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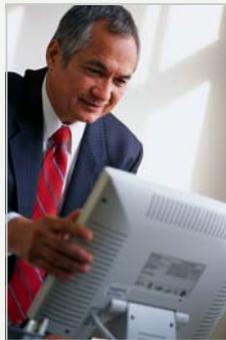
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NSPS Launches *iSuccess* Training Course

The Program Executive Office, NSPS, has developed a Web-based training course to assist employees in writing effective job objectives and self-assessments. The course, called “*iSuccess*,” is a result of important feedback provided by Spiral 1.1 employees. Draft job objectives and accomplishments can serve as a starting point for discussions between employees and their supervisors as they work to finalize mission-aligned objectives.



The narrated *iSuccess* course guides employees through the writing process using a step-by-step approach. A “virtual coach” and “virtual employees” are added features that provide important tips and techniques for writing, as well as specific examples. *iSuccess* helps employees:



- Write effective job objectives using the SMART (specific, measurable, aligned, realistic/relevant, timed) framework;
- Select appropriate contributing factors that reflect how to accomplish job objectives;
- Understand the impact of performance indicators on the development of job objectives; and
- Practice writing a self-assessment based on their accomplishments and achievements.



A self-paced tool, *iSuccess* is useful at any time during the performance management process. Employees can place drafted work into a Word document and save it to the computer desktop for easy access. Employees can also copy and paste these job objectives into the Performance Appraisal Application.

To access the *iSuccess* training course, please visit the “Resources” area of the NSPS home page via the following link: <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps>.



Be Vigilant When Accessing TSP Account from a Home Computer

In late December 2006, the computers of several Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) participants were infected with keylogging software that allowed criminals to record all keystrokes made by participants without their knowledge. The hackers also retrieved the customers' TSP personal identification numbers and other account information, according to a [statement](#) on the TSP Web site.

Keylogging originated as a diagnostic tool used in software development. When misused by computer hackers, however, keylogging can enable them to obtain passwords or encryption keys—and thus bypass other security measures.

TSP officials indicated the TSP computer system was not breached, and they were able to identify approximately two dozen participants who had relatively small amounts withdrawn from their accounts and electronically forwarded to fraudulent accounts.

“Although we are working with the financial companies involved for the return of the funds,” the officials noted, “the total amount of loss involved is approximately \$35,000. All affected participants have been notified.”

Personal information was compromised when keyloggers monitored each keystroke of the users while they entered their TSP information into their own computers. All cases involved electronic funds transfers.

As an added security measure, TSP has discontinued making electronic payments for online transactions. Officials added that over the coming months, several enhancements would be made to the TSP Web site. These include a new alert message, more robust Web passwords, and the use of TSP account numbers, which will replace Social Security numbers for most TSP purposes.

Outgoing TSP Executive Director Gary Amelio—who, in an unrelated development, recently announced his departure for the private sector—said participants should also take common-sense steps when using their own computers.

Installing keylogger protection and promptly closing the browser after each visit to a TSP account are simple, yet effective, ways to strengthen online security. (Just logging off a Web site does not clear the browser's memory, so it is

important to click the “X” at the top of the Internet screen.) “We urge you to do this,” Mr. Amelio said.

According to a 2006 survey, 49 percent of TSP participants access their accounts via a home computer. Thus, the potential exists for future fraudulent activity. Hackers can target anyone, but home computer users can reduce their exposure by closing the browser right after accessing their TSP accounts and installing updated security software that includes firewalls, antivirus programs, and spyware detection.

The Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations offers free antivirus software for Department of Defense (DoD) personnel to use on home computers. To obtain it, access the following link from a “.mil” computer system and authenticate with your common access card and personal identification number: https://www.jtfgno.mil/antivirus/home_use.htm.

-Benefits and Entitlements



IT Portfolio Management

The Department formally implemented the information technology (IT) portfolio management process via Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 8115.02, “Information Technology Portfolio Management Implementation,” dated October 30, 2006.

CPMS Human Resources Business, Information, and Technology Solutions (HR-BITS) has identified approximately 240 systems that—according to their entries in the Defense IT Portfolio Registry—contain, use, or distribute DoD civilian HR data in one or more of these categories: HR strategy, organization and position management, staff acquisition, performance management, compensation management, benefits management, HR development, employee relations, labor relations, and separation management.

HR-BITS reviews civilian portfolio investments through the DoD Investment Review Board process. A portfolio is the collection of capabilities, resources, and related investments required to accomplish a mission-related or administrative outcome. DoDI 8115.02 establishes portfolios by mission

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IT Portfolio Management

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area, core-business mission area (“sub-portfolio”), and Component. Mission areas must establish sub-portfolios and a strategic direction aligned with the enterprise strategic plan (Quadrennial Defense Review) and Global Information Grid integrated architecture.

Together with civilian HR Component stakeholders, CPMS manages the civilian HR IT portfolio. The management process emphasizes consistency with the Clinger-Cohen Act.

The management process is tightly coupled with DoD decision-support processes. These include the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System; Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) process; and Defense Acquisition System.

DODI 8115.02 requires annual portfolio oversight management reviews aligned with the PPBE cycle. The DoD Chief Information Officer, DoD Chief Financial Officer, mission area leads, and other stakeholders conduct the reviews.

Sub-portfolio reviews and recommendations on Component portfolio investments flow through the mission area to the Principal Staff Assistant. Continuation, modification, or termination of existing IT investments may be the result.

New IT investments may also be initiated to fill capability gaps.

-HR-BITS



Fast Facts About Hiring Graduates of the National Security Education Program (NSEP)

PURPOSE: The National Security Education Program (NSEP) is a major Federal program designed to build a broader, more qualified pool of United States (U.S.) citizens with foreign language and international skills. The program strengthens U.S. economic competitiveness, international cooperation, and national security. It has five components:



- ✦ David L. Boren Scholarship Program;
- ✦ David L. Boren Fellowship Program;
- ✦ Language Flagship Program;
- ✦ English for Heritage Language Speakers Program; and
- ✦ Language Corps.

KEY FACETS OF SCHOLARSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, AND FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS:

- ✦ These serve to attract persons with unique skills in less commonly taught languages and cultures and in a wide array of professional fields. Graduates are ideal candidates for assisting the Department in its core mission.
- ✦ Students participate in a continuum of professional, social, and language learning activities that provide them with superior skills.
- ✦ Fields of study are wide ranging (e.g., business, economics, law, applied sciences, history, and social sciences), all with special focus on cultural areas and associated languages of particular interest to the Department.

- ✦ Award recipients must demonstrate a commitment to bring their exceptional skills to the Federal Government—specifically, to agencies with a national security mission. After completing the program, each student must fulfill a service obligation requirement.

STATUTE: The foundational statute is the National Security Education Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-183), December 4, 1991, as amended.

HIRING NSEP GRADUATES:

- ✦ You may use Schedule A 213.3102 (r) excepted service appointing authority (time-limited appointment for up to 4 years). “R” authority may be used for filling any position—even one that has not been designated as an NSEP position. Excepted service appointment procedures in title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 302 must be applied, including application of veterans’ preference.
- ✦ You may also use any other appointing authority for which the recipient is eligible.

RÉSUMÉS: These are posted online at www.nsepnet.org.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- ✦ Click [here](#) for the January 23, 2007, memorandum from the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy), titled “Hiring Graduates of the National Security Education Program.”
- ✦ Click [here](#) for additional information about NSEP.

-Policy and Strategy Support





DoD Receives Results of the 2006 OPM Federal Human Capital Survey

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) released the results of the Federal Human Capital Survey on January 31. The Corporate Data Analysis Branch of HR-BITS is continuing to analyze the material for the Department's results, but now we would like to highlight a few items that stand out.

GOOD RESPONSE RATE. Of the 99,000 DoD employees sampled for the survey, more than 50,000 responded. We are pleased that so many took the time to answer questions that are critical to our continuing evaluation and assessment of the Department's Human Resources (HR) policies.

ABOVE-AVERAGE SCORES. Notably, the Department exceeded the overall Government-wide average score in all four Human Capital Accountability and Assessment Framework (HCAAF) Indices. The indices include questions related to leadership/knowledge management, performance management, talent management, and job satisfaction. The Department ranked below the Government average in only one item (related to leadership/knowledge management) and exceeded the Government in 26 items, or 67 percent of the 39 HCAAF items that constitute the indices.

SIGNIFICANT STRENGTHS. One of the HCAAF items, job satisfaction, is considered an overall strength for the Department. This is significant, because survey results also indicate that job satisfaction is a key to employee retention.

Ninety percent of DoD employees surveyed believe that the work they do is important, and the vast majority know how their work relates to the agency's goals and believe they are held account-

able for achieving results. Additionally, the Department scored well in employee satisfaction with benefits and in cooperation between employees to get work done. The survey also showed that DoD employees like the kind of work they do and believe their organizations produce high quality work. One-third of these items are considered strengths for the Department. ("Strengths" are items with positive responses—"strongly agree" or "agree"—of 65 percent or more.)

NEED FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS. The results outlined above are strengths to build upon. However, the survey also surfaced areas for additional attention. The lowest DoD scores related to programs such as childcare subsidies, telecommuting, flexible spending accounts, and long term care insurance. Other areas that scored lower were the employees' belief that promotions are based on merit and that there are opportunities to get a better job.

Finally, the results for DoD reveal some areas that we are analyzing more closely, as follows:

- Twenty-five of the 73 items scored (or 34 percent) had positive responses in the 51-64 percent range. Many of these questions related to recognition/feedback, leadership, manager quality, various facets of job satisfaction (including pay), training/development, and organizational issues (including recommending one's organization as a good place to work).
- Fourteen of the 73 items scored (or 19 percent) had positive responses in the 36-50 percent range. These questions related to rewards, empowerment regarding work proc-

esses, employee relations issues, information received from management about what is going on in the organization, career opportunities, alternative work schedules, and leadership.

We appreciate the work OPM did in conducting the survey and presenting detailed DoD results. This material will be a great help in shaping the Department's future human capital policies and initiatives. It will also be valuable in reshaping the work and performance cultures to ensure the civilian workforce can meet its mandate to support the war fighter and the Department's national security mission.

-HR-BITS 

FEHBP Enrollment Codes

OPM recently announced that it would not expand Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) enrollment codes. Previously, OPM had sought to expand the codes from three to seven characters to accommodate growth of FEHBP plans and options. OPM has now decided instead to recycle codes that are no longer used by discontinued plans.

The new approach saves Federal agency resources that would otherwise have been required to modify automated enrollment and payroll systems, so that these systems would accept the seven-digit enrollment codes.

-Benefits and Entitlements 



CPMS Personnel-ity Profile

“Country Boy” Mark Smith Is Serving His Country

“I’m definitely a country boy,” says Mark Smith, Chief of the Recruitment Assistance Division. “My grandfather owned a coal mine, and my father was a miner.” Mark’s hometown of Tazewell is nestled in the Appalachian Basin of southwest Virginia. Its Queen Anne houses and farmhouse-style homes with broad front porches still lend the town a 19th-century charm.

But times have changed for Tazewell. By the 1970s, the coal-based local economy had declined sharply. Even longtime residents began moving away.



RAD’s Mark Smith discusses DoD civilian employment opportunities with a wounded soldier during a career event at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

“In 1976 I enlisted in the Air Force,” Mark says, “and I stayed in the service until retiring in 1999. Then I went to work in industry, but like many others, after 9/11 I wanted to return to the Department of Defense. In May 2002, I accepted a position with the Defense Logistics Agency as their corporate recruiter. Soon afterwards, I began attending recruiter consortium meetings

at CPMS. That led me to apply for my current job. I joined CPMS in September 2004.

“The Recruitment Assistance Division—RAD—promotes civilian employment as true public service. You don’t have to wear a uniform to serve your country. As DoD civilians, we go home every night knowing we’ve done something on the job to support our war fighters.”

Currently, RAD has 12 staff members. “Some are retired military recruiters

like me; others are staffing specialists. We get synergy from this mix. Our recruiters are becoming experts in the Federal staffing process, and our staffers are learning to be great salespeople. To be effective, you need strong skills in both areas.”

During 2007, RAD will emphasize its new Student Training/Academic Recruitment (STAR)

program at selected colleges and universities. “We hired two university students in a pilot program to promote the Department as the employer of choice. We hope DoD Components will follow suit and hire their own STARs. This would expand campus recruitment, so the entire Department can share the wealth of new talent.

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Pandemic Influenza (PI)

The first pandemic influenza (PI) preparedness conference on civilian HR issues was held in January at the Pentagon. Attendees were members of the continuity of operations (COOP) community, HR practitioners, and information technology specialists from all DoD Components. Here are selected highlights:

- “Social distancing” techniques—staggered work hours, telework, or just spreading out in the workplace—can be effective countermeasures during a pandemic health crisis.
- Traditional COOP plans must be adjusted, since absenteeism may run as high as 40 percent or last beyond 30 days. Other key areas include plans for interoperable communications and sustainment of vital records and databases.
- Leave and emergency hiring programs can also be used to support continuity.
- The DoD PI Internal Communications Plan will provide a comprehensive, Department-wide communication strategy. The goal is to make personnel aware that each command, installation, and unit has procedures and guidance for what to do in the event of an outbreak.

The conference is only one in a series of events aimed at protecting the health of the workforce and ensuring continuity of operations. For further information on PI preparedness, go to www.dod.mil/pandemicflu or www.cpms.osd.mil/disasters.

-Policy and Strategy Support





Mark Smith Pursues Future DoD Workforce

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“In the STAR pilot program, our two students will write a marketing plan, aid DoD recruiters and VIPs who visit their respective campuses, and represent the Department at job fairs and any similar activities,” Mark explains.

“Two events have already been slated at the University of Puerto Rico and Michigan State University. These institutions have diverse student bodies, and both are good sources of mission-critical skills like science and engineering.”

On a personal note, Mark and his wife, Miriam, have two sons. Jonathan is a police officer for the city of Norfolk, VA. Rafael is a college senior with an electrical engineering major. “Both our sons are in the Air National Guard,” Mark adds with quiet pride.

While this “country boy” had to leave his hometown of Tazewell a number of years ago, for now Mark says that he and his wife are “perfectly happy” to call Fairfax County their home.

“We’ve lived in northern Virginia almost 15 years, and we love it! Arlington and Fairfax Counties—and of course, the nearby District of Columbia—are very historic and offer a tremendous variety of things to see and do.

“This is a great place to live and work and raise a family,” Mark says.

Supreme Court Decides *Osborn v. Haley*

The Supreme Court recently ruled in *Osborn v. Haley*, a case concerning Federal employees’ immunity from a lawsuit for torts committed while acting within the scope of their employment or occurring during the course of their official duties.

The *Osborn* decision discusses the Westfall Act (codified at Section 2679 of title 28, U.S. Code), which authorizes the Attorney General to certify that a Federal employee acted within the scope of his or her employment during the period in which an alleged tort occurred.

After certification, the Department of Justice files a motion in the appropriate Federal district court to remove the case from state court and to substitute the United States for the employee as the defendant.

In this particular case, the Federal employee, Mr. Haley, was alleged to have interfered with the private-sector employment of the plaintiff, Ms. Osborn, resulting in her termination. Ms. Osborn contends that Mr. Haley’s alleged actions did not fall within the scope of his job, thus making the U.S. Attorney General’s certification improper for the purpose of removing the case from the state court into the Federal district court.

The Supreme Court held that the United States can insert itself as the defendant in lawsuits against Federal workers even if the alleged act was not within the scope of the employee’s employment, if the Attorney General concludes that the employee did not commit the act. Further, the Supreme Court held that the Attorney General’s certification is conclu-

sive for the purpose of removal from the state courts to the Federal district court. Once removed, the Federal court cannot remand the case to the state court.

The Supreme Court’s decision in *Osborn v. Haley* underscores the immunity provided by the Westfall Act. It calls attention to the protections afforded to Federal employees acting within the scope of their official duties.

The ruling insulates Federal employees from the cost and effort of defending themselves in lawsuits similar to the *Osborn* case—i.e., suits based upon common law torts—thus placing the burden of defending the lawsuit on the Federal Government. (See, e.g., *Hunter v. Bryant*, 502 U.S. 224, 228 (per curiam).)

While this case reaffirms the legal protections afforded Federal employees, managers and HR professionals should still exercise due diligence in performing their official duties and responsibilities.

To read the decision, click [here](#).

-Labor and Employee Relations



CPMS Employment

CPMS vacancies are posted on USAJOBS. To access employment opportunities for status candidates, click [here](#).

For other CPMS vacancies, click [here](#).