HR Exchange

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OPM Implements Online Surveys

James Perez and Everett Slavik, OPM

OPM is now conducting compensation and workforce planning surveys via the Internet, thanks to a survey software program that enables the use of web-based surveys. This new and innovative technology enables OPM to conduct reliable surveys in a faster and more efficient manner, in addition to providing better convenience and service to survey participants. OPM's Compensation and Workforce Planning Division is currently using this online service utility for its annual *Compensation and Benefits Survey* and for two new surveys: the *Utility Compensation Survey*, which has been completed, and the *Exit Interview Survey*, which is still under development.

The *Compensation and Benefits Survey* is conducted annually as a means to complete the statutorily-required *OPM Annual Compensation Report*, which compares state pay with pay prevailing in the public and private sectors. The survey consists of 60 benchmark jobs and a benefit questionnaire that is sent to private and governmental organizations within the state, as well as the surrounding contiguous states.

The *Utility Compensation Survey* was conducted for the first time this year to provide the data necessary to complete and submit the *Biennial Compensation Report of the Grand River Dam Authority* (GRDA) to the Governor and Legislature. This report, also required by statute, compares GRDA's pay rates with those in the relevant market. Prior to implementing the new online technology, compensation surveys of this type were constructed as an Excel spreadsheet, saved on a floppy disk, and mailed to the participants. After completion by the participant, the file was then mailed (or e-mailed) back to OPM for compilation. The new survey technology permits OPM to receive the data on a real-time basis as soon as the survey is completed by the participant.

OPM is also developing an online *Exit Interview Survey* instrument for departing employees in partner agencies. Like the compensation surveys, the OPM exit interview survey will be web-based with security measures in place to allow confidentiality among survey participants. The deployment of the survey will be centrally located and analysis of the survey responses will be accomplished by OPM. OPM will also provide statewide and agency reports on the exit interview results to assist agencies in assessing different facets of their departing workforce. The resulting analysis will allow agencies to not only take a more in-depth look at turnover in the state of Oklahoma, but also utilize the results as a baseline for future workforce retention studies.

Though the final results have not been tabulated for any of these three surveys, OPM Compensation and Workforce Planning Team members believe the use of the new survey software will provide a reliable and innovative use of technology to conduct and complete vital surveys in a more efficient manner.

Both James Perez (left) and Everett Slavik (right) are Executive Fellows in OPM's Carl Albert Public Internship Program.

The Rules, They Are A 'Changin'

Kimberlee Williams, OPM

Emergency amendments to the Merit Rules were signed by Governor Henry and became effective July 1, 2003. The majority of the changes were designed to make the rules consistent with statutory changes made during the 2002 legislative session. Other changes include:

- Amendments to OAC 530:10-7-20 and OAC 530:10-7-26 to eliminate the requirement that all employees in a job family level must receive market adjustments or equity adjustments. The new amendments require that only those employees performing similar duties or having the same role or accountabilities receive the market or equity adjustment. The amendments also allow, but do not require, an Appointing Authority to limit market or equity adjustments to those employees having at least a "meets standards" on the most recent performance evaluation.
- An amendment to OAC 530:10-7-24 regarding skill-based pay adjustments to clarify that the skill for which the employee is being compensated must be beyond that necessary to perform the primary responsibilities of the position.
- A new rule (OAC 530:10-9-123) to implement expedited recruitment for positions or job family levels for which the education, experience, or certification requirements substantially limit the applicant pool.
- Revocation of OAC 530:10-11-34 regarding the suspension of probationary employees. OPM has determined this rule is outside of its purview.
- An amendment to OAC 530:10-15-43 to allow employees to be paid for a holiday when the employee is furloughed both the day before and the day follow-

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From the Desk of the Administrator

On October 15, 2002, I issued the FY 04 - 05 Strategic Plan for the Office of Personnel Management, which was the result of months of intense discussions within and outside of OPM. We announced that our agency vision was to make the *"Office of Personnel Management the Human Resources Provider of Choice"* and the *"State of Oklahoma the Employer of Choice"*; and our agency mission, simply stated, was, *"We serve the people of Oklahoma by delivering reliable and innovative human resource services to our partner agencies to achieve their missions."* We very optimistically established several long-term goals focusing on improving people and processes and preparing for the future in terms of an aging workforce and changing needs of our state agency customers.

Today, like many state agencies, we find ourselves revisiting our Five-Year Strategic Plan at the end of the first quarter of FY 04. However, our world has changed since October 15, 2002.

A few weeks ago, I announced the impact FY 03 revenue shortfalls and the significantly-reduced FY 04 budget reductions have had on OPM (see related story this page). One year ago OPM had 98.4 employees providing HR services to state agencies. Today, we have 82.6 employees. Two reduction-in-force implementation plans, several accepted voluntary out offers, and decisions not to fill vacant positions have reduced our budgeted FTE by 17.4 from 99.6 to 82.2, and reduced our budget by 12.98 percent.

In spite of these financial challenges, our agency Vision and Mission remain unchanged. In fact, there is even a greater need for OPM to deliver *"reliable and innovative human resource services to our partner agencies"* because accomplishing your agency missions with reduced resources is even more challenging for each of you today.

Kudos

to Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources and Administration, on his titular appointment to the Executive Council of the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration.

OPM Remains Committed to Serving Customers Despite Downsizing

Dayna R. Petete, OPM

Since July 1, 2002, OPM has eliminated approximately 19 positions in an effort to address budget cuts experienced during FY 02, FY 03, and FY 04. OPM has a legislatively-mandated full-time-equivalent (FTE) employee limit of 116.5 and currently has 82.2 FTE budgeted for FY 04.

"In the past year, OPM has reduced employee travel significantly, cancelled contracts, eliminated seven vacant funded positions, eliminated five occupied positions through voluntary buyouts, and eliminated four occupied positions through reduction-in-force," commented Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Governor Brad Henry's Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources and Administration. "Additionally, two filled positions were eliminated through reduction-in-force on July 31, and another filled position will be eliminated through voluntary buyout in December. And, we have built in a vacancy rate of two FTE for FY 04."

All OPM departments have been affected by the downsizing. Specific reductions include: Office of the Administrator—one vacant position and a half-time contract with the Attorney General; Financial Management Services—one vacant position, two occupied positions through voluntary out and reduction-in-force (RIF), and one position reallocated to a lower position to achieve cost savings; Office of Communications—one occupied position through RIF; Management Services (Classification and Compensation)—two occupied positions through voluntary out and RIF (another occupied position will be eliminated in December through voluntary out); Employee Selection Services (Applicant Services and Personnel Assessment)—six vacant positions; Human Resource Development Services—one vacant position and two occupied positions through voluntary out; Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity—one-quarter time temporary position; and Information Technology Services—three occupied positions through RIF.

General Revenue funds (money appropriated by the Legislature) account for 95 percent of OPM's income. OPM's General Revenue allocation was reduced $324,960 in FY 02. Budget reductions during FY 03

OPM Committed, continued on page 3

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totaled 7.85 percent or $423,883. In July 2003, OPM received a $61,693 offset due to final FY 03 state revenue collections that will be used as carryover for one-time expenditures. FY 04 budget reductions from FY 03 reduced appropriation levels total $373,192. Total appropriation base reductions since FY 02 equal $1.122 million.

"Despite the staff reductions dire budgetary circumstances have compelled us to make, we remain as committed as ever to the OPM Mission—to 'serve the people of Oklahoma by delivering reliable and innovative human resource services to our partner agencies to achieve their missions'," Jackson stated.

OPM receives payments from Merit System agencies for administrative operating costs. In FY 02, the cost per FTE, based on the average number of Merit System or "classified" agency employees, was $185.87, and in FY 03, $187.22. The estimated cost for FY 04 is $180.00 per FTE. The FY 04 estimate is based on a reduced General Revenue level, as well as a reduced number of FTE for Merit System agencies.

Since July 1, 2002, state agencies have eliminated approximately 530 occupied positions through reduction-in-force and voluntary buyout: Career and Technology Education—31; Department of Commerce—21; Department of Education—91; Office of State Finance—7; Department of Health—127; Department of Human Services—64; Indigent Defense System—27; Tourism & Recreation—19; Will Rogers Commission—1; ABLE Commission—7; Department of Central Services—21; Corporation Commission—47; Office of Juvenile Affairs—56; and Office of Personnel Management—11.

"Of course, 'doing more with less' is certainly not a new phenomenon in state government," added Jackson, who served as OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources for both Governor David Walters and Governor Frank Keating. "We have been dealing with staff shortages since the early 1990s when the hiring freeze was first implemented. In the past, however, we dealt with the situation by not filling vacant positions. Unfortunately, since employee salaries, benefits, etc. account for 80 percent of OPM's overall expenditures, we have been forced to address the past year's budgetary shortfall by eliminating occupied positions. It has really been tough."

"Tough times, however, require creative approaches to fulfilling our obligations to our state agency partners, as well as continuing to support our commitment to 'continuous quality improvement'," Jackson noted. "Our agency vision remains to make OPM the 'human resources provider of choice' and 'the State of Oklahoma the employer of choice.'"

Rules, continued from page 1

ing the holiday.

OPM staff members are currently working on emergency amendments to make the Merit Rules consistent with statutory changes made during the 2003 legislative session. Emergency amendments to the rules on reduction-in-force are awaiting approval by the Governor. In addition, OPM staff members are in the process of drafting and reviewing other amendments to the Merit Rules. Although not required by the Oklahoma Administrative Procedures Act, OPM will notify state agencies of the proposed amendments by *All Appointing Authority* memoranda, give agencies the opportunity to comment on the proposals, and host a rules hearing.

OPM will host a rules hearing on **October 20, 2003**, at 1:30 p.m. in the Sequoyah/Will Rogers Concourse Theatre on emergency amendments to the Voluntary Payroll Deduction rules. Please refer to OPM *All Appointing Authority* Memorandum 03-38 for these rules proposals.

On August 28, Oklahoma Lieutenant Governor Mary Fallin spoke to members of the Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women (OCSW) regarding the activities of the Special Task Force for Women Incarcerated in Oklahoma, which was created by Senate Bill 810 (2003). It is the responsibility of the Task Force, which is composed of 11 members including the Lieutenant Governor and the OCSW chair and vice-chair, to consider such factors as the inmate's education and literacy level, gender bias, policies, and procedures that may have contributed to the high incarceration rate of women in Oklahoma. OPM provides staff support for OCSW, which was created by the Legislature in 1994.

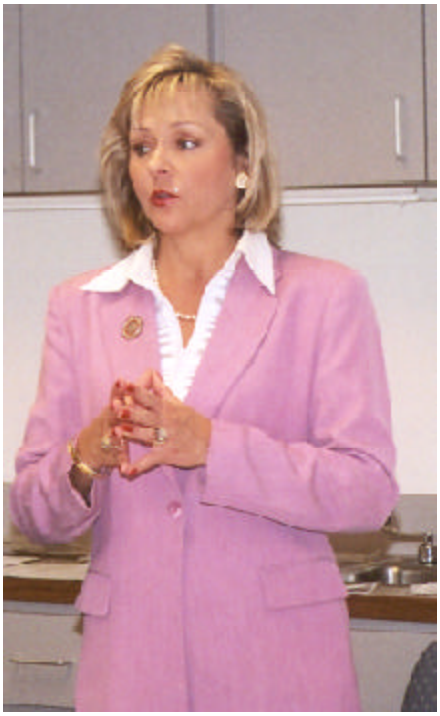
SB 194 Impacts Skill-Based Pay

Kimberlee Williams, OPM

Pursuant to Enrolled Senate Bill 194, skill-based pay differentials will become permanent after 24 months. This statutory change becomes effective November 1, 2003. OPM has interpreted this provision of law to mean that on November 1, 2003, any employee who is currently receiving a skill-based pay differential and has received that differential for the previous 24 months, will have the amount of the differential rolled into his or her base salary. Once the skill-based pay differential becomes permanent and is rolled into the employee's base salary, the agency will no longer have discretion to eliminate the skill-based pay, even if the employee no longer possesses the skill (such as a professional certification) that was the basis for the skill-based pay, or if the employee moves to another position, level, or job family.

Procedurally, agencies will need to complete OPM-14s on all employees whose skill-based pay differential will be rolled into base pay to show a salary adjustment with an effective date of November 1, 2003. The OPM-14s should reference "SB 194" in the remarks section.

Skill-Based Pay, continued on page 4



Skill-Based Pay, continued from page 3

Agencies whose compensation philosophy does not encompass the concept of making skill-based pay a permanent part of the employee's base salary will need to restructure their skill-based pay plans and effect the change no later than October 31, 2003.

Please note that the statutory change does not affect lump-sum skill-based pay programs; nor does it apply to data processing mission critical pay differentials or any other differential currently in use.

If you have questions, please contact Tom Patt, OPM Director of Compensation, at (405) 522-0422 or tom.patt @opm.state.ok.us.

Carrie Rohr Appointed OPM HRDS Director

On August 21, 2003, Carrie Rohr became director of OPM's Human Resource Development Services (HRDS) Division. She had been acting director since April 30, 2003, when former director Larry Fisher retired.

Carrie Rohr started working for the state of Oklahoma in 1978, and began her career at OPM in 1982. Ms. Rohr began teaching HRDS classes in 1985, and was appointed coordinator of the Oklahoma Certified Public Manager Program in 1989.

Ms. Rohr is a member of the American Academy of Certified Public Managers, the

Carrie Rohr, continued on page 6

OPM Hosts CPP Training

Hank Batty, OPM

The Oklahoma Personnel Act (74:840-1.6A) requires all state government HR professionals to be trained and certified by the OPM Administrator within six months of appointment. After attaining certification, HR professionals must complete annual training requirements to maintain this status.

OPM will offer the next training session for the Certified Personnel Professional (CPP) program November 4 - 7, 2003, at the Tom Steed Center. This training is required for all HR professionals in the executive branch of state government, excluding institutions within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

The four-day training course includes sessions on a variety of human resource topics including recruitment, selection, classification, compensation, training, grievances, and workplace issues. Each participant evaluates his or her own state agency through the Agency Self-Evaluation guide to measure the agency's compliance with state and federal human resource requirements. Presenters include Hank Batty, Carrie Rohr, Natasha Riley, Brenda Thornton, James Perez, Tom Patt, David Hays, and Dayna Petete, OPM; and Jack Dobbins, Oklahoma Tax Commission.

Human Resource Management (Mathis & Jackson, West Publishing Corporation, 10th ed. 2003) is the principal text for the class. The last day of the training session is devoted to a session with Dr. Robert Mathis, SPHR, co-author of the textbook and a recognized authority in the HR field.

The fee is $240.00 for each participant. Interested persons should contact Grayson Bedwell of the OPM Human Resource Development Services Division at (405) 521-6334 for registration. If you have questions about the CPP training requirements or the course itself, please contact Hank Batty at (405) 521-6303.

26 CPM Participants Graduate

Carrie Rohr, OPM

On Thursday, September 11, 2003, 26 individuals representing 11 state agencies received the designation of *Certified Public Manager*. More than 200 family members, friends, co-workers, and agency heads were present for the ceremony, held in the Senate Chamber of the State Capitol. Howard Hendrick, Director of the Department of Human Services and Cabinet Secretary of Human Services, addressed this year's graduates.

The *Good Works Award*, an annual award given for the outstanding CPM project, was awarded to Pamela Clark, Department of Human Services. Her project, *Developmental Disabilities Service Division Medication Administration*, was one of eight nominated from the more than 110 projects submitted during the year.

Each CPM graduate completed 300 hours of training, passed four examinations, and submitted four job-related projects. The CPM Program, offered through OPM's Human Resource Development Services Division, is designed to professionalize public management by giving Oklahoma state managers and supervisors the tools necessary to improve their management skills. Oklahoma's program was first accredited by the National Consortium of Certified Public Managers in 1988 and received continued accreditation in 1993, 1998, and 2003. There are currently 29 CPM Programs nationwide. Oklahoma's program has been recommended for college credit, both on the undergraduate and graduates levels, by the American Council of Education.

This year's graduates include:

Cindy Coate
Commission for Teacher Preparation

Scott Thompson
Department of Environmental Quality

Ginger Blockcolski, Pamela Clark, Lori Crase, Deborah Fawn, Donna Fields, Mike Jackson, Pamela Jenkins, Barbara Kidder, Toy O'Brien, Phyllis Schnelle, Lawana Sullivan, and Jerry Tomlinson
Department of Human Services

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CPM Graduation, continued from page 4

Jody Harlan
Department of Rehabilitation Services

Mike Ryser, Tekia Statton, & Lynn Whitford
Department of Transportation

Rosalie Garten
Employees Benefits Council

Greg Thomas
Office of Personnel Management

Glenda Gay
Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

Gene Krier and Jeannette Williams
Oklahoma State and Education Employees Group Insurance Board

Susan Dozal and Rhonda Jenkins
State Board of Pharmacy

Janet Logan
Tourism and Recreation Department

Ruth Rolfe, Cox Communications, is chair of the Certified Public Manager Advisory Board.

CPM
CERTIFIED PUBLIC MANAGER

Contact Carrie Rohr, OPM Human Resource Development Services Division, at (405) 521-6344, or carrie.rohr@opm.state.ok.us, for more information about the Certified Public Manager Program.

Good Work! Indeed

Larry Fisher, OPM
Reprinted from the Third Quarter 2002 HR Exchange

Editor's Note: CPM Graduate Pamela Clark, Department of Human Services, received the 2003 CPM "Good Works Award" for her project, "Developmental Disabilities Service Division Medication Administration," during graduation ceremonies September 11, 2003, at the State Capitol. The following article by Larry Fisher, former OPM Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Development Services, appeared this time last year in the "HR Exchange".

What is the *Good Works Award* and why does OPM give a *Good Works Award* at each CPM graduation? Here's the story.

When CPM was being created in 1986, many people were asked for ideas, opinions, recommendations, and other assistance. One such person was Gerald D. Wilkins of the Department of Commerce (actually, the Department of Economic and Community Affairs at that time), who managed the agency's Circuit Rider City Manager program. Gerald's public service career had been outstanding. He had served as a manager of a public housing project in Wichita during World War II and had been city manager for Liberal and Newton, Kansas, as well as Enid, Ardmore, and Seminole, Oklahoma.

Gerald was an interesting guy. He was highly motivated, always positive, and thanked people profusely for the smallest of favors. He carried cards he made himself which said, "Good Job!" on them and he would give those cards to people who did him a kindness, including leaving a "Good Job!" card with tips for wait staff and other service employees. If, back in the 1980s, someone handed you a small card that said, "Good Job!", you had met Gerald.

Gerald and his wife Marguerite had one son, Gerald W., and one daughter, Carol. Carol married Larry Fisher and Larry was the person charged with creating a CPM Program for the state of Oklahoma. Larry called his father-in-law, Gerald Wilkins, for guidance. They spent many hours discussing requirements, standards, and approaches to creating a program worthy of the state of Oklahoma. Gerald's advice and guidance were invaluable.

Gerald was still a full-time employee of Commerce in 1987 when he died of heart complications at the age of 80. Sadly, he did not get to see the first CPM graduates complete the program nor read any of the more

Good Work, continued on page 6

This year's CPM graduates included OPM Team member Greg Thomas (center), Human Resources Programs Manager, OPM Classification Division. Pictured with Mr. Thomas are (left) Hank Batty, OPM Deputy Administrator for Programs, and (right) Howard Hendrick, Director of the Department of Human Services and Cabinet Secretary of Human Services, who was the keynote speaker at this year's graduation ceremony.

Good Work, continued from page 5

than 1,000 CPM projects that have been written.

Gerald's family wanted to remember him so they decided to create an award for the best CPM project each year. They called it the *Good Works Award* because of Gerald's initials, GW, and because of his practice of handing out "Good Job!" cards to people. The family buys a plaque and each year the name of the *Good Works Award* recipient is added; that individual keeps the plaque for one year. During each CPM graduation, the last recipient announces the next recipient of the *Good Works Award*. At that time, the family gives the presenter a desk set (to keep!) that has his or name engraved on it and the words *Good Work!*.

Carrie Rohr, continued from page 4

Oklahoma Society of Certified Public Managers, the Society of Government Meeting Planners, and the American Society for Training and Development. She has served as the chair of the National Consortium of Certified Public Managers. She is currently the First Vice-President of the Wild West Chapter of the Society of Governmental Meeting Professionals and is the Host State Chair on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Government Training Directors.

Carrie attended the University of Kansas (and remains a huge Jayhawks fan!) before receiving her B.A. in Management of Human Resources from Southern Nazarene University. She has completed coursework in the Masters of Public Administration Program at the University of Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Society of Certified Public Managers named her the 2001 *CPM Manager of the Year*.

Carrie is married to Mike Rohr and has two sons, Joe, a junior at Oklahoma State University, and Sam, a junior at Putnam City North High School.

Got PEP?

OPM is accepting nominations for Productivity Enhancement Program (PEP) awards! Contact Joyce Smith, OPM HRDS, at (405) 522-3617, or joyce.smith@opm.state.ok.us, for more information.

Edward Manuel, Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, 2002 recipient of the CPM "Good Works Award," presented the "Good Works Award" plaque to 2003 recipient Pamela Clark, Department of Human Services.

All 50 States Offering Alternative Work Schedules; Health Care Costs Still Soaring

Reprinted With Permission—July 2003 IPMA-HR News

All 50 states allow some type of alternative work scheduling for at least some employees, reports the *2003 State Employee Benefits Survey*, published by Workplace Economics Incorporated, a Washington, D.C.-based economics consulting firm.

The survey found that state governments offer an assortment of options to assist employees in managing the often-competing demands of work and family obligations. All 50 states offer alternative work schedules that allow employees to adjust their start and departure times. Forty-three states offer compressed workweeks (for example, four-day workweek or working a two-week schedule in less than 10 days). Telecommuting is offered in 35 states.

In many instances, however, states have indicated that flexible work options are not universally applied to all employees, but are offered only on a case-by-case basis, depending on the agency's needs, the report stated.

In addition, state governments and their employees continue to struggle with rising health care costs. Twelve states reported a total premium for family coverage exceeding $900 per month. Sixteen states pay the full premium for family coverage.

In most states, the amount paid by both employee and the state depends on the type of health plan and level of coverage chosen by the employee. In four states—Illinois, Kansas, New Mexico and West Virginia—the portion of the premium paid by the employee varies by salary, said the report.

All 50 states make health insurance available to retirees up to the age of 65, and 48 states, with the exception of Indiana and Nebraska, provide coverage under the state plan for retirees age 65 or older, although the report states that Indiana indicated that retirees may purchase a Medicare complement plan through the state. In 12 states, it was reported that the state pays the full cost of individual coverage for retirees under age 65 (not yet eligible for Medicare). Seventeen states reported they pay full premiums for Medicare-eligible retirees over the age of 65. In a number of states, the retiree's share of health care premiums depends upon the date hired, date of retirement or years of credited service at the time of retirement.

To obtain the full report, visit www.workplace-economics.com or call (202) 223-9191.

Interim Study Looks at Agency Director Salaries

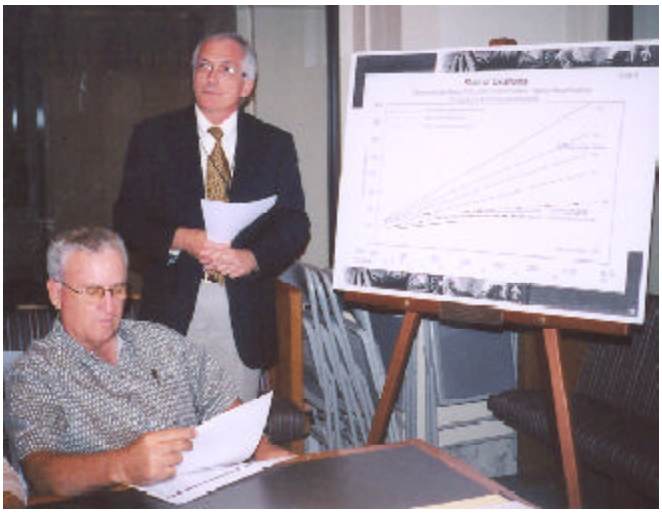
Tom Patt, OPM

The House Appropriations and Budget Subcommittee on Select Agencies met September 18 and October 2 to study the issue of the pay of nonappropriated agency directors, as directed by House Interim Study 2003H-021.

The committee, chaired by Representative David Braddock (D-Altus), began its inquiry by looking at the original *Agency Director Pay Study* conducted by OPM in 2001 in response to Senate Bill 224 (2001), which required a study of all agency director salaries for both appropriated and non-appropriated state agencies.

The study, which *HayGroup* consultants performed on OPM's behalf, compared the salaries paid to state agency directors with those of executives in both the public and private sector labor markets. The HayGroup's report included a recommended salary structure which grouped agency director positions into salary grades with associated pay ranges which were competitive with the relevant labor market at that time. Since this study was completed nearly two years ago, OPM Compensation and Workforce Planning Team members have updated the pay ranges to reflect market pay growth that has occurred during the interim.

After receiving an update from Tom Patt, OPM's Director of Compensation and Workforce Planning, on the essential elements of the earlier HayGroup study, the Committee heard presentations from non-appropriated agency directors and board members relating to each agency's activities, its financial condition, and any recommendations for pay adjustments for the directors. Rep. Braddock told agency and board representatives that his committee would seriously look into the matter of pay adjustments for the directors, but that he was unable to make any commitments. He indicated that one option under consideration is to include a pay range, rather than a single dollar amount, as a statutory pay authority for the directors.



Tom Patt (standing), Director of OPM's Compensation and Workforce Planning Division, discusses the HayGroup's study of state agency director salaries. Seated is Representative Dale Turner (D-Holdenville), vice-chair of the House Appropriations and Budget Subcommittee on Select Agencies.

OPM Welcomes Japanese Visitor

Hank Batty, OPM

On September 5, 2003, OPM played host to one of our international counterparts, Mr. Takao Uemura, of the National Personnel Authority, Tokyo, Japan. Mr. Uemura, who serves as the Assistant Director of the Planning and Legal Affairs Division of Japan's federal civil service bureau, came to Oklahoma as his first stop on a year-long visit to the United States.

During his time in the US, Mr. Uemura will visit a number of state government human resource agencies, including stops in Little Rock, Arkansas; Austin, Texas; and Madison, Wisconsin. His chief purpose is to learn more about how American civil service systems have evolved from the traditional Merit System models that were implemented in the 20th century.

During a lengthy visit with Hank Batty, OPM Deputy Administrator for Programs, Mr. Uemura explained that General Douglas MacArthur implemented Japan's civil service system during the American occupation following the conclusion of World War II. In Mr. Uemura's view, the Japanese civil service has changed very little since then and now faces many of the challenges that led American civil services to decentralize functions and give agencies more flexibility during the past 20 years.

Mr. Uemura explained that Japanese culture makes it difficult to adjust to several facets of the American model that we may take for granted. As one example, he indicated that transfer from one agency (or ministry, as they are called in Japan) to another is virtually unheard of. Japanese culture would consider such a move disloyal to the bureau—even if another bureau offered greater opportunities for the employee.

Mr. Uemura was very impressed with the facility with which Oklahomans can apply for and obtain state employment. In Japan, civil service examinations are offered only once each year. Those examinees who score the highest may be placed in more responsible and higher paying positions, while the next strata may be placed in lower level jobs. Most examinees are not hired. Although these applicants may apply the following year, their chances for employment remain bleak.

Japanese government, much like public sector employers in the United States, has the reputation of compensating employees less than their private sector counterparts. Nevertheless, government employ-

Japanese Visitor, continued on page 8

The Rising Cost of Workplace Depression

Deanna Miller, OPM

It has taken a few years, but employers now have a price tag on depression in the workplace—$31 billion!

The current economic climate in Oklahoma and the nation is one of uncertainty and insecurity. The state of Oklahoma has recently experienced significant downsizing through reductions-in-force and voluntary buyouts. These circumstances effect both the state employees who are separated, as well as the employees who keep their jobs with the state. Following such events, there will likely be a shift in morale, as well as an increase in tension and stress that may lead to depression.

Ms. Miller is an OPM State EAP representative. In addition to her other duties, Ms. Miller teaches and HRDS class entitled "Stress Management."

Depression is a term with which most people are familiar, yet few understand the effects it has on individuals and, in turn, the workplace. A majority of Americans will experience depression in some form. Depression ranges from simply having a period of the "blues" to being completely debilitated by it. Men and women experience and respond to depression in different ways. Men have a tendency to internalize their feelings, and women cope by talking about issues.

A RAND Corporation study found that patients with depressive symptoms spend more days in bed than those with diabetes, arthritis, back problems, lung problems, or gastrointestinal disorders. When the figures are broken down, they translate to about $12 billion in lost work days each year, and more than $11 billion in other costs accrued from decreased productivity due to symptoms that sap energy and affect work habits. Signs of depression at work include:

- Having trouble meeting deadlines or finishing reports.
- Difficulty making decisions.
- Unusual increase in mistakes on the job.
- Decline in dependability.
- Increase in tardiness or sick days.
- Decline in enthusiasm or desire on the job.

Remember, we are all susceptible to depression—you are not alone. If you have questions about depression or just need to talk, call the OPM State Employee Assistance Program at (405) 947-7576.

Japanese Visitor, continued from page 7

ment is considered an honor and civil servants are proud of their status in Japanese society.

Mr. Uemura indicated that, while women make up a substantial part of the Japanese civil service workforce, it is extremely rare for women to become managers or executives. He also was unaware of any special attempts by the government to accommodate persons with disabilities.

At the conclusion of Mr. Uemura's visit, Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources and Administration, presented him with an Oklahoma lapel pin and a copy of the OPM FY 02 *Annual Report* and the Second Quarter 2003 edition of the *HR Exchange.*

OPM Personnel Assessment Team members Natasha Riley and Jamie Culp attended the IPMA-HR Assessment Conference (IPMAAC) in Baltimore, June 22 - 25. IPMAAC programs offer involvement with leading professionals to foster interchange of ideas and experience concerning professional standards and methodology in the personnel assessment area.

Burnout Advice for the HR Professional

Reprinted with permission
June 2003 IPMA-HR News

As your organization's needs have grown, you—an HR professional—are a prime candidate for burnout. Along with the lingering fears and worries about workplace safety and security since the September 11 terrorist attacks, those of us in the Washington, D.C., area had to cope with the additional safety worries of the sniper attacks in 2002.

The year 2003 ushered in even more stress with increased budgetary cutbacks for many and the challenge of demonstrating return on investment (ROI), managing shrinking HR staffs, and also juggling benefit tasks. Now, the war in Iraq has brought a new challenge, coping with employees being called up for military duty. Who can blame you for wishing you were on a sabbatical somewhere in Hawaii?

Alas, the realities would still be there when you return, so here are some exercises and tips that can help you cope, and so that you can better help others cope:

- Prevent emotional and physical exhaustion. Physical exhaustion can lead to frustration, fatigue and emotional exhaustion. Burnout comes from training to do too much and from caring too much about the results of what we do. Psychologists tell us that the mental symptoms are more important than the physical symptoms of job burnout. Burnout comes when you are emotionally spent, and indifference and cynicism set in. An obvious response to this problem is to reduce your workload to realistic amounts, to stop working 60- to 80-hour work weeks, and to become more emotionally detached from the problems you face at work. Doing this without becoming callous, uncaring and ineffective takes great skill.

  The real secret of reducing workloads is to recognize that you cannot get everything done—you must concentrate on prioritizing your work, letting the least important work go. Prioritization is the key to preventing emotional and physical exhaustion.

Burnout, continued on page 9

Burnout, continued from page 8

Most importantly, you have to recognize that there is life outside work. You will have more energy and be more effective when you lead a more balanced life and have active interests outside work.

- Remember your "calling." Dealing with people problems — front and center — can be tough, but remember that solving these problems will give you a deep sense of gratification. Is that not why you joined the HR profession?
- Embrace challenge. Your role is more important than ever, since HR is seen as a unifying force and has the power to significantly affect your organization's morale. Try to view the many changes that come with the modern HR professional's calling as blessings—there is nothing dull about your day. Also, your skills and areas of expertise will grow year by year as you add online services, manage new sources of benefits, address union and other issues, and cope with the constantly changing legal requirements to fulfill the Fair Labor Standards Act and the many other federal and local laws.
- Turn stress into a positive. In *The Stress Management Handbook*, author Kristine Brewer notes that by seeing stress as a force that can motivate and energize you, rather than one that makes you anxious and frustrated, you can channel its energy into productive results.
- Keep a feel-good file. Include the thank yous, emails, complimentary memos and other bits and pieces of information that come your way to remind you of all the times you have done something right or invaluable. When stress threatens to overtake you and you cannot remember why you chose HR as a profession, take out that file and be reminded.
- Make a goal journal. Envision your life and career five, 10 and 15 years from now. Are you still an HR professional? If not, where do you want to be? Keep this plan close by so you can revise and review it when you are feeling overwhelmed. Read this right after you look at your feel-good file.

Additional Tips You Can Start Using This Week

- Do deep-breathing exercises and some yoga stretches.
- Celebrate a job well done before moving on to the next task.
- Delegate work as much as possible at work and at home.
- Count your blessings—name them one by one.
- Call your home or work answering machine and leave a reminder for yourself to relax.
- Identify things you can look forward to each day.
- Be patient with yourself.

FYI

James L. Howard, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission, announced during the September 25 MPC meeting that he plans to retire by June 2004. Before becoming MPC Executive Director in 1985, Mr. Howard was OPM's Chief of Management Analysis from November 1980 through July 1985.

OPM Team Members Attend Lawton-Fort Sill Veterans Center Dedication

Greg Thomas, OPM

On Friday, September 5, 2003, OPM Team members Diane Haser-Bennett, Greg Thomas, Ron Thatcher, and Laraine German attended the dedication ceremony for the newly-completed Lawton-Fort Sill Veterans Center. More than 1,200 people, including several state legislators and other dignitaries, attended the ceremony, and Governor Brad Henry served as the keynote speaker.

Governor Henry emphasized that the $38 million facility is not just the crown jewel of Comanche County and the state of Oklahoma, but the crown jewel of the nation. The Center is a 200,000 square foot facility consisting of: four 50-bed nursing units; multiple TV, reading and sitting areas; free standing chapel; 5,000 square foot auditorium/tornado shelter that was built to withstand an F5 tornado; 4,000 square foot recreation hall; 4,000 square foot dining facility; barber shop; canteen; clothing room; a lobby with two fireplaces and a 1,200 gallon aquarium. The Center is located in the southeast section of Lawton and provides an excellent view of the Wichita Mountains.

The Center is a 200-bed, long-term care facility providing for minimum care, intermediate care, skilled care, and will have a special unit for Alzheimer and dementia

Veterans Center, continued on page 10

Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs HR staff members (left to right) Janine Scifries and Susan McClure enjoyed the dedication ceremony for the newly-completed Lawton-Fort Sill Veterans Center with OPM Team member Greg Thomas.

Veterans Center, continued from page 9

patients. In addition to normal nursing care, the Center will have full-time physicians, laboratory personnel, and pharmacists. The Center is scheduled to begin admitting veterans in October.

In preparation for the facility's opening, OPM staff assisted Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs HR staff members in establishing and allocating positions, as well as recruiting potential employees. The Lawton-Fort Sill Veterans Center will employ 312 full-time employees.

OPM wishes the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs the very best in its latest endeavor and we stand ready and willing to assist in any human resources matter.

In Memoriam

Photo from the Oklahoma State Senate Website.

Senator Keith Leftwich
(D-Oklahoma City)

(July 6, 1954 - September 19, 2003)

Senator Leftwich was the principal author of OPM's request bill in 2003.

We offer our heatfelt condolences to his wife Debbe and sons, Kurt and Kevin. Debbe Leftwich is chair of the Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women, which is staffed by OPM.

OPM Hosts NAGTAD Conference

Carrie Rohr, OPM

OPM hosted the National Association for Government Training and Development (NAGTAD) Annual Conference, September 28 – October 1 in Oklahoma City. Thirty-five participants from throughout the country networked and discussed trends in the area of training and development. Although the numbers were down this year, due to states' budget problems, it did not diminish the enthusiasm of the group.

Scott Powell and Joan Ferris, Southwest Airlines, entertained NAGTAD Conference attendees with their presentation, "Southwest Airlines' University for People."

Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources and Administration, presented NAGTAD officers with certificates signed by Governor Brad Henry making them "Honorary Citizens" of Oklahoma. Carrie Rohr (left), OPM, Conference Chair, is pictured with the proud recipients (l to r) Marianne Gaudin, Mississippi, President-Elect; Jody Zauha, Idaho, Public Relations Chair; Cindy Fauerbach, Delaware, Secretary; and Ann Cobb, North Carolina, Treasurer. Not pictured is Greg Smiles, New Jersey, President.

Jane Bozarth, North Carolina, provided information to attendees on "Cheap, Fast and Easy E-Learning Solutions for the Chronically Underfunded." Pictured with Ms. Bozarth is Carrie Rohr, OPM.

On Sunday, the attendees toured the US Postal Training Center in Norman and later the National Center for Employee Development, a sponsor at this year's conference, hosted a dinner. The conference featured a variety of educational seminars. Joan Farris and Scott Powell, trainers with Southwest Airlines, shared insight on developing a corporate university structure in training departments. LeAnn Jenkins, Director of the Oklahoma Federal Executive Board, shared lessons learned from the Oklahoma City Bombing. She challenged each participant to develop training programs to help their states in the event of a major crisis. Dr. Kathleen Rager, University of Oklahoma, shared information re-

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NAGTAD, continued from page 10

garding using brain research to improve the training process. Other sessions included: Linda Hawk, *Why Are You Like That?*; Jane Bozarth, *Cheap, Fast and Easy: E-Learning Solutions for the Chronically Underfunded*; Gayla Sherry, *Understanding the Training Needs of Today's Workforce*; Alan J. Dean, *A Systems Approach to Workforce Development and Succession Planning*; Linda Dowling, *Mentor Manager, Mentor Parent*; and Lori Hoppes, *Return on Investment—Realizing Value*.

The participants were treated to a visit to the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum their last evening in Oklahoma City. Next year's conference will be in Asheville, North Carolina.

Mentor Executive Benefits from Experience

Patricia K. Schweitzer
Executive Coordinator
Construction Industries Board

Editor's Note: The purpose of the State Mentor Program, created by the Oklahoma Legislature in 1994, is to develop the executive potential of employees in all branches of state government, with a special emphasis on women, racial minorities, and individuals with disabilities. The State Mentor Program is coordinated by Dayna R. Petete, OPM Assistant Administrator for Communications and Legislative Liaison. Patricia Schweitzer was a Mentor Executive from July 1997 through July 1999.

Being one of the first Mentor Executives, I had little expectation of what benefits I might receive from the program, but did harbor hopes that it was the road to something better. I served rotations in the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Oklahoma State Senate (Senate), Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and my home agency, the Oklahoma Tax Commission (OTC).

Even though most of my education and experience was rather distant from the mission of DRS, I find myself being more observant of those with disabilities and the abilities that they possess since my Mentor Executive experience at DRS. While at OPM I had a greater exposure to statewide per-

Mentor Executive, continued on page 12

Governor's Council Holds Meeting at York

Oscar Quiroga, Chair
Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs

York International Corporation's Unitary Products Group (UPG) sponsored the meeting of the Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs held at York's Norman, Oklahoma, facility on July 14, 2003.

The meeting began with a Mexican style lunch and a welcome message from Tom Huntington, President of York UPG. Council member Oscar Quiroga, also a York UPG manager, made welcoming comments, as well.

Pictured (l to r): Oscar B. Jackson, Jr. and Brenda C. Thornton, OPM; Karen Gentry, Department of Public Safety; Kathy Taylor, Cabinet Secretary of Commerce and Tourism; Oscar Quiroga, York International; Juanita Salazar Lamb, Council member; Yolanda Charney, Council member; and Guillermo Rojas, Council member.

Joining the Council members as guests for lunch were:

- Tom Huntington, President, York International UPG;
- Becky Payton, Vice President of Human Resources, York International UPG;
- Karen Gentry, Director of Driver License Examination, Oklahoma Department of Public Safety;
- Casey Blackford, Oklahoma Department of Public Safety;
- Jorge Mario Quiroga, Video Service Manager, City of Oklahoma City;
- Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources and Administration;
- Brenda C. Thornton, Director of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity, OPM; and
- Linda Williamson, Administrative Assistant, Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity, OPM.

Following lunch, Oscar Quiroga conducted a plant tour for the Council members and guests before chairing the regular meeting of the Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs.

Special guest speakers at the meeting were: Kathy Taylor, Cabinet Secretary of Commerce and Tourism; and Karen Gentry, Director of Driver License Examination, Department of Public Safety.

York UPG places great value on the diversity initiatives of our community and welcomed the opportunity to support the efforts of the Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs in addressing the needs of our Hispanic community.

Editor's Note: The primary mission of the Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American and Hispanic Affairs is to expand opportunities for Oklahoma Hispanics in education, employment, health, housing, culture, and recreation. The Council also advises the Governor on the development and implementation of policies, plans, and programs related to the special needs of Hispanics.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for October 27, 2003, at OPM.

Mentor Executive, continued from page 11

sonnel issues, as well as the opportunity to provide staff support for a legislative task force on strategic planning. I enjoyed the Senate rotation greatly, and it is my experience there that has since benefited me the most in my career path.

Upon my return to the OTC, I worked in Tax Policy preparing fiscal impacts for legislation but was later transferred to Internal Audit. While there, I honed my software skills and learned new applications while also learning about the different areas of the OTC. Unfortunately, my position at the

Patricia Schweitzer, Executive Coordinator of the Construction Industries Board and former Mentor Executive, and Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources and Administration.

OTC did not offer me the opportunity to exercise the skills and knowledge I had acquired from the State Mentor Program.

A great opportunity presented itself with a division of the Oklahoma State Department of Health—the Construction Industries Board—soon to be an independent agency. I was hired in January 2003, as an executive coordinator, and I act as a liaison between the CIB and the legislature. My current position allows me to use my law degree and computer talents, as well as the skills and knowledge I gained through my Mentor Executive rotations at the Senate and OPM.

If I had it to do again, I would not change anything about my experience. The State Mentor Program provided me with a multifaceted overview of the operations and functions of several of the different agencies comprising our state government. I feel the Mentor Executive experience has allowed me to expand my career opportunities with state agencies, and assisted me in obtaining my current position. I would like to thank everyone associated with the State Mentor Program and hope it continues to evolve as an integral part of the process of improving state government.

3A Memos Since July 2003

03-38 (10/06/03)
Proposed Emergency Amendments to Voluntary Payroll Deduction Rules

03-37 (9/18/03)
Agency Management PeopleSoft Implementation Briefing

03-36 (9/16/03)
Emergency Amendments to the Merit Rules for Employment

03-35 (8/22/03)
State Mentor Program

03-34 (8/18/03)
Proposed Emergency Amendments to Reduction-in-Force Rules

03-33 (08/18/03)
Skill-Based Pay Adjustments

03-32 (8/11/03)
Certified Personnel Professional Training

03-31 (7/10/03)
Oklahoma State Employees Charitable Contribution Campaign (OSECCC)

03-30 (7/09/03)
2003 EEOC State and Local Government Information (EEO-4)

Note: *All Appointing Authorities Memos are available on the OPM Website (www.opm.state.ok.us) under "Quick Links".*

Agency HR Changes Since July 2003

Department of Agriculture
Bonnie Smith
Human Resource Administrative Assistant
Retired

Garland Morgan
Human Resources Administrator
Retired

Corporation Commission
Karlotta Neasbitt
Personnel Manager
Resigned

Jan Hawkins
Benefits Coordinator
Resigned

Patty Ormerod
Human Resources Specialist
Resigned

Lewis Burkhart
Human Resource Director

Grand River Dam Authority
Christy Scott
Accountant/Payroll

Health Care Authority
Debra Martin-Barber
Assistant HR Management Coordinator

Department of Human Services
Clarese Amadi
Dispute Resolution Program Manager
Resigned

Georgette Clark
Program Manager
Resigned

Renee Jones
Intra-agency transfer from Employment Services to Classification and Compensation

Tim McByers
Human Resource Management Specialist
Resigned

Dale Moore
Intra-agency transfer from HR Services to Employment Services

Sharon Simpson
Program Manager
Resigned

Gwen Trent
Human Resource Management Specialist
Tulsa Regional HRMD Office

Merlene Williams
Administrative Assistant
Resigned

Office of Personnel Management
Misty Brandon
Human Resource Assistant
Applicant Services
Interagency transfer to OSBI

LaVerne Fullbright
Human Resource Assistant
Applicant Services

Jim Lippert
CORE Change Management Coordinator
Appointment Ended

Deborah Martin-Barber
Human Resources Specialist
Management Services
Interagency transfer to Health Care Authority

Timothy Morrow
Administrative Technician
Management Services
Resigned

Patti Ormerod
HR Programs Manager
Financial Management Services

Lalitha Sundara-Rajan
DP Application Specialist
Information Technology Services
Separated by reduction-in-force

HR Changes, continued on page 13

HR Changes, continued from page 12

Raymond Wainscott
DP Application Specialist
Information Technology Services
Separated by reduction-in-force

Cynthia Willliamson
Human Resources Specialist
Financial Management Services
Intra-agency transfer to Employee Selection Services

Agency HR Changes, continued on page 18

OPM Committee Calendar

Affirmative Action Review Council
11/15/03 & 12/17/03—2:00 p.m.
Department of Agriculture

CPM Advisory Board
Meets at the call of the chair

Child Day Care Advisory Committee
Meets at the call of the chair

OPM State EAP Advisory Council
10/22/03—10:00 a.m.
State Capitol
Room 419-B

Governor's Advisory Council on Asian-American Affairs
10/24/03—2:00 p.m.
Office of Personnel Management
Conference Room G-91

Governor's Advisory Council on Latin-American & Hispanic Affairs
10/27/03—2:00 p.m.
Office of Personnel Management
Conference Room G-91

Committee for Incentive Awards for State Employees
Meets at the call of the chair

Mentor Selection Advisory Committee
Meets at the call of the chair

State Agency Review Committee
11/12/03—2:00 p.m.
Office of Personnel Management
Conference Room G-91

Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women
10/23/03 & 11/20/03—1:30 p.m.
Office of Personnel Management
Conference Room G-91

Note: *Calendar subject to change. Call (405) 521-2177 for most recent information concerning OPM Advisory Bodies and other entities staffed by OPM.*

HRDS Fall 2003 Semester Begins

Carrie Rohr, OPM

The Fall 2003 OPM Human Resource Development Services (HRDS) training semester began September 10, 2003, with classes at the Tom Steed Center in Midwest City and Oklahoma State University in Tulsa. The HRDS Fall 2003 semester runs through December 19, 2003.

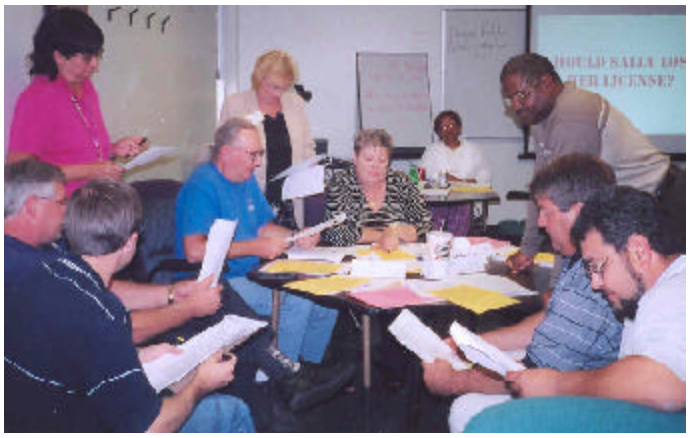
HRDS offers approximately 62 different courses each semester—everything from *Administrative Law* to *Managing Diversity in the Workplace* to *World Trends*. In the past, HRDS relied primarily on contract trainers to teach the majority of courses. During the last few years, however, HRDS has begun recruiting state employee practitioners to teach a number of courses. For example, members of the OPM State Employee Assistance Program staff, Warren Thompson, Robert Stevens, and Deanna Miller, teach classes such as *Effective Stress Management* and *Managing the Troubled Employee Through the EAP Process*.

And, Scott Lange and Melanie Cherry from the Merit Protection Commission share information with state agency supervisors concerning *Managing the Grievance Process*, *the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission Appeals Process*, and *Progressive Discipline*.

The state's tight budgetary situation has further encouraged the use of state employee trainers. In addition to HRDS staff members Joyce Smith, Lee Hayden, and Carrie Rohr, state employee instructors include Kara Morrow, Office of Handicapped Concerns; Scott Lange and Melanie Cherry, MPC; Paula Land, Department of Rehabilitation Services; Howard Payne, Department of Public Safety; and Diane Haser-Bennett, Karen Luman, Leann Morrow, Warren Thompson, Robert Stevens, Deanna Miller, Natasha Riley, and Dayna Petete, OPM.

Contract trainers include Dina Denison, Mary Jo Major, Susan Ferguson, Thomas Nolan, Vic Jackson, Ron Stewart, Julia Teska, Mike Seikel, Gayla Sherry, Kerry Robertson, and Penny Hampton.

For more information on HRDS courses, contact Grayson Bedwell at (405) 521-6334.



"Administrative Law" course members participate in a mock "individual proceeding" entitled, "Should Sally Lose Her License?"

"Legislative Process" participants hone their organizational skills as political party and coalition leaders in their efforts to get a bill passed by the class "legislature".

OPM Program Helps Ms. Wheelchair America

Malia Bennett, Communications Director
Oklahoma State Senate

Cinda Hughes credits her family with helping her to focus on her abilities rather than her limitations. Now a law passed nearly twenty years ago will help Cinda continue to focus on her abilities while she brings positive recognition to Oklahoma.

Hughes, a quadriplegic since birth, is a receptionist at the State Senate where she's worked for the past nine years. In addition to her responsibilities at the Senate, Hughes also serves on the Advisory Board for the Oklahoma Office of Handicapped Concerns. For more than two years, she produced and hosted a weekly radio program, Native Beat, which focused on social and political issues of concern to Native Americans.

This past year, Hughes undertook a new challenge—she decided to compete in the Ms. Wheelchair Oklahoma pageant. Hughes' poise, intelligence and beauty impressed the judges and she won the crown. In July, those same attributes brought Cinda the national title of Ms. Wheelchair America 2004.

Winning the title will mean some travel for speaking engagements during the next year for Hughes, who said she was looking forward to representing the state as Ms. Wheelchair America.

"This is an incredible opportunity to be an advocate for people with disabilities here in our state and across the country—but I also see the role as an ambassador on behalf of Oklahoma. I am excited about the opportunity to tell others about our colorful history, diverse cultures, and people that make Oklahoma such a wonderful place to visit and to live," said Hughes.

Thanks to a state law originally passed in 1985 and administered by the Office of Personnel Management, Hughes will in fact be able to do that and still remain a state employee. The legislation created an interchange program through which state agencies could share the talents and abilities of employees for specific tasks. It was particularly helpful in the days and weeks following the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building. State agencies were able to shift workers, particularly those with Human Resource training, to areas where they were greatly needed as thousands of Oklahomans worked to help one another through the aftermath.

Senate President Pro Tempore Cal Hobson (left) presents Cinda Hughes, Ms. Wheelchair America 2004, with a special citation while Senate Chief of Staff Tom Walls (right) looks on.

In Hughes' case, the interchange program will allow her to work as a representative of the Oklahoma Department of Tourism when traveling as Ms. Wheelchair America. State President Pro Tempore Cal Hobson said this was a perfect example of how agencies could cooperate to take advantage of gifted state employees in a way that benefits the entire state.

"Cinda is the kind of person who refuses to say, 'I can't.' She looks at a particular situation as a challenge and simply figures out the best way to make it happen. That should be an inspiration to every Oklahoman in this state, and I'm sure she will inspire people all over the country. I'm very pleased that the interchange program administered by OPM will help make this possible," said Senator Hobson.

Among Hughes' upcoming engagements are events in Washington D.C., where she'll be the keynote speaker at the U.S. Department of Labor's Commemoration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month and in Seattle, where she will address the annual Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Conference.

"The people at the State Senate are like family. They have been extremely supportive of my endeavors. I'm very grateful to the Senate, the Department of Tourism and OPM for making it possible for me to represent Oklahoma as Ms. Wheelchair America," said Hughes.

FYI

For additional information on the State Personnel Interchange Program and how it can assist you with temporary staffing needs, contact Dayna Petete, OPM Assistant Administrator for Communications and Legislative Liaison, at (405) 521-6293, or dayna.petete@opm.state.ok.us

CORE/PeopleSoft Hosts Agency Management Briefings

Jim Lippert, OPM

The Sequoyah-Will Rogers Concourse theatre was the site of two state agency briefings in early September on the upcoming implementation of the PeopleSoft system.

Over 80 agency heads and senior agency staff attended two briefings on the PeopleSoft software in anticipation of the November 1, 2003, "go-live" date for the Financials, Purchasing, and Procurement modules. Jerry Stillwell, CORE Project Coordinator, along with Jim Lippert, OPM Change Management Coordinator, and Jeanie Robards, CORE Change Management Coordinator, provided project information and conducted Question and Answer sessions for those in attendance.

In addition to reviewing information about the properties of the new ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system, attendees were encouraged to pose questions, as well as exchange information between agencies concerning their progress in adapting to the new system.

A copy of the *Agency Management PeopleSoft Implementation Briefing* presentation is available on the CORE Website (www.state.ok.us/coreoklahoma). If you have questions about PeopleSoft implementation, contact Jeanie Robards at (405) 962-2420.

CORE/PeopleSoft Train-the-Trainer Workshops Well-Attended

Jim Lippert, OPM

The CORE/PeopleSoft Project Team presented a series of Train-the-Trainer workshops for CORE trainers and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) during the weeks of July 21 and July 28 at the Department of Human Services (DHS) training facility in Norman. Kathy Clowers and Joe Martier, both of the Maximus organization, presented the PeopleSoft courses to over 100 state employees during the ten-day period.

The courses were taught on the PeopleSoft Accounting, Purchasing and Procurement modules in preparation for the scheduled November 1 go-live date of these modules. Trainers and SMEs attending these courses were provided with a wide variety of information, all designed to enhance their presentation skills and knowledge for the End-User training that took place August 4 to September 30.

The workshops included familiarization with the Instructor Packet, which contained Password Schedules, technical support information, a Data Reference Sheet (used in presentation exercises), a hot-key chart to simplify PeopleSoft software navigation, a Chart of Accounts Crosswalk table, and a variety of related instructional tools. In addition, trainers and SME's participated in overviews of each training course in preparation for teaching these courses.

Carrie Rohr, Director of OPM's Human Resource Development Services Division, said, "These workshops provided more than 100 trainers and SMEs with the tools and information necessary to effectively train our end-users. As a result, we have received very favorable evaluations from end-user participants."

The PeopleSoft software is an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system that, when implemented, will establish the State's Financial, Purchasing/Procurement, Human Resources/Payroll business processes as an integrated system that will greatly enhance the way these systems interact.

Originally, Phase I of the PeopleSoft system was scheduled to "go-live" July 1, 2003. However, it was determined that a staggered go-live would better suit the state's needs. As a result, the Financial and Purchasing/Procurement modules will go-live November 1, 2003, with the Human Resources/ Payroll modules scheduled to go-live January 1, 2004.

If you want to know more about the PeopleSoft project or training-related issues, you can call Bob Anderson at (405) 962-2403, Carrie Rohr at (405) 521-6344, or go on-line at www.state.ok.us/coreoklahoma.

Members of the CORE/PeopleSoft Team include (left to right) Carol Barton, Payroll & Benefits Lead, OPM; Martin Barrett, Purchasing and e-Procurement Lead, Department of Central Services; Brenda Bolander, Financials Lead, Office of State Finance (OSF); Lisa McKeithan, Technical Lead, OSF; and Linda Belinski, Security Lead, OPM. Not pictured is Lezlie Thiery, HR Lead, OPM.

Scott Meacham, Director of the Office of State Finance and Cabinet Secretary of Finance and Revenue, welcomed agency directors and senior staff to the CORE/PeopleSoft agency management briefing on September 9. Mr. Meacham is a member of the CORE/PeopleSoft Executive Steering Committee.

OPM Team Members Attend Compensation Conference in the "Big Easy"

Tom Patt, OPM

Diane Haser-Bennett, OPM Assistant Administrator for Management Services, and Tom Patt, OPM Director of Compensation and Workforce Planning, were among 120 attendees from 24 states and 39 Louisiana state agencies who gathered September 29 – October 1, 2003, in New Orleans, Louisiana, for the "Joint Pay Conference."

Joint Pay Conference attendees included (left to right) Tom Patt, OPM Director of Compensation and Workforce Planning; Ken Otte, Compensation Manager for the State of Kansas; and Diane Haser-Bennett, OPM Assistant Administrator for Management Services.

The meeting was called a joint conference because it included member states of two salary conferences which normally meet separately: the Central States Compensation Association, consisting of 25 member states, and the Southeastern States Salary Conference, comprised of 14 member states. Four states, including Oklahoma, are members of both conferences.

Periodically, the two conferences join forces for a joint conference to pool their resources and share ideas. The theme of this year's conference was *Pay Me Something, Mister!*—a compensation-related play on the phrase heard frequently in the crowds during Mardi Gras: "Throw me something, Mister."

"The joint conference is a fabulous networking opportunity for compensation professionals," Ms. Haser-Bennett explained. "It provides a forum for discussion of common issues in the pay and benefits areas and to learn the best practices and innovative solutions that some states have employed."

Among the topics discussed at this year's conference included such thought-provoking issues as *The Future of Merit Systems*, *Automated Salary Survey Demonstrations*, and *Succession Planning*. In addition to these important topical presentations, each state took turns at the microphone during the "State of the States," an opportunity to provide the group with a thumbnail sketch of compensation activities within each jurisdiction during the previous year.

Next year, each salary conference will meet on its own once again, with the Central States Conference meeting in Colorado and the Southeastern States assembling in Alabama. However, participants at this joint conference will no doubt long remember this conference in "The Big Easy."

FYI

Effective September 1, 2003, Governor Brad Henry moved the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission from the Human Resources and Administration Cabinet to the Commerce and Tourism Cabinet.
—Executive Order 2003-21

Task Force Meets

Dayna Petete, OPM

The *Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Task Force* has met three times since it was created during the 2003 legislative session by House Bill 1342. The purpose of the Task Force, which is chaired by Representative Abe Deutschendorf (D-Lawton) and Senator Gilmer Capps (D-Snyder), is to study and prepare recommendations concerning the "accessibility for the disabled to publicly produced and provided electronic and information technology."

During the first Task Force meeting on August 21, members discussed Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, which require that when federal government agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology, they must ensure that the electronic and information technology allows federal employees with disabilities to have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access to and use of information and data by federal employees who are not individuals with disabilities, unless an undue burden would be imposed on the agency.

Section 508 also requires that individuals with disabilities, who are members of the public seeking information or services from a federal agency, have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to that provided to the public who are not individuals with disabilities, unless an undue burden would be imposed on the agency.

During the September 4, meeting of the Task Force, Jeanie Robards, Change Management Coordinator for the CORE / PeopleSoft Project, provided information regarding the project and stated that the system will be 508-compliant when it is implemented.

On October 2, members of the Task Force voted to recommend legislation during the 2004 session similar to that passed in the state of Missouri, which includes accessibility standards that must be used by each state agency in the procurement of information technology (IT) and in the development and implementation of custom-designed IT systems, Websites, and other emerging IT systems.

OSCPM Conference Attracts 300

Carrie Rohr, OPM

More than 300 people attended the Oklahoma Society of Certified Public Managers' (OSCPM) 14th Annual Educational Conference. The conference was held Friday, September 12, 2003, at the National Center for Employee Development in Norman. This year's conference registration fee was reduced to $65 in an effort to assist agencies with budget constraints.

Conference speaker Tim Tall Chief, State Department of Health, and conference participant Mary Brewington, Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

Professional speaker Bobbie Staten, North Carolina, was this year's keynote speaker. Her topic, *Batteries Not Included*, was a motivational presentation designed to give participants the "jump-start" they might have been missing. She challenged the audience to charge their batteries while they laugh and learn to work smart, work together, and most importantly, fall in love with their jobs again. Her entertaining presentation was a favorite among the participants.

Conference participants chose from six concurrent sessions offered throughout the day. Dr. Marla Sanchez, founder and CEO of Spectrum Development, Inc., a national training company committed to developing people and enhancing relationships, offered helpful tips on dealing with change during her presentation, *Managing Change in the Workplace*. Dr. James Crutcher, State Department of Health, shared information regarding *Bioterrorism and Safety in Today's Workplace*. Tim Tall Chief, State Department of Health, described his experiences with Native-American traditions in *Indian Affairs Are Best*. Steve Gilliland, founder and CEO of Performance Plus Professional Development, provided insight on *Managing the Generation Gap in the Workplace* and *Motivating for Excellence*, and Bob Oros, president and principal owner of MoreGrossProfit.com, shared his personal observations on dealing with negotiation during his presentation, *Your Ability to Effectively Negotiate.*

Burns Hargis, former candidate for Governor and a moderator on KFOR's *Flashpoint*, entertained the audience during his luncheon speech. He challenged the participants to continue to make a positive difference in Oklahoma government.

This year, in an agreement between OSCPM and the Department of Central Services, Certified Procurement Officers were able to receive continuing education credit for attending the conference. In addition, Carl Albert Public Internship Program Interns and Executive Fellows received credit for their mandatory training requirements for participating in this year's conference.

Hank Batty, OPM Deputy Administrator for Programs, welcomed OSCPM Conference participants.

OSCPM is a nationally-recognized professional organization for state managers founded in June 1989. It is composed of supervisory- and management-level state and local government employees who are enrolled in the Certified Public Manager Program.

Legal Issues

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September & October 2003 IPMA-HR News

Employee Fired After Disciplinary Problems Has Medical Claim

The United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit ruled in *Jacqueline M. Doebele v. Sprint et al.* that an employer might be liable for violating the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) when it improperly regards an employee with mental illness as potentially violent. In addition, an employer that ignores the advice of its experienced human resource professionals and disciplines and fires an employee after she returns from medical leave may be liable for retaliation. Docket No. 01- 3372, August 28, 2003.

Jacqueline Doebele worked for Sprint for more than three years when she was fired for poor performance. Doebele sued, alleging that Sprint violated the ADA and the FMLA. For most of her tenure, Doebele's performance was adequate, although not stellar. The work environment was extremely poor, with many personality conflicts, gossip and rumors.

Doebele's managers at some point appear to have decided to force her out of Sprint by spreading rumors and "setting her up." Doebele was given a verbal and a written warning for allegedly confrontational behavior where other employees felt threatened. The evidence suggests that the other employees made up the story.

During this time, Doebele sought and received treatment for bipolar disorder. She took leave, some of which qualified as FMLA leave. Although cautioned by experienced human resources staff that their actions violated Sprint policy and perhaps federal law, the managers insisted on denying Doebele's request for a reduced work schedule, time off for counseling and a limit on her supervisory duties and interactions upon return to the office.

Doebele returned to work for a few short weeks before she was fired for poor attendance and lack of effectiveness. She filed suit against Sprint for discrimination under the ADA and retaliation under the ADA and the FMLA.

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The Tenth Circuit upheld these claims and directed further proceedings. The court ruled that a reasonable fact finder could conclude that Sprint improperly regarded her as disabled under the ADA. The record shows that Doebele's managers thought she posed a threat to others, although there was never any indication that she actually did. In addition, her managers expressed concern with productivity, attendance and insurance, "all recognized indicators of discrimination based on myth, fears and stereotypes," said the court.

In addition, the court found that the discipline and termination could easily fit into the prohibited retaliation provisions under the ADA and the FMLA. There was evidence of discrimination from comments and written notes, such as one recommending disciplinary action that made a point to note that Doebele had been out on disability leave for nine weeks.

Employee Allowed to Proceed With Retaliation Claim

An employee alleging retaliation in violation of Title VII may proceed with his claim, even where the alleged retaliation was due to the employee defending himself against a sexual harassment suit. United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, *Eric H. Deravin, III, v. Bernard Kerik, Commissioner, and New York City Department of Corrections*. Docket No. 02-7729, July 11, 2003.

For more than 20 years, Eric Deravin worked for the New York City Department of Corrections (DOC). He was promoted several times, reaching the level of assistant deputy warden. However, he was not promoted to deputy warden, despite applying five times at the recommendation of the chief of his department.

Deravin alleges that each of his attempts to be promoted were blocked by Bernard Kerik, then commissioner of the DOC. Kerik allegedly blocked his promotion because he successfully defended himself against a sexual harassment charge filed by Jeanette Pinero, another corrections officer that Deravin contends was romantically involved with Kerik.

The lower court dismissed Deravin's claim, finding that "defending oneself against charges of discrimination does not qualify as protected activity under Title VII." The Second Circuit Court of Appeals reversed.

Title VII prohibits employers from retaliating against employees because they have participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing under Title VII. This language should be interpreted broadly, said the Second Circuit. Other courts and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) have determined that even involuntary participation in Title VII proceedings by an employee accused of sexual harassment qualifies as protected activity.

Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., OPM Administrator and Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources and Administration, and Dayna R. Petete, OPM Assistant Administrator for Communications and Legislative Liaison, attended the IPMA-HR Training Conference in Chicago in September.

Agency HR Changes, continued from page 13

Department of Rehabilitation Services
Mary Martin
Human Resource Management Specialist
Retired

Department of Transportation
Earl Davis
Assistant Human Resources Division Manager
Retired

Department of Veterans Affairs
Sharon Jones
Human Resource Management Specialist
Norman Division

Pat Ready
Human Resource Management Specialist
Lawton/Ft. Sill Division

The Employees Benefits Council's annual Option Period Enrollment for Plan Year 2004 (January 1, 2004 - December 31, 2004) is September 29, 2003, through October 29, 2003. This year state employees may enroll via the Internet on the new BAS system or use the paper enrollment form. Contact your Benefits Coordinator for information.

State Agencies Participate in State Charitable Campaign

Dayna Petete, OPM

State agency representatives participated in the OPM State Charitable Contribution Campaign Coordinator Training on August 18 at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, and in the kick off for the 2003 Campaign on September 5, 2003, with *Breakfast at the Brick*.

Howard Hendrick, Director of the Department of Human Services and Cabinet Secretary of Human Services, is Chairman of this year's campaign, which has been dubbed State Charitable Campaign or SCC.

State Charitable Campaign, continued on page 19

OPM State Charitable Contribution Campaign Coordinator Diane Haser-Bennett (left) attended the SCC Employee Campaign Coordinator Training on August 18 at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma. With Ms. Haser-Bennett are Howard Hendrick, Director of the Department of Human Services and Chairman of the State Charitable Campaign, and Erin Brewer, Director of Public Sector Campaigns for United Way of Oklahoma City.

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The United Way is the Principle Campaign Fund Raising Organization (PCFRO) for the state of Oklahoma responsible for annual public solicitation of funds, providing financial support for charitable agencies, and administering the charitable contribution campaign.

OPM is responsible for coordinating the activities of the State Agency Review Committee (SARC), which oversees, at the state level, the Oklahoma State Employee Charitable Contribution Campaign. In 1989, the Legislature created a single combined charitable solicitation that enabled state employees to contribute to a variety of charitable organizations through payroll deduction. Each year, SARC solicits applications from interested organizations and selects those charitable entities that provide or support direct health and welfare services to individuals or their families.

Since 1989, state employees have contributed more than $2.5 million to this combined fund-raising effort through the convenience of payroll deduction, a one-time contribution of cash or a check, or support of various agency activities.

The SCC "Early Bird" deadline is October 24, and the final deadline for this year's campaign is November 14.

Legislative Committee Begins Hearings On Zero-Based Budgeting

Dayna Petete, OPM

On August 25, the Legislative Oversight Committee on State Budget Performance held the first of many meetings on zero-based budgeting. Members of both political parties and both houses of the Legislature will serve on the Committee with staff support provided by the Office of State Finance. Senator Mike Morgan (D-Stillwater) and Representative Bill Mitchell (D-Lindsay) chair the Committee.

During the 2003 session, the Legislature passed House Bill 1256, which created the Committee and charged it with the responsibility of conducting budget evaluations of all state agencies. Every four years the Committee will review each agency's budget and will use the information to work on budget bills during the next session.

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Oklahoma Lt. Governor Mary Fallin (right) shared an encouraging word with 2003 State Charitable Campaign volunteers Carrie Rohr, OPM, and George Johnson, Department of Human Services, during "Breakfast at the Brick".

Business Ethics—Why Is It So Important?

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Ethics are important to an organization because they set the tone for the cultural and working environment of the organization. Ethics act as a barometer of how things should be done in an organization and provide rules of conduct that employees—both staff and management—can follow. Ethics also has to do with the pride and satisfaction employees find in their work, the attention to quality and service, the degree to which suppliers and customers are treated fairly and honestly—all of which impinge upon the organization's overall reputation and success.

What is Business Ethics?

Business ethics is knowing what is right and wrong and doing the right thing in an organizational environment that takes into consideration the employees and customers of that organization.

One of the problems with enforcing ethics in organizations today is that certain types of unethical behavior may be considered acceptable in the workplace. For example, taking home or using general supplies from the office for personal use; loading office software on home computers; employees surfing the Internet when they should be working; and managers cheating the organization and customers for personal profit.

There are basically two broad areas of business ethics:

1. **Managerial mischief**—Illegal, unethical or questionable practices of individual managers or organizations, as well as the causes of such behaviors and remedies to eradicate them.
2. **Moral mazes**—Includes the numerous ethical problems that managers must deal with on a daily basis, such as potential conflicts of interest, wrongful use of resources, mismanagement of contracts and agreements, etc.

Steps to Create An Effective Ethics Program

1. Assess organizational values and vulnerabilities to misconduct;
2. Create opportunities for management to discuss organizational values and risks;
3. Develop and communicate clear standards of conduct; and
4. Refine management systems and practices to support the ethics program.

Benefits of Managing Ethics in the Workplace

There are numerous benefits in formally establishing an ethics program, rather than dealing with issues on an as-needed basis. Ethics programs:

- Establish organizational roles to manage ethics,
- Schedule ongoing assessment of ethics requirements,

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- Establish required operating values and behaviors,
- Align organizational behaviors with operating values,
- Develop awareness and sensitivity to ethical issues,
- Integrate ethical guidelines to decision making,
- Structure mechanisms to resolving ethical dilemmas,
- Facilitate ongoing evaluation and updates to the program,
- Help convince employees that attention to ethics is not just a knee-jerk reaction done to get out of trouble or improve public image,
- Cultivate strong teamwork and productivity,
- Align employee behaviors with those top-priority ethical values preferred by leaders of the organization,
- Support employee growth and meaning,
- Help employees face reality, both good and bad, in the organization and themselves,
- Help ensure that policies are legal,
- Help avoid criminal acts,
- Detect ethical issues and violations early on so they can be reported or addressed,
- Help manage values associated with quality management, strategic planning and diversity management,
- Identify preferred values and ensure that organizational behaviors are aligned with those values,
- Promote a strong public image, and
- Benefit the bottom line of an organization.

In the 2003 National Business Ethics Survey (NBES), major findings indicated:

1. 82 percent of the participants in 2003 said that top management in their organizations keep promises and commitments, as compared with 77 percent in 2000.
2. Two key indicators of ethics-related problems in the workplace—(1) observed misconduct and (2) pressures to compromise ethics standards—have declined since the 2000 survey. Observed misconduct dropped from 31 percent in 2000 to 22 percent in 2003, while pressure fell from 13 percent to 10 percent during this time period. Declines in observed misconduct and pressure have occurred primarily among non-management employees.
3. Reporting of misconduct by employees has increased steadily in the surveys conducted in 1994 (48 percent), 2000 (57 percent) and 2003 (65 percent). Employees indicate that values such as honesty and respect are practiced more frequently in their organizations in 2003.

The four elements of formal ethics programs reported by respondents included:

1. Written standards of conduct,
2. Ethics training,
3. Ethics advice lines/offices, and
4. Systems for anonymous reporting of misconduct.

Other findings of the survey indicated that the presence of an ethics program is associated with increased reporting of misconduct by employees. Specifically, employees are most likely to report in organizations with all four program elements in place (78 percent). Employee reporting declines steadily in organizations with fewer program elements such as: written standards plus (67 percent), written standards only (52 percent) or none (39 percent). Ethics programs are associated with higher perceptions that employees are held accountable for ethics violations.

Resources

1. Ethics Today– 2003 NBES survey summary (May, 2003). Ethics Resource Center Washington D.C. 2003: http://www.ethics. org/releases/nr_20030521_nbes.html.
2. McNamara, C. Complete Guide to Ethics Management: An Ethics Toolkit for Managers. http://www.mapnp.org/library /ethics/ ethxgde.htm.
3. Ozard, D. et al. Organizational Ethics in Healthcare. Toward a Model for Ethical Decision-by provider Organizations. Institute for Ethics.
4. Perry D. L. Keys to Creating an Effective Ethics Program. Ethics Resource Center, Washington, DC: http://www.ethics.org.

Additional Resource:

IPMA-HR Resource Center Packet on Ethics: http://www.ipmahr. org/index.cfm?navid=79.

In Memoriam

Mr. Rex Chen (second from right) passed away October 1, 2003. He had been a member of the Governor's Advisory Council on Asian-American Affairs since 1995. Other members of the Council include (l to r) Vasithy Sengdara, Tinny Chang, Dr. Yoshi Sasaki, Dr. Rita Raman, and Hung Le, Chair. OPM's Office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity provides staff support to the Council.

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HB 1256 also requires the Committee to prepare a report on each agency that includes a review of the agency's programs, performance and management; information detailing whether the agency demonstrated that there was a need for the services and programs which justifies the agency's continued existence; and data determining whether the agency is the most appropriate provider of the programs and services furnished by the agency.