

June 18, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: JOHN BERRY  
DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Office of Personnel Management Assistance in Meeting Hiring Reform, Employee Satisfaction and Wellness Requirements Contained in the President's Fiscal Year 2011 Budget and Performance Plans

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in collaboration with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), is very pleased to have an opportunity to work with each of you in carrying out the President's hiring reform agenda as well as the Work-Life initiative, which includes wellness and improving employee satisfaction. It is unprecedented for human capital issues to have such a significant role in the overall President's budget and performance plans. Both Director Orszag and I recognize that effective hiring will increase agencies' capacity to better fulfill their mission and serve the American people.

To ensure this effort has the highest level of support within OPM, I have established two senior level teams to address both of these issues, led by my Deputy Chiefs of Staff—Ms. Jennifer Mason (Hiring Reform) and Mr. Justin Johnson (Work-Life). In addition, I have dedicated some of my more seasoned staff members to each of these teams and directed them to work with you in a collaborative manner in ensuring our collective success.

The following maps out the different strategies we will use to assist you in achieving the hiring process mapping; streamlined and plain language job announcements; hiring manager involvement in the hiring process; and applicant notification:

SWAT Teams: Each agency will establish a SWAT team, comprised of hiring managers and human resource professionals within the agency and OPM representatives. The teams will have the responsibility within each agency to:

(1) Map the current hiring process using OPM's End-to-End Hiring Process as the guide and its Hiring Toolkit Diagnostic Model. The hiring process mapping will be from the time a manager identifies a need to hire until the person selected starts his/her first day on the job. In addition, the

SWAT team will identify any barriers that an agency is encountering in reaching the government-wide standard in the Roadmap and analyzing the root causes of these barriers.

(2) Develop and use streamlined and plain language job opportunity announcements (JOA) for the top 10 occupations within each agency. Agencies will also use the current OPM streamlined/plain language JOAs, found at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov) “Employer Services” tab.

Agencies and OPM will identify SWAT team members no later than July 1, 2009. While human resource professionals should be an integral part of the SWAT team, it is requested the leader of the agency team have a policy or core mission-related role in the agency. The agency SWAT teams will provide agency leadership, OMB and OPM with an initial status update by September 30, 2009. The agencies will provide their final hiring process mapping results, along with an action plan to tackle the barriers identified, in their FY 2009 Human Capital Management Report (HCMR), due December 15, 2009. Agencies will make full use of their streamlined/plain language job announcements as each one is developed, but no later than December 15, 2009.

Collaborative Network/Community of Practice Across Agencies. OPM will facilitate a match up of agencies with similar composition/missions to establish partners (sister agencies) to assist one another with all four areas of hiring reform and wellness. Rather than each agency tackle this one issue at a time, I believe we can have better consistency, accountability and success by joining forces in solving these challenges. OPM will reach out through the Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) Council to establish these partnerships. OPM will establish a human capital community on OMB’s Web 2.0 MAX Federal Community government-wide website to foster sharing of successful practices in addressing these important human capital requirements. Additionally, OPM will post each agency’s SWAT team and their contact information on the MAX webpage.

Training Academies. OPM will hold a series of training academies for both human resource and operational line management to demonstrate successful agency hiring process mapping, and how to write streamlined/plain language job announcements. OPM will also hold training academies for hiring managers on the value of their participation in the hiring process. We will reach out to those agencies who are most ready to begin these hiring reform efforts to kick-off the first training academy.

Hiring Manager Survey Results. The OPM End-to-End Hiring Roadmap provides useful tips on how to involve managers in the hiring process. OPM, in collaboration with the CHCO Council, developed a Manager Survey last year for measuring agencies’ overall success in hiring manager involvement and their satisfaction with the hiring process. As a first step, the SWAT teams will review the agency’s current results on relevant items on the Managers Satisfaction Survey and identify areas requiring improvement.

The SWAT teams will provide a status update to agency leadership, OMB and OPM regarding targeted improvement areas. Agencies will include in their FY 2009 HCMR their targets for improving their manager satisfaction scores during 2010 and their action plans for addressing barriers to hiring manager involvement in the hiring process.

Applicant Notification. Regarding notifying applicants of their status at four points through USAJOBS.gov in a timely fashion – application received, application assessed for qualifications, applicant referred to selecting official (or not); and application selected (or not) - OPM is currently working with agency representatives to make these four touch points a reality within USAJOBS. One such feature is “Proactive Notification” for applicants, which will provide a status statement at each of the four points through the use of email alerts. This enhancement will be implemented on June 20, 2009. OPM has already started discussions with several of the departments/agencies within the CHCO Council on the requirement to use USAJOBS to provide jobseekers with “Applicant Status.” Ms. Kim Bauhs, Director, USAJOBS, is OPM’s point of contact. Ms. Bauhs can be contacted at [kim.bauhs@opm.gov](mailto:kim.bauhs@opm.gov).

To further assist agencies, OPM is in the initial stages of creating centralized pools of top applicants for key mission-critical jobs across the Federal Government who can be interviewed by agencies and quickly hired. As a sign of my commitment to this initiative, as well some of the other initiatives outlined in this memo, I have set aside a portion of OPM’s budget to ensure our collective success.

Other human capital initiatives that Director Orszag and I believe are important to address in your agencies include improving employee satisfaction and wellness. Studies show that, on average, happy and healthy employees are more productive and engaged in their work. There is evidence that an engaged workforce leads to improved performance results.

Improving Employee Satisfaction. To meet your employee satisfaction requirements, agencies should review their 2008 Federal Human Capital Survey (FHCS) results, provided earlier this year by OPM, to identify (1) the ten items on which they scored lowest compared to the rest of government; (2) any item(s) on which employee satisfaction decreased since the 2006 FHCS; and (3) those Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework (HCAAF) indices in which the agency scored lower than the rest of government. Agencies should conduct follow-up activities, such as focus groups and town hall meetings as appropriate, to understand the reasons for employees’ dissatisfaction with these items. Agencies should also engage those labor organizations representing their employees, as appropriate, as part of these follow-up activities to help improve employee satisfaction in a meaningful and sustainable way. Based on these follow-up activities, agencies should create an action plan, including improvement targets, to increase employees’ satisfaction on these items.

Agencies should submit these action plans to OPM, and as part of their FY 2011 budget submission to OMB, due September 14<sup>th</sup>.

Improving Employee Wellness. For the wellness initiative, agencies should submit an inventory of current wellness activities, cafeteria and fitness facilities, and health clinics as well as any plans to enhance these programs. OPM will provide an on-line web tool for agencies to complete their wellness inventories. Guidance will be issued by July 10 that agencies can follow to complete this requirement. The tool will record the activity/facility, any agency performance metrics tracked in relation to this activity/facility, current agency performance against these metrics, and cost and utilization data. Examples of items to include in this inventory are wellness competitions, fitness facilities, cafeteria and vending machine promotion of healthful food choices. Agencies should submit their health and wellness performance improvement targets and action plans to OPM, and as part of their FY 2011 budget submission to OMB, due September 14<sup>th</sup>.

I, and the OPM team, look forward to working with you over the next six months in achieving results with these very important initial hiring reform efforts. Ms. Angela Bailey, Deputy Associate Director for Talent and Capacity Policy and Hiring Wolf Pack Team Lead is OPM's point of contact for the hiring reform initiatives/requirements outlined in this letter. Ms. Bailey can be reached at [angela.bailey@opm.gov](mailto:angela.bailey@opm.gov). Ms. Ana Mazzi, Acting Deputy Associate Director for Learning, Executive Resources and Policy Analysis is OPM's point of contact for the employee satisfaction initiative. Ms. Mazzi can be reached at [ana.mazzi@opm.gov](mailto:ana.mazzi@opm.gov). Mr. Dan Green, Deputy Associate Director for Employee and Family Support Policy and Wellness Wolf Pack Team Lead is OPM's point of contact for wellness initiatives. Mr. Green can be reached at [daniel.green@opm.gov](mailto:daniel.green@opm.gov).