

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL MANUAL SYSTEM

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SUBJECT: Career Counseling Program

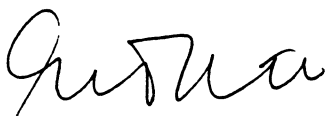
DATE: December 5, 1991

The subject DPM Letter transmits the policy to implement a Departmentwide Career Counseling Program. A draft of the proposed policy was coordinated in September 1991. All comments were carefully reviewed and several recommendations were incorporated into the final policy.

The Secretary has given his personal commitment to creating a work environment in which self development is encouraged and employees are afforded the opportunity to develop plans of action to meet individual career development and organizational workforce goals. The intent of this program is to ensure that resources are committed to appropriately manage a Career Counseling Program and to assure that all employees, regardless of duty location, have access to career counseling. We are proud that the implementation of such a program places the Department ahead of many other Federal agencies.

For a program of this significance to be successful, it will require your personal support and commitment. Therefore, please designate a career counseling program coordinator within 30 days of the issuance of this policy. A Career Counseling Program Plan, including scope of proposed program and timetable for achieving full employee coverage, should also be developed in 120 days and provided to the Chief, Human Resources Development Division, M-13.

If you have any questions concerning the implementation of this program, Nancy Mowry, of my staff, is available to assist you and may be reached on 366-6202.

  
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Director of Personnel

Attachment

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM

PURPOSE. This Departmental Personnel Manual Letter provides for career counseling programs for all Department of Transportation (DOT) employees. A Career Counseling Program allows managers to develop better communication and greater retention of valued employees; provide better utilization of employee skills; achieve more realistic developmental staff goals and resource planning; build talent inventories for special skills; and accomplish productive performance appraisal discussions. Similarly, through career planning, individuals determine their skills, interests, and values; consider career options; set goals; and establish plans for achieving goals. Career counseling facilitates the career planning process and is the initial step to an overall program of career development.

BACKGROUND. The Government Employees Training Act of 1958, and subsequently, Executive Orders 11348 and 11478, mandate that each Federal agency develop employees through the establishment and operation of progressive and efficient training and career planning programs. Civil Service 2000, a long term workforce needs assessment, published in June 1988, reports that most of the workers who will staff the Federal Government in the year 2000 are already on the payroll. Since current workforce trends indicate that the national workforce will grow more slowly than it has in recent years, the numbers of young workers will decline. Consequently, in order to maintain a cadre of well qualified Federal workers, employees' skills, knowledges and abilities need to continue to be developed. Further, the National Transportation Policy, Phase 2, supports expanding employee counseling programs to increase the Department of Transportation's (DOT) strength and effectiveness; to improve support for new and current employees in achieving their potential; and to develop and apply the skills represented by diverse groups and backgrounds in the modern workforce.

POLICY. It is the policy of DOT to create a work environment in which self development is encouraged; to provide a self assessment and goal setting system for employees to gain information and understanding about themselves and their work environment; to assist employees in self assessment and career counseling processes; to help employees develop plans of action to meet individual career development and organizational workforce goals; and to ensure that opportunities for training and self study are available for all employees in identifying career development needs, consistent with resources and workload.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT. Overall policy concerning the Department's Career Counseling Program will be provided by the Office of the Secretary, Office of Personnel. Supervisors, as leaders, have the primary responsibility of providing career counseling to help

employees develop to their highest potential. Human resource specialists assist in and facilitate the career counseling process. General responsibilities include the following:

1. Office of the Secretary, Office of Personnel shall:
  - a. provide assistance and guidance to Operating Administrations in establishing career counseling programs;
  - b. encourage cooperative efforts and sharing of information, ideas, and resources, as appropriate, among Operating Administrations in developing and administering career counseling programs;
  - c. provide information on career program matters of Departmental interest;
  - d. serve as an advisor to the Operating Administrations on career program matters, such as skills identification, career paths and written sources of information; and
  - e. evaluate the success of Departmental career counseling programs.
2. Operating Administrations shall:
  - a. develop and administer career counseling programs which further both organizational and individual goals;
  - b. ensure that resources are available to appropriately manage a Career Counseling Program;
  - c. provide training and guidance to managers, supervisors, and human resource specialists in career counseling techniques to motivate self-development for employees;
  - d. assure that all employees, regardless of duty location, have access to career counseling;
  - e. provide an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for assessing the requirements of both the individual and the organization; and
  - f. create a feedback system for measuring the success of the career counseling program.
3. Supervisors and Managers shall:
  - a. create a growth and development environment and support the career development of subordinates;

- b. provide employees career development advice in fulfilling potential and accomplishing organizational objectives;
- c. identify experience, knowledge gaps, or behaviors that limit effective performance and offer constructive comments in evaluating employees' career aspirations;
- d. assist employees, as appropriate, in setting career goals through an IDP; and
- e. provide career counseling, coaching, or to the extent feasible, formal or on-the-job training or release of employees for developmental assignments.

4. Employees Shall:

- a. assume primary responsibility for career planning and personal development;
- b. assess personal interests; define personal success; determine willingness to provide the investment of time, effort, resources, and mobility needed to succeed; evaluate alternatives; and develop a timetable;
- c. seek information on what job or training is available, where it is available, and what training paths are necessary to attain goals;
- d. prepare an IDP, as appropriate, in consultation with their supervisors; and
- e. consistent with workload requirements and available resources, pursue on-the-job training, government sponsored training or formal training to achieve career goals.