



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Friday, July 20, 2001

MSG 2001-53

MEMORANDUM FOR: Human Resources Directors

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

Subject: Study of Trades and Labor Occupations

As you know, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is conducting a Governmentwide study of the trades and labor workforce. The results of this study will provide information on the most critical competencies needed to help you recruit and retain trades and labor employees. It also will provide information critical for assessment, job transitioning, career development and training, and help in organizational realignment. The results can be used to develop a variety of other human resource management (HRM) products.

We expect to complete this study in 2001, and 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.

OPM would appreciate your assistance in initiating this study.

1. If you are participating in this study, please notify your personnel offices of this important project and encourage their attention to its completion.
2. Following our standard practice, 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 175,000 Federal employees in the 99 trades and labor occupations that we are studying. OPM is randomly selecting approximately 18,000 of these employees to participate, along with 13,000 of their supervisors. Surveys will be sent to these participants in July/August 2001.

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 postcards that should 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 to

"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. The success of the study depends on the materials reaching all participants. 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's contractor.

If you have any questions or wish to contact the project team, please contact Andrea Bright on (202) 606-3590 or e-mail ajbright@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 survey of trades and labor employees in the Federal workforce. Participants in the survey will include approximately 45,000 randomly selected incumbents employed in 99 Federal trades and labor occupational series.

We have designed an employee survey to collect information about the employees and their jobs. We will distribute the surveys 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 29,000 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 trades and labor jobs, OPM staff can develop model human resource products that will help agencies recruit, hire, train and 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 Ms. Andrea Bright at (202) 606-3590.

Sincerely,
Donna J. Gregory
Assistant Director, Personnel Resources and Development Center Employment Service