

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

**DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL MANUAL SYSTEM**

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**DPM LETTER NO. 300- 26**

**DATE: October 17, 2002**

**SUBJECT:** Recruiting, Selecting, Developing, and Appraising Supervisors

In accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. addressing employment, training and performance appraisal, the Secretary has established a revised policy (attached). It establishes new procedures and initiatives for (1) recruiting and selecting supervisory positions (2) developing supervisors, (3) appraising performance of probationary and experienced supervisors.

Questions about this policy should be directed to the Departmental Office of Human Resource Management, M-10.

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Learning and Development Council Members  
OPI: OST/M-10/Randy Bergquist/202-366-6016

# **RECRUITING, SELECTING, DEVELOPING, AND APPRAISING SUPERVISORS**

## **I. PURPOSE and SCOPE:**

This letter establishes a comprehensive system that provides a corporate perspective on how all Operating Administrations (OAs) recruit, select, develop, and appraise supervisors. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) policy framework that governs the identification, selection, development, and performance evaluation of supervisors provides Federal agencies significant flexibility to design systems tailored to their organizational needs. This letter is intended to provide consistency in creating a culture for growing high-performing leaders. Regulations that define the policy framework for these areas are described in Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations Parts 300, 410 and 430 and 5 U.S.C. section 3321 (a)(2). These provisions apply to all supervisors including uniformed supervisors of civilian employees. Note: In the U.S. Coast Guard, where these processes may be assignment driven, this policy guidance must be reflected in the internal policies, practices and procedures governing recruiting, selecting, developing and appraising supervisors.

## **II. DEFINITIONS**

The definition of supervisor, as indicated in 5 U.S.C. Section 7103(a)(10) means, “an individual employed by an agency having authority in the interest of the agency to hire, direct, assign, promote, reward, transfer, furlough, layoff, recall, suspend, discipline, or remove employees, to adjust their grievances, or to effectively recommend such action, if the exercise of the authority is not merely routine or clerical in nature but requires the consistent exercise of independent judgment...”

## **III. RECRUITING AND SELECTING SUPERVISORS**

When considering candidates for all supervisory positions all OAs must use the following Quality Ranking Factor (QRF) as a mandatory factor in agency vacancy announcements:

*Ability to lead a diverse workforce including: creating a culture that fosters high standards of ethics; developing strategies to maximize employee potential; developing performance plans and monitoring performance; resolving conflicts; fostering workforce diversity on the staff; and recognizing staff contributions.*

In addition, OAs may also use other QRFs that clearly address agency specific supervisory or leadership competencies. These competencies must be evident in the criteria used to evaluate candidates against the QRF.

When assessing supervisory competencies for selection purposes, high performing organizations have used the following methods/tools successfully:

- Supervisory Assessment Questionnaires
- Assessment Centers
- Supervisory Aptitude Tests
- Structured Interview Questions for Selecting Supervisory Personnel

#### **IV. SUPERVISORY PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

Candidates selected into supervisory positions may be required to complete a probationary period. However, employees who have completed the required probation in a prior supervisory or managerial position in the Federal Government are exempt from the required probationary period. Satisfactory completion of a probationary period is a prerequisite for continuation in the position. If at anytime during the employee's probationary period, the supervisor becomes aware of deficiencies, the supervisor must notify the probationary employee of the deficiency and clarify the expectations.

#### **V. DEVELOPING SUPERVISORS**

Once an employee is appointed to a new supervisory position (e.g., employee has never held a supervisory position in the Federal Government), the organization must:

- Conduct a needs assessment that addresses the OPM/DOT leadership competencies,
- Assist him/her with an Individual Development Plan (IDP) that is based on the needs assessment,
- Include 40 hours of formal development during the one-year probationary period, and
- Notify the OA training office when the employee completes an assigned supervisory learning activity.

As long as the employee encumbers a supervisory position, the organization must:

- Conduct a needs assessment that addresses specific leadership competencies needing development,
- Maintain an IDP that is based on a needs assessment, and
- Notify the OA training office when the employee completes an assigned learning activity.

When a non-DOT supervisor is selected into a DOT supervisory position, the organization must:

- Conduct a needs assessment that addresses specific leadership competencies needing development,

- Maintain an IDP that is based on a needs assessment, and
- Notify the OA training office when the employee completes an assigned learning activity.

OAs are strongly encouraged to assess needs and develop IDPs for all current supervisors. Supplemental continuous learning activities may include:

- Courses in human resource management (e.g., employee relations; labor-management relations; diversity management, recruitment; staffing and classification; performance management; employee development)
- Mentoring/coaching
- Rotational assignments to other program offices
- Combination of classroom theory, experiential learning, and computer based instruction that addresses specific leadership competencies requiring development.

## **VI. APPRAISING SUPERVISORS**

DOT's Performance Management Taskforce shall establish and all OAs must implement mandatory accountability standards and measures that apply to all levels of management and supervision. This shall include a requirement that is consistent with the prescribed regulations 5 CFR part 430, Subpart C and DPM Letter No. 920-24 dated June 10, 2002. This Taskforce will also revise Departmental Personnel Manual 315-40, subchapter 9 to eliminate barriers to addressing poor performing probationary supervisors. Two such barriers include:

- An organization's budget may not allow for the poor performing probationary supervisor to return to a regular position, and
- Performance during the probationary period usually is not addressed until the end of the period.