



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

Office of the
Director

January 31, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS

FROM: KAY COLES JAMES,
DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Information Technology (IT) Training Program Guidance

Section 209 of the E-Government Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-347), hereafter referred to as the Act, requires the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in coordination with the Federal Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council, to assess the adequacy of existing Governmentwide information technology training programs and to recommend improvements as appropriate. Additionally, the Act requires OPM, in collaboration with the Council, to issue policies to assist agencies in the development of performance standards for IT training programs. This memorandum provides guidance with respect to meeting these responsibilities, in accordance with the general framework established by the *Report on the Establishment of a Governmentwide Information Technology (IT) Training Program* (opm.gov/hrd/lead/pubs/ittpreport_07-04/ittpreportJuly2004.pdf).

Determining IT Training Needs. Before an agency can develop IT training performance standards, it must first determine organizational and individual training needs. Given the agency-specific nature of most IT projects, this is primarily an agency responsibility. However, to assist you in this regard, OPM and the CIO Council have developed an on-line IT workforce competency assessment tool that will allow you to evaluate the current skill levels of individuals in your IT workforce, identify critical competency gaps, and most importantly, link those competency gaps to specific training courses and other learning opportunities as a basis for developing organizational and individual training plans. The assessment tool, part of a comprehensive IT Workforce Development Roadmap developed by OPM and the CIO Council, can be found at golearn.gov. Note that since 2003, OPM and the CIO Council have conducted an annual on-line competency survey of the entire IT workforce; results are available for your agency through the CIO Council.

Establishing IT Training Standards. Once an agency has determined its specific IT training needs and a strategy to meet them, it must develop agency- and program-specific performance standards to measure the efficacy of that strategy. This is a requirement of the Act as well, and it ensures that agency IT training efforts are focused squarely on results. While it is not possible to establish a single set of Government-wide IT training program performance standards, OPM has developed a *Guide to Strategically Planning Training and Measuring Results* (opm.gov/hrd/lead/Pubs/spguide.pdf) to provide agencies with a common methodology for developing such standards. The Guide describes how to (1) measure pre-training performance (individual and organizational), (2) set tangible short- and long-term post-training performance

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objectives, and (3) periodically evaluate and compare post-training progress against those performance objectives. The Government Accountability Office's *Guide to Assessing Strategic Training and Development Efforts in the Federal Government* (GAO-04-546G) (<https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-04-546g.pdf>) also provides a useful reference in this regard.

Evaluating IT Training Efforts. As discussed above, performance standards are critical to evaluating the effectiveness of IT training efforts, specifically and generally. This too is a specific requirement of the Act, which further requires that each agency include a description of its progress in establishing and implementing IT training programs in its annual E-Government Act report. In addition, OPM (in coordination with the CIO Council) will include IT training in its review of overall agency human capital programs and strategies. In this regard, our Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework already provides general standards for evaluating the effectiveness of training efforts, particularly with respect to its mission-critical occupations. Given the importance of information technology - and hence, a high-performing IT workforce - to agency missions, we intend to track agency IT training results in the Human Capital scorecard under the Workforce Planning Standard for success.

The OPM Human Capital Officer assigned to your agency will provide you with additional guidance in this regard. Questions concerning this memorandum should be directed to Mr. Mark Doboga, our Deputy Associate Director for Talent and Capacity Policy. He may be reached at (202) 606-0388 or by email at Mark.Doboga@opm.gov.

cc: Chief Information Officers
Human Resources Directors