you are not now a manager) | 36 |
| I do not wish to advance past my current level of responsibilities | 29 |
| I would like to advance to a supervisory position (if you are not already a supervisor) | 4 |
50. Please select the box that best describes your retirement intentions:
- | | |
|--|----|
| I plan to continue working beyond my retirement eligibility date | 51 |
| Undecided | 50 |
| I plan to leave on my retirement eligibility date (not an early out) | 32 |
| I would take an early out, if offered | 16 |
| I plan to leave government service before retirement | 8 |

51. if you selected answers c, d, or e above, please indicate the reason(s).

It was always my plan to retire (or, leave) at this point	32
I have an opportunity which interests me more	15
I don't feel appreciated	14
I no longer enjoy my work	11
The compensation is not adequate	10
I've accomplished all that I hoped to achieve	4
I don't like my working environment	3
The job has gotten too complicated	1
I don't work well with my management	1
Other reasons (please specify)*	13

- *1. Once kids are out of school, it will be time to find something really fun to do with the rest of my life. A new career perhaps in the environmental arena or disaster relief.
- 2. Retirement package is no longer any better than the private sector.
- 3. I've got so many years to go I can't really say for sure how I'll feel when I get there. I'm planning on being financially set to go as soon as I'm eligible. I might change my mind—it's far too early to tell (I've got 17 more years!)
- 4. My decision will be based on the availability of development opportunities, improve promotion opportunities.
- 5. The opportunity to pursue a second career. I feel that one should not have to work in one job/career longer than 20 yrs. If I stay to retirement age I will have 35+ yrs.
- 6. I enjoy my work—but it's stressful.
- 7. I want more influence than career civil service allows. I can accomplish and influence the government more by working outside the government.
- 8. There is not enough potential for growth at SSA. We have the smallest number of GS-15's and SES's among all Federal agencies. There is more opportunity elsewhere, including the private sector. When I hit a plateau, I will move on.
- 9. I'm ready
- 10. husband is older and already retired—
- 11. Spouse will retire before me. I want to share that extended vacation with him for as many years as possible. Would supplement my income with a part time job and would pursue outside interests.
- 12. The interaction was great.
- 13. I love my work, but, if the opportunity was available, I'd retire and travel.

SUMMARY OF OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

1. **What are the most important competencies of a successful supervisor? (This question is for practice; each participant submit one idea)**
 - communications ability
 - listening skills
 - leadership
 - honesty
 - flexibility
 - fairness
 - open-mindedness
 - time management and organization skills
2. **To reach the objective of getting your job done, what are your three or four major responsibilities? (for example, manage financial resources, manage the staff, administer contracts and/or contractor staff, oversee customer relations and service, and manage technological resources.)**
 - manage staff
 - coaching and mentoring
 - manage workload
 - planning
 - manage financial resources (although a number of participants said all financial management was done at levels above them)
3. **What aspects of your major responsibilities are especially challenging?**
 - dealing with challenging employees—or at least many different personalities
 - requests from upper management for reports or information made with extremely short notice.
 - competing priorities; priorities always changing
 - motivating employees
 - getting the work done with the staff available
 - finding time to get everything done
4. **What about your job as a supervisor is changing?**
 - complexity of the missions and external environment
 - technology
 - reduction of administrative support to managers

- pace of change and need for speed
- the interdependency between agencies, private sector organizations and even global organizations is increasing geometrically.
- changes in the workforce and their expectations
- demographics—aging workforce, especially among supervisors/managers
- the goals/priorities of government are changing (current focus on homeland defense)
- compression of levels of management/supervision
- Information overload

5. To what extent do you receive or not receive adequate resources related to *budget*?

- Budgets are decreasing in many organizations, but responses are widely divergent not only among agencies but within agencies. Some say financial resources are adequate; others say they cannot afford paper clips.
- In many instances, budget decisions are made at higher levels.
- For supervisors who do manage their own budgets, budget information is often inadequate.
- Timing of budgets is a big problem.
- Budget exercises are not meaningful.

6. To what extent do you receive or not receive adequate resources related to staff—quantity and quality?

- Widely divergent responses among focus groups, not only among agencies but also within agencies. Some say quantity is OK but quality is lacking; some say the exact opposite; some say both quantity and quality are fine; and some say both quantity and quality are real problems.
- Timing is a problem. Start hiring too late and it takes too long.
- Workforce/workload imbalances are common and difficult to correct.

7. To what extent do you receive or not receive adequate resources related to *technology*?

- Responses vary widely, more variation among agencies than within agencies.

- Generally, technology is becoming more available, although it still lags the private sector. Even when the available technology is OK, its implementation, training of users, and technical support are deficient or at least inconsistent, and it's unevenly and irrationally deployed and insufficiently integrated.

8. To what extent do you receive or not receive adequate resources in *other areas*?

- Although some responses are contradictory, many mentioned inadequate resources for travel and training.
- Although not that many mentioned that inadequacy in supplies (e.g. paper and toner) is a problem in their organization, it appears to be a problem for several groups; and for those groups, it is a big problem.

9. To what extent do *working conditions* such as office space, safety, air quality and so forth contribute to or detract from your ability to be an effective supervisor?

- Working conditions, physical environment, are very important to supervisors' ability to motivate staff.
- Those conditions range from very nice to totally unacceptable—sometimes within the same agency.
- The need for privacy to conduct conversations with employees is critical and largely unmet
- Temperature control and air quality were often-mentioned problems
- Dealing with physical environment issues chews up a lot of supervisors' time

10. To what extent does your *upper level management support* you in meeting your responsibilities and objectives?

- At the next level up, management is generally supportive, in some cases very supportive. Less true at higher levels.
- One area in which upper level supports tends to be poor is in employee discipline and performance based actions.
- At headquarters, the focus seems to be more on the priorities of the current administration and higher profile issues, sometimes to the detriment of the basic work of the agency.
- Highest level management tends to be distracted by impending change

- Contacts with higher management tend to focus on customer complaints more than plans or overarching goals.
- Headquarters staff is often too far removed from the realities of the field. Decision making authority should be delegated to the local level.
- Frequent changes at the top make it difficult to have a long term goals, objectives
- In most cases good, but too many channels of review before final approval. Tendency to micromanage; every decision is treated the same rather than more intensive review of more important or bigger decisions.
- Need improved communication of higher management needs and expectations. Also hard to tell whether they think you are doing well.

11. Do you receive appropriate compensation, awards and recognition?

- Answers ranged from “Absolutely” to “Nope” and “Compensation and awards are a joke and often an insult to employees”—sometimes this variation occurred within the same focus group. Some of the negative answers mentioned salary caps.
- “Everyone would like more recognition...including my staff.” Many respondents mentioned the importance of more recognition in terms of “pats on the back,” being included in decision-making, and getting funding for projects.
- Awards often go to the wrong people, are inequitable in amounts, and/or are too difficult to get approval for (cumbersome process).

12. Is the training and development you receive sufficient?

Responses ranged from “there is an overabundance” to “It is nonexistent.” Most said adequate training exists, but:

- Problem is finding time to take advantage of opportunities.
- Ensuring resources are available at the right time is an ongoing issue.
- Online training opportunities are abundant, but does not meet all of my needs.
- Teleconferencing has been highly emphasized as a preferred training tool, however, it does not meet all needs.
- “There is much valuable training available ... online... but there really isn’t time to do it even at home since we work more than

an 8 hour day and many weekends and are too exhausted once we do get home.”

- The follow-up is not good.

13. To what extent do you think you are successfully carrying out your supervisory responsibilities?

- Pretty well—considering (time, resources, difficulty of motivating people).
- On a scale of 1 to 7 (1 = unsuccessful; 4 = neither successful nor unsuccessful; 7 = extraordinarily successful), the Philadelphia FEB focus group rated the success of today’s federal managers a 4.5. The Associations focus group gave them a 5.3.

14. What aspects of your supervisory responsibilities and performance are you having the most difficulty doing as well as you would like?

- Dealing with difficult employees and conflict among employees.
- Dealing with poor performers/ineffective employees.
- Motivating “experienced employees”—a challenge since disillusionment sets in and significant financial incentives disappear; many have the attitude that they are entitled to their work and there is little room for improvement.
- Not having enough time to communicate with and mentor employees.
- Making performance appraisal useful; having meaningful performance discussions with my employees.
- Resisting doing non-supervisory work.
- Handling the increasing burden of administrative work.
- Supervising too many people without subordinate supervisors.

15. What are the major obstacles that keep you from being a better supervisor? For example, lack of authority, not enough time, lack of support, insufficient resources.

- Too much to do and not enough time to do it (This was perhaps the strongest point to come out of all the focus groups).
- not enough authority; micromanagement by superiors
- conflicting priorities, unclear expectations, inconsistent decisions by higher management
- Being bypassed: staff and peers taking issues directly to my boss and my boss going directly to my staff.

- lack of support from higher management in dealing with employee conduct and performance problems

16. How much influence do you have over the success of the unit you supervise?

- A lot, but not as much authority as I would like.

17. What changes should be made or actions taken that would help you develop as an increasingly competent supervisor?

- more training in supervising, managing, motivating, and developing employees; more training in communications skills and in managing different kinds of people
- more decision-making authority at lower organizational levels; Greater sense of accountability coupled with a broadened scope of authority.
- more mentoring by higher-level managers
- Managerial competencies can be increased by simple and regular interaction with their peers—sharing ideas, sharing what’s worked for them, brainstorming solutions to common problems. Some of this is addressed at off-site meetings, supervisors meetings and town hall meetings; however, there are few management groups which meet during regular business hours that facilitate a recurring exchange of this nature.
- Support functions should be realigned back to the proper internal organizations—reduction of management burden to deliver support programs would allow managers more time to deal with their own program operations.
- Revisit the streamlining efforts that require the 11:1 employee to supervisor ratio.

18. What changes should be made or actions taken that would strengthen the support you need to be an effective supervisor?

- Improve communication from all levels.
- Upper management should listen to the managers who are managing.
- Empower the lower management staff with information and resources—open communication.
- Reduce volume of e-mail.
- Convince upper management that we need their support, confidence, and backing.

- Worry about the end-user with the many new administrative system “roll outs,” about integration of these to provide a uniform interface to the user and to minimize duplication of effort, about communication among all staff involved.
- more effective program planning
- more realistic budgeting process

19. What additional competencies do you need in order to be a more successful supervisor?

- Making a business case for change
- Dealing with tough communications—external PR, internal change, performance assessment, etc.
- Leading change
- Managing performance
- Resolving conflict
- Time management

20. The most rewarding part of my job is:

- Helping employees develop their talents and seeing them rewarded
- Successfully completing projects, meeting organizational goals

21. The most frustrating part of my job is:

- competing demands for my time
- Dealing with performance/conduct problems
- lack of staff resources

22. Anything else you want to say and/or anything you think we should know about that we haven’t asked about.

- Many supervisors manage to get things done by putting in a lot of extra (largely uncompensated) hours.

APPENDIX D

**Office of Management
and Budget Executive
Management Scorecard⁶⁵**

2002 END-OF-YEAR EVALUATION

*Denotes improvement over 2001 baseline;

**Denotes drop from 2001

R = Red Light; Y = Yellow Light; G = Green Light

⁶⁵Source: Government Executive Magazine, GovExec.com, January 31, 2003.

Agency	Human Capital	Competitive Sourcing	Financial Management	E-Government	Budget/ Performance Integration
Agriculture	R	R	R	Y	R
Commerce	R	R	R	Y	Y*
Defense	Y*	R	R	R	Y*
Education	R	R	R	Y*	R
Energy	Y*	R	Y*	Y*	R
Environmental Protection Agency	R	R	Y*	Y	Y
Health and Human Services	R	R	R	R	R
Homeland Security	R	R	R	R	R
Housing and Urban Development	R	R	R	R	R

Agency	Human Capital	Competitive Sourcing	Financial Management	E-Government	Budget/ Performance Integration
Interior	R	R	R	R	R
Justice	R	R	R	R	R
Labor	Y	R	Y*	Y	Y*
State	R	R	R	R	R
Transportation	R	R	R	R	Y
Treasury	R	R	R	R	R
Veterans Affairs	R	R	R	Y*	Y*
Agency for International Development	R	R	R	R	R
Corps of Engineers	R	R	R	R	R

Agency	Human Capital	Competitive Sourcing	Financial Management	E-Government	Budget/ Performance Integration
General Services Administration	R	R	Y	R	R
NASA	Y*	R	R**	R	Y*
National Science Foundation	R	R	G	G*	R
Office of Management and Budget	R	R	R	R	R
Office of Personnel Management	Y	R	Y*	Y	R
Small Business Administration	R	R	R**	Y	Y
Smithsonian	R	R	R	Y	R
Social Security Administration	Y	R	Y	Y	Y*

APPENDIX E

Human Resources Management Panel Biographical Sketches

ACADEMY FELLOWS

Ralph C. Bledsoe, Chair Former Assistant Archivist for Policy and IRM and former Assistant Archivist for Management and Administration, National Archives and Records Administration; Director, Ronald Reagan Library; Director, Washington Public Affairs Center, University of Southern California; Special Assistant to the President of the United States, Cabinet Council on Management and Administration; Associate Director, Office of Planning and Evaluation, Federal Emergency Management Agency; Professor and Senior Faculty Member, Federal Executive Institute.

Carolyn Ban Dean, Graduate School of Public Affairs and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh. Former Associate Professor and Assistant Professor, Department of Public Administration, Graduate School of Public Affairs, State University of New York at Albany: Policy Analyst/ Acting Division Chief, Civil Service Reform Act Evaluation Management Division, U.S. Office of Personnel Management; Manager, Arthur Young and Company.

Cora Prifold Beebe Consultant. Former Vice President, Jefferson Consulting Group; Chief Financial Officer/Executive Director (Admin-

istration), Office of Thrift Supervision, U.S. Department of the Treasury; Branch Chief and Executive Assistant to the Associate Director for Management, U.S. Office of Management and Budget; Director, Planning, Budget, and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Commerce; Director, Policy, Budget, and Program Management, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Bradford Huther Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Former Special Attaché and former Consultant, World Intellectual Property Organization; Chief Operating Officer, Bureau of the Census. Former positions with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office: Associate Commissioner and Chief Financial Officer; Assistant Commissioner for Finance and Planning; Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Administration; Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Operations.

Patricia W. Ingraham Distinguished Professor of Public Administration, Alan K. Campbell Institute, The Maxwell School, Syracuse University. Former positions with the Maxwell School: Director, Alan K. Campbell Institute; Professor and Associate Professor, Department of Public Administration. Former Director, Program in Public Policy and Administration, and Associate Professor, State University of New York at Binghamton; Commissioner, Department of Planning and Economic Development, Broome County, New York; Special Assistant, Evaluation Division, Office of Community Development, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Harriett G. Jenkins Consultant. Former Director, Office of Senate Fair Employment Practices, U.S. Senate; Assistant Administrator, Equal Opportunity Programs, National Aeronautics and Space Administration; Teacher, Principal, Director of Elementary Education, and Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Berkeley Public School System.

Roslyn S. Kleeman Distinguished Executive-in-Residence, Department of Public Administration, School of Business and Public Management, George Washington University. Former Staff, Office of Presidential Personnel, The White House; Director, Federal Workforce Future Issues and Senior Associate Director, General Government Division, U.S. General Accounting Office; Project Director, U.S. Office of Management and Budget; President's Advisory Council on Management Improvement; Acting Director and Deputy Director, Women's Action Program, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

Thomas S. McFee Management Consultant. Former Assistant Secretary for Personnel Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Technical Assistant to the Director, Science and Technology Office, Executive Office of the President; Director, Systems and Development, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare; Project Leader, Weapons Systems Evaluation Group, U.S. Department of Defense.

James L. Perry Associate Dean and Chancellors' Professor of Public Affairs, School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University. Former positions with Indiana University: Director, Institute for the Study of Government and the Nonprofit Sector, Indiana University; Professor. Former Senior Research Associate, National Academy of Public Administration; Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Personnel Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Professor, Graduate School of Management, University of California, Irvine

Gordon Sherman Director, Fidelity National Bank. Former positions with Social Security Administration, Atlanta Region: Regional Commissioner; Deputy Regional Commissioner; Principal Staff Officer, Office of Atlanta Regional Commissioner; Administrative and Staff Assistant. Various directorships on several bank boards, profit and non-profit organizations, and civic associations.

Curtis Smith Malcolm R. Meyers Distinguished Chair in Public Service, Wilson Center for Leadership, Hampden-Sydney College. Former Director, Federal Executive Institute. Former positions with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management: Associate Director for Retirement and Insurance; Associate Director for Career Entry; Policy Advisor to the Director; Deputy Assistant Director for Pay and Benefits Policy, Compensation Group; Special Assistant to the Associate Director; Legislative Assistant.

Frank Thompson Dean, Nelson A. Rockefeller of Public Affairs and Policy, Acting Provost, and Professor of Public Administration and Policy, Political Science, and Public Health, State University of New York at Albany. Former Executive Director, National Commission on the State and Local Public Service (Winter Commission); Professor and Department Head, University of Georgia; Program Analyst, U.S. Public Health Service; Assistant Professor of Political Science, California State University at Long Beach

NON-FELLOWS

Madelyn Pulver Jennings Former Senior Vice President of Personnel for the Gannett Company. Previously, held executive positions at Standard Brands and General Electric. Serves on Emory Business School's Center for Leadership and Career Studies Board of Advisors, George Washington University's School of Business and Public Management Associates Council, the Board of Directors of the Labor Policy Association, and the Society for Human Resource Management.

William H. Wilder Former Human Resources Director, City of Charlotte, North Carolina; Chief of Classification and Pay, State of Florida. Member of the International Personnel Management Association, Past President of the State Chapter. Member and President of Local Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management.

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Frank Cipolla
NAPA Project Director
21st Century Federal Manager



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