



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Thursday, August 31, 2000
MSG-076

FROM: CAROL J. OKIN (...Aug. 30,2000...) ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR
EMPLOYMENT

Subject: Study of Information Technology Occupations

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is conducting a Governmentwide study of the information technology (IT) workforce. The results of this study will be invaluable during these changing times to develop products and information that will help you recruit and retain IT employees. It also will provide information critical for job transitioning, career development and training, diagnostic assessment, as well as, to help organizations in realignment. The results will be used to develop a variety of other human resource management (HRM) products, including OPM's new competency-based qualification standard for IT occupations.

We expect to complete this study in the spring of 2001, and we will ensure that all agencies receive a copy of the final report. We believe that you will find the results of the study extremely useful as you develop new HRM programs for information technology occupations.

OPM would appreciate your assistance in initiating this study.

1. Please notify your personnel offices of this important upcoming project and encourage their participation.
2. We have [informed](#) the national union presidents regarding this study. It also may be appropriate for you to inform local union officials. If so, we suggest that they be told that coordination has already been carried out at the national level. Attached is a copy of the letter sent to national union presidents.

There are approximately 59,000 Federal employees in the following four IT occupations that we are studying: 0334 Computer Specialist, 0391 Telecommunications, 0854 Computer Engineer, and 1550 Computer Scientist. OPM is randomly selecting approximately 11,200 of these employees to participate, along with their supervisors. Surveys will be sent to these participants in September 2000.

We will be sending the survey packets and follow-up letters to personnel office contacts, nationwide, for distribution to the participants in the random sample. When we ship the surveys, we will enclose: 1) an instruction sheet, 2) a list of the employees who will receive surveys, 3) survey packets (a survey packet for each of the employees in the study and a separate survey packet for their supervisors), and 4) follow-up letters that need to be distributed to the participants one week later.

All of the materials will be sent as a package to each personnel office contact. The employee packets will be addressed to the participant, and the supervisor packets will be addressed "Supervisor of name of employee." Therefore, the personnel office contact will need to identify 1) each employee's supervisor before passing the package along, and 2) the location of the employees. It is imperative for the success of the study that materials reach all participants. Perhaps the most important contribution of each personnel office will be the effort to locate employees and their supervisors.

It is important that all participants and interested parties be aware that all responses will be used solely for the purposes of this project, confidentiality will be protected, and results will be reported in aggregate form only. Employees will not be competing with anyone in completing the survey. Their work habits and productivity are not being studied or evaluated. The survey results of individuals will not be released to agencies. Employees will be asked to return completed inventories directly to OPM.

If you have any questions or wish to contact the project team, please contact Tara Ricci (202-606-1727) or email tmricci@opm.gov.

We greatly appreciate your help in this important endeavor.

Attachment:

Dear [Union President]:

This letter is to inform you that the U. S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is conducting a study of information technology (IT) employees in the Federal workforce. Participants in the study will include approximately 11,200 randomly selected incumbents employed in the following four IT occupations, in grade levels GS 9-15, and their supervisors: 0334 Computer Specialist, 0391 Telecommunications, 0854 Computer Engineering, and 1550 Computer Scientist.

An employee survey is being designed to collect information about the employees and their jobs. The surveys will be distributed in the summer of 2000 and will require approximately one hour of time to complete. In addition, job analysis inventories will be distributed to supervisors of these employees. The responses will be strictly confidential and the data will be used to develop human resource management products, e.g., occupational training plans for career development and transitioning, as well as new selection and evaluation procedures. The responses of individuals will remain anonymous and will have no effect on the individual's employment.

By establishing a comprehensive database of occupational information on information technology jobs, OPM staff can develop model human resource products which will allow agencies to recruit, hire, develop, and retain quality employees. One potential human resource management product would be training courses/programs developed to enhance the skills of information technology employees in the current workforce.

We appreciate your support in this important research effort. If you have any questions about this project, please contact [Ms. Tara Ricci](#) at (202) 606-1727.

Sincerely,

Marilyn K. Gowing, Director
Personnel Resources and Development Center
U. S. Office of Personnel Management