



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Thursday, April 26, 2001
MSG 2001-036

MEMORANDUM FOR: Human Resources Directors

FROM: Richard A. Whitford, Acting Associate Director For Employment

Subject: Science and Engineering Occupational Study Briefing

In my short presentation to the HRMC on March 6, 2001, I noted our upcoming Science and Engineering Occupational Study. We have scheduled a full briefing to provide you with more detailed information regarding OPM's study of the science and engineering occupations. The briefing will be on Wednesday, May 2, at 2:00 p.m. in the OPM Executive Conference Room (room 5A06A). We hope that you or your staff will be able to attend this meeting. If you have questions regarding this OPM initiative but cannot attend, please contact Jacqueline Caldwell on 202-606-2308, or at jacaldwe@opm.gov. As a long-standing practice, we will notify the national unions of this initiative and are attaching a draft copy of this letter.

We will be surveying employees and supervisors in key scientific and engineering occupations. Requests from the agencies about recruitment and retention issues among this population have spurred our efforts to collect occupational information that we will use to update HR practices.

This study is the latest phase of the Governmentwide occupational analysis program. To date, we have completed studies of managerial, clerical and technical, and professional and administrative occupations. We are also currently studying information technology and trades and labor occupations. OPM and agencies have used the results of these studies to develop new HR practices for recruitment, selection, and retention for these jobs. As an example, the results of each of these studies have been incorporated into delegated examining guidance, which serves as a resource of job-related information for agencies.

We expect to administer the survey in early summer and have the results available in late fall. Upon completion of each study, we will publish a technical report of group results, which will be available on our web site for your use. We can also provide agencies with occupation-specific results, through reimbursable arrangements.

If you are interested in hearing more about this study, please plan to attend the briefing on May 2, 2001. We look forward to working with you on this very important initiative.

Enclosure (1)

Dear [Union President:]

This letter is to inform you that the U. S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is conducting a survey of science and engineering employees in the Federal workforce. Participants in the survey will include approximately 50,000 - 70,000 randomly selected incumbents employed in 36 professional and 10 technical science and engineering occupational series.

We have designed an employee survey to collect information about the employees and their jobs. We will distribute printed surveys and provide for Internet administration of the survey in 2001. Supervisors are being asked to let employees complete the survey during the workday. Employees will need approximately two hours of time to complete the survey. In addition, we will distribute surveys to 30,000 randomly selected supervisors of these employees. All responses will be strictly confidential. The responses of individuals will remain anonymous and will have no effect on any individual's employment.

By establishing a comprehensive database of occupational information on scientific and engineering jobs, OPM staff can develop model human resource products that will help agencies recruit, hire, train, develop, and retain employees. The results of this survey will help us identify important skills for these jobs. It also will help us develop career information for these jobs.

We appreciate your support in this important research effort. If you have any questions about this project, please contact Dr. Jacqueline Caldwell on 202-606-2308.