



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Thursday, July 5, 2001
MSG 2001-52

MEMORANDUM FOR: Human Resources Directors

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

Subject: Study of Scientist and Engineering Occupations

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is conducting a Governmentwide study of the scientist and engineering workforce. For many agencies, these positions are mission critical, and the information we will gather from this study will provide more in-depth data for your workforce analysis of these positions and the recruitment, retention, and reward strategies developed around them. This study will provide information to support policy and program initiatives related to qualifications and delegated examining. The information that is gathered on the competencies for these positions will provide you with better information on which to base strategic changes in response to OMB Bulletin 01-07. The results can be used to develop a variety of other human resource management (HRM) products as well.

OPM would appreciate your assistance and support as we undertake this study. We have informed the national union presidents about this study. It also may be appropriate for you to inform local union officials. If so, we suggest you tell them that coordination has already been carried out at the national level. We also ask that you notify your personnel offices of this important project and encourage their participation.

There are approximately 167,000 Federal employees in the 46 scientist and engineering occupations that we are studying. OPM is randomly selecting about 50,000 of these employees to participate, along with 30,000 of their supervisors. Surveys will be made available to participants this summer.

We are making the survey available in both Internet and paper versions. OPM will work with agencies that want to use the Internet version to ensure that participants in the study have easy access to the survey. We will provide the paper version of the survey to agencies that are using the Internet version for those employees who prefer the paper version.

OPM will send materials in bulk to each personnel office for the agencies that do not administer the survey via the Internet. When we mail the surveys to the personnel office contacts, we will enclose a list of detailed instructions for distribution of the survey, a list of employees who will receive the survey, survey packets and follow-up postcards. The success of the study depends on the materials reaching all participants.

It is important that all participants completing the survey 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 individual 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's contractor. Sample pages from the survey are attached.

We expect to complete this study in 2001. A copy of the final report and other information will be available for all agencies on OPM's web site. We believe that you will find the results of the study extremely useful.

If you have any questions or wish to contact the project team, please contact Dr. Jacqueline Caldwell on (202) 606-2308 or email jacaldwe@opm.gov.

We greatly appreciate your help in this important endeavor.