



THE ADVISOR NEWSLETTER

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CPAC Leadership Corner

Farewell, Ms. Latrice Benton

By Tonie Case



Great leaders create a strong emotional connection with their staff. They inspire them to reach greater depths and to tap into their creativity. They provide an example of good ways to approach problems, as well as help shelter their team from outside conflicts. They call for hard work – both from themselves and from others – without losing their empathy, and move people to follow their lead, rather than command it.

So when you get a great boss – one who not only makes your work easier, but one that has made you a better person, says GOODBYE - you don't know what the new person will be like (other than different) and you're worried. So what's the best way to deal with your old boss' departure?

Members of the Forbes council recommend:

1. **Keep in Touch.** Make a commitment to stay in touch, seriously, do it. This will help with the transition and keep your ties with your old boss strong.
2. **Give some time and space.** Celebrate your accomplishments together and discuss what's next for all involved. Remember that it's likely that the exiting boss is also experiencing a loss at some level. After they leave, give them some time and space as well.
3. **Avoid comparisons and build a new relationship.** Avoid bringing into mind comparisons between the old boss and the new boss.
4. **Ask for what you need and keep an open mind.** Take time to reflect on what you really loved about working with your boss. How did they help support you? While your new leader can't emulate your old one, by getting clear on the things that worked well for you in the past, you can begin to ask for what you need as you get to know your new leader.
5. **Stay positive and accept change.**
6. **Acknowledge the pain, then move forward.** We all remember losing bosses and we felt genuine loss and sadness. It's not a pleasant feeling of grief. Acknowledge the pain professionally and wish them well. With your incoming leader, enjoy their change of pace, focus, and environment.
7. **Be accountable for your own happiness.** Take back that control by being accountable for your own happiness at work and be open to your new boss and how they will add to your experience.

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Although all this advice and recommendations are great – the reality is that the Fort Sam Houston CPAC has lost one of those really GREAT BOSSES. Her name is Ms. Latrice Benton, our CPAC Director.

Of course, we are lucky to have served with her and are happy she was selected for this great new job in Europe. The passion that she brought to the job and her solid work ethic has been instilled in all of us. And for those in our CPAC who do not realize all that she did and her fairness for all her team members, she fought for all of us for many years way before she became our CPAC Director.

So we say, THANK YOU, MS LATRICE – thank you for all your passionate arguments and discussions you made to all levels above yourself on our behalf. Thank you for always defending us as “your people”, always looking out for the best for the team overall first. Thank you for the long hours of sacrifice you made for many of us now and in the past, thank you for time that you could have been spending with your family; thank you for all the donuts and tacos and cards and flowers, and other things you bought and never asked anyone else for anything. Thank you for keeping everyone’s favorite candy on your many desks within this CPAC. But mostly Ms. Latrice, thank you for being the truly phenomenal woman that you are! Please know that we are all so proud of you and your accomplishments. We wish you the best in your new career move!



A General Overview of TSP

Submitted by Christy George



The Thrift Savings Plan or TSP was created in 1986 as part of the Federal Employees Retirement Systems Act. TSP is the same as a 401(k) plan used in the private sector. TSP benefits include agency matching contributions, agency automatic contributions, catch up contributions and low expense ratios. Because the thrift savings plan is based on tax-deferred contributions, any contributions made into it will not be taxed until the money is withdrawn, which can be deferred until retirement.

TSP is similar to standard retirement plans so it can easily be transferred to non-government related IRAs and 401(k) plans and vice versa when a change in employment occurs. Although, all federal employees that fall under CSRS and FERS are eligible to contribute to TSP, there are different requirements for each group.

If you are interested in making the maximum regular contribution, you may find it easier to contribute a dollar amount versus a percentage. Making your TSP election/change to coincide with the first pay date in 2022 will allow you to evenly span your contributions over the full 26 pay periods. For 2022, the maximum regular TSP contribution is \$20,500 over 26 pay periods.

Beginning in the year you turn 50, you may make additional contributions above the Annual Elective Deferral limit. For 2022, the AED limit is \$6,500.

To make a TSP election/change, or to view the ABC-C charts, visit or <https://www.tsp.gov> or <https://abc.chra.army.mil/abc/>



Hail and Farewell



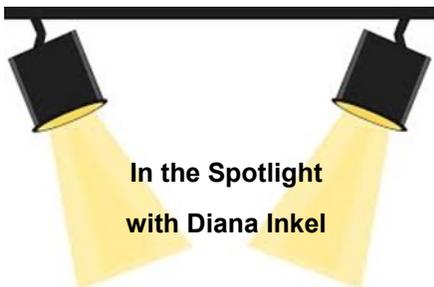
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Branch D (Staffing)



Where is your hometown?
San Antonio, TX.

Which Branch do you work for?
CPAC Customer Support (CSB) Branch.

How long have you been with the CPAC?
Seven years.

What is your favorite part about working at the CPAC?
Besides my job, all the wonderful friends I've made over the years.

What is something most people would not know about you?
I'm a magazine fanatic! Some of my favorite magazines are about cooking, health, pets, tech, business, finance, politics and general news. Luckily, they're all digital so I'm easily able to read articles anywhere, at any time.

What is it that you do that sets you apart in providing excellent customer service? I'm empathetic to my customer's needs. Therefore, I try to assist them to the best of my ability.

Classification: Determining the Grade

Submitted by Corey L. Poe

Application of Standards

OPM prepares classification standards on the assumption that the people using them are either personnel specialists or managers trained in how to classify positions and knowledgeable about the occupations and organizations concerned. Regardless of the specific format of the standard, you must consider and apply it as a *guide* to grade level decisions. You should not use grade level criteria mechanically to match or "force fit" a position to specific elements, factors, situations, or duties. You must always use sound classification judgment to determine the extent to which an individual job fits the *intent* of the standard.



Standards do not describe all possible kinds or combinations of work in a particular occupation. This would be impossible because of the changes that occur so frequently in how some work is assigned and performed and in how some missions and organizations are structured. An attempt to completely describe how work is structured in all components of all agencies also would be an impossible task. In any case, the final evaluation decision is based on an evaluation of the whole position against appropriate grade level criteria following established classification policy and procedure.

A group of positions in the same occupational series may encompass a considerable variety and combination of specific types of duties at the same grade level. A grade level represents a band or range of difficulty. Therefore, you must be careful to ensure that the grade level decision is compatible with the grade concept in the standard. Differences in the work assigned to positions are often assumed to imply differences in grade level. In fact, these differences may simply represent variations within the range of a grade level.

- It is essential that you consider the intent of any standard when applying it to a specific job. Intent is determined by considering the standard as a whole. This means that full weight is given to:
- background and occupational information;
- descriptions used to illustrate successive grade levels;
- changes in the nature of the work not reflected in the standard;
- and significant classification features in the job that are not addressed in the standard.

Factors Not Considered

Not considered in determining the grade level of a position are issues, such as volume of work, financial need of the employee, salary comparability, quality of work, efficiency of performance, the employee's length of service, difficulty in recruiting for the occupation, or duties performed only in the absence of another employee. Other areas of the personnel management system take these considerations into account. Performance and incentive awards, the merit promotion plan, periodic step increases, and special pay rates, for example, are all tools used to deal with issues not properly resolved through the classification of positions.

For more information regarding classification grade determinations, please visit <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/classifying-general-schedule-positions/>.

Labor Relations: Formal Discussion

Submitted by Robert Anthony Rodriguez

Section 7114(a)(2)(A) of The Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute or FSLMRS, establishes, “an exclusive representative of an appropriate unit (bargaining unit) in an agency shall be given an opportunity to be presented at:

- any formal discussion
- between one or more representatives of the agency and one or more employees in the unit (bargaining unit) or their representatives
- concerning any grievance or any personnel policy or practices or other general condition of employment

Keep in mind that this can be a “one way” conversation from a supervisor or a member of Management/Leadership to a group of subordinates, i.e., a town hall meeting with mandatory attendance, a simple discussion on a change to dress code, or even a change to an SOP.

When management and one or more bargaining unit employees are involved in a meeting where the subject being discussed is a personnel policy or practice or general condition of employment, you may be engaging in a formal discussion.

Pursuant to Section 7114(a)(2)(A) of the FSLMRS, there is a requirement to invite the Union to these discussions. A Union is entitled to advance notice of a formal discussion so it can decide whether to attend and, if so, to designate a representative of its own choice to attend the meeting. [*Dep’t of the Air Force, Sacramento Air Logistics Ctr., McClellan Air Force Base, Cal., 29 FLRA 594 (1987); see also GSA, Reg. 9, L.A., Cal., 56 FLRA 683 (2000)*].

The union should be invited to these discussions, but how do you know if it is really a formal discussion?

There are indicators of whether a meeting would meet the statutory definition of “formal.” The FLRA takes a holistic approach when it considers whether a meeting meets the “formal” definition. You must look at the nature of the meeting to determine if it is “formal” (e.g., an impromptu meeting can be “formal” even if taking place in what you thought was an informal setting.)

The FLRA has held the following subject matters meet the test for a Formal discussion under 7114(a)(2)(A):

- Grievance Meeting
U.S. DOJ, INS, N.Y. Office of Asylum, Rosedale, N.Y., 55 FLRA 1032 (1999)
- Meeting to discuss policies and procedures concerning annual leave
U.S. DOD, Def, Logist. Ag., Def. Depot Tracy, Tracy, Cal., 37 FLRA 952 (1990)
- Interview in preparation for an arbitration hearing or ULP hearing
Dep’t of the Air Force, F. E. Warren Air Force Base, Cheyenne, Wyo., 31 FLRA 541 (1988).

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The FLRA also considers the “Totality of the Circumstances” when determining the formality of any discussion [*F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Cheyenne, Wyo.*, 52 FLRA 149 (1996); *Dep’t of HHS, SSA, Bureau of Field Operations, S.F., Cal.*, 10 FLRA 115 (1982).]:

- The level of supervisory or management officials conducting the meeting;
- Whether other supervisors or management officials attended;
- How long the meeting lasted;
- How the meeting was called;
- Where the meeting was held;
- Whether a formal agenda was established for the meeting;
- Whether attendance was mandatory;
- Were notes taken or a record made of the meeting;
- The subject matter addressed during the meeting; and
- The manner in which the meeting was conducted.

When management proceeds with a formal discussion with bargaining unit employee(s), without notification to the Union as required under 7114(a)(2)(A), the liability may result in an Unfair Labor Practice held against your Command.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding formal discussions please contact your FSH CPAC Labor Relations Specialist Team, Robert Rodriguez and Catherine Guerra @ usarmy.jbsa.hqda-cpac.mbx.labor@army.mil.

The Importance of Training and Development in the Workplace

Submitted by James DeBerry

Training isn't just important to an organization, it is vital. Training and development provides both the individual and the organization with benefits and leads to better processes and business growth. Training gives everyone a great understanding of their roles/responsibilities and the knowledge and skills they need to do that job effectively. This will enhance their confidence which can also improve their overall performance. Employees that receive necessary ongoing workforce training, provide the organization with enabling one employee to pick up where another left off, keeping them all on the same page without having to provide constant help and supervision.



Also, the benefits of training on an ongoing basis includes:

- The maintenance of team cohesion.
- The creation of a common mindset and a shared vocabulary.
- Enables the team to respond to technological changes that can affect their job requirements and facilitate career development.
- Helps employees respond to the changes that come from organizational restructuring.
- Gives them the ability to adapt to changes resulting from increased diversity in the workforce and helps to meet the employee's need for continued growth.

Ongoing training can reduce employee turnover, as employees are more likely to feel valued when they are invested in and therefore, less likely to change employers. Training can be of any style relevant to the work or responsibilities of the individual and can be delivered by any appropriate method. Some examples include: on-the-job training, mentoring/coaching, cross-functional training, team training and customer service training.

The main purpose of training is to produce a positive change in the functioning of an organization and can be thought of as the best insurance policy against all sorts of the inevitable changes and the unforeseeable needs that will arise in your organization from time to time.



Civilian Education System (CES) Important Changes & Updates

Submitted by Wanda Ward

Army Management Staff College website has changed to <https://armyuniversity.edu/amsc/amsc>

Basic Course: This course is designed for Army Civilians aspiring leaders and non-supervisors who seek supervisory and/or leader's positions (GS 05 - 09). Beginning in FY23 the Basic Course will no longer offer resident or virtual classes. The course will only be available through distributed learning.

Intermediate Course: Prepares current and aspiring Army Civilian leaders (GS 10 -12) to become more innovative, self-aware, and prepared to effectively lead and care for personnel and manage assigned resources at the organizational level. The course is required per AR 350-1 for Army Civilian supervisors in those grades. Training and developmental exercises focus on "mission" planning, team building, establishing command climate, and stewardship of resources.

The Intermediate course has 2 phases through blended learning consisting of a distributed learning (DL).

Phase 1- is conducted through a self-paced online Distributed Learning.

Eligibility for the Intermediate Course Phase 1 is available to all Army Civilians in permanent appointments in grades GS-10 through GS-12 (or equivalent) and Wage Grade.

Prerequisites. The Foundation Course (required only for individuals hired after September 30, 2006). Intermediate Course DL Phase 1 must be complete before the instructor-facilitated Phase 2.

Phase 2- Resident/Mobile Education Team (MET) Offering

The Intermediate Course Phase 2 is offered via three-week instructor-led facilitation at Fort Leavenworth, KS and on-site at other locations via Mobile Education Teams (METs). This is a 14.5 day course. Expect full 8 hour days and 30 minutes to 1 hour of homework each night.

Phase 2 also, offers an online virtual classroom environment. See the link below for offering dates and locations <https://armyuniversity.edu/amsc/courses/CourseSchedule>.

For additional information visit Army Management Staff College link: <https://armyuniversity.edu/amsc/AMSC>

To register for CES courses. Log on to <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/CHRTAS/>



ARMY PRIVACY OFFICE: Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Breach Fact Sheet

What is a PII breach? The actual or possible loss of control, unauthorized disclosure, or unauthorized access of personally identifiable information (PII) where persons other than authorized users gain access or potential access to such information for other than authorized purposes where one or more individuals will be adversely affected.

Examples of PII:

- Social Security Number (Standalone–full or in ANY form)
- date of birth
- home/cell phone number
- financial information
- DoD ID
- protected health information (PHI)
- Inmate Registration Number



What can you do to prevent a PII breach?

As a Department of Army employee, you are entrusted with safeguarding PII contained in any command documents and system of records. **You have a responsibility to—**

- Encrypt the email message and ensure the email recipients have a “need to know.” (Forward emails with PII only to email recipients who have a need to know.)
- Lock your computer before walking away AND secure any PII on your desk before leaving for the end of the day.
- Before printing a document containing PII, verify the printer location and select secure print mode.
- If a breach of PII occurs, notify your supervisor and contact your privacy office immediately.
- Report the PII breach within 24 hours to the Army Privacy Office using the Privacy Act Tracking System (PATS): <https://www.privacy.army.mil/PATS/login.aspx>.
- When teleworking in an area of your home, ensure it is free from individuals who do not have a “need to know.”
- Secure and protect Army mobile electronic devices, such as government laptops and government cellphones.
- Ensure laptops and mobile electronic devices have Data at Rest (DAR) encryption and are Common Access Card/Public Key Infrastructure (CAC/PKI) enabled. See your information technology (IT) support team for assistance.
- Complete annual PII training.

What are common causes of PII breaches?

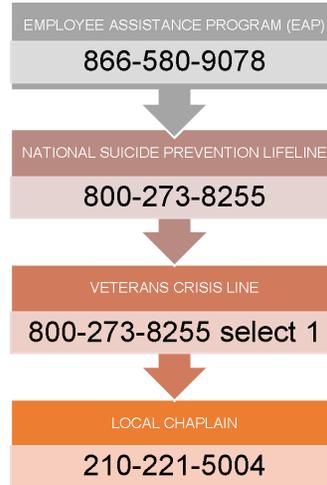
Most PII breaches are due to human error. Army personnel who mishandle PII are required to take remedial training. It is your responsibility to prevent human errors:

- Do not send unencrypted emails containing PII or send unencrypted or encrypted emails containing PII to recipients who DO NOT have a “need to know.”
- Do not post PII on shared network drives, Microsoft Teams or SharePoint sites without restricted access for only those with a need to know. See your IT support team for assistance.
- Do not post personal documents on a network shared drive.
- Do not discuss PII/PHI with others that do not have a need to know.
- Do not leave PII unsecured, such as on a desk or at a network printer.
- Do not post or discuss work-/health-related information on any social media platforms.
- Do not leave your government-issued devices unattended in an unlocked vehicle or trunk.
- Do not Report IT-related PII breaches to the U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT).



Supporting the Mental Health and Well-Being of Federal Employees

In accordance with the President's Management Agenda Goal 2.3, OPM and DoD are committed to supporting Federal employee well-being and ensuring that employees are aware of available mental well-being support services. DoD Components are encouraged to provide employees information about the mental health service options available through the Employee Assistance Programs, Federal Employees Health Benefits plans, and the NAF Health Benefits Plan. Components are also encouraged to remind employees about the various leave and workplace flexibilities available to them should they seek treatment for themselves or eligible family members.



What is EAP?

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a voluntary, confidential program that helps employees (including management) work through various life challenges that may adversely affect job performance, health, and personal well-being to optimize an organization's success. EAP services include assessments, counseling, and referrals for additional services to employees with personal and/or work-related concerns, such as stress, financial issues, legal issues, family problems, office conflicts, and alcohol and substance use disorders. EAPs also often work with management and supervisors providing advanced planning for situations, such as organizational changes, legal considerations, emergency planning, and response to unique traumatic events.



What do they offer?

With EAP you will find free, confidential services to help you and your household members manage everyday challenges and work on more complex issues. You can explore the variety of services available, find a provider to meet your unique needs, and search the Learning Center for relevant health information and tools. Here's what they have to offer:

- Counseling
- Lifestyle coaching
- Online programs
- Financial wellness, Legal services and Identity theft resolution
- Senior care management
- Work-Life Services
- Member website

Key features

- Provided at no cost to you and your household members
- Completely confidential service provided by a third party
- Includes up to 6 counseling sessions

Laying out the facts:

Agency human resource and personnel vetting offices (security, suitability, and credentialing) are important partners in dispelling the myth that seeking mental health treatment will disqualify applicants or employees from working for the government or passing a background check. Everyday individuals with mental health conditions carry out their duties without presenting a security risk. We encourage proactive management of mental health conditions to support the wellness and recovery of Federal employees and others.



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION VISIT:

- <http://www.mentalhealth.gov>
- <http://samhsa.gov>
- <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
- <http://sprc.org>
- <http://nimh.nih.gov>
- <http://nida.nih.gov>
- <http://niaaa.nih.gov>



Various leave and Workplace flexibilities available to employees:



For an employee's own needs, they include:

- Sick leave for Personal Medical Needs
- Family and Medical Leave
- Parental Bereavement Leave (pending Army guidance)
- Leave under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program
- Annual Leave
- Advanced Sick Leave
- Advanced Annual Leave
- Leave without Pay
- Alternative Work Schedules
- Credit Hours under Flexible Work Schedules
- Compensatory Time off and Telework

For care of an employee's family member who is pursuing treatment, they include:

- Sick Leave for Family Care and Bereavement
- Sick Leave to Care for a Family Member with a Serious Health Condition
- Family and Medical Leave
- Leave under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program
- Annual Leave
- Advanced Sick Leave
- Advanced Annual Leave
- Alternative Work Schedules
- Credit Hours under Flexible Work Schedules
- Compensatory Time off and Telework

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<https://www.samhouston.army.mil/cpac/index.aspx>



<https://www.facebook.com/Ft-Sam-Houston-Civilian-Personnel-Advisory-Center-217123538373277/>



<https://twitter.com/FSHCPAC>



usarmy.jbsa.hqda-cpac.mbx.inquiry@mail.mil

A Word on Quality Control

Submitted by Daniel Moore

Quality control (QC) is a process through which an organization seeks to ensure that product quality is maintained or improved. Quality control requires us to create an environment in which both management and employees strive for perfection. This is done by training personnel, creating benchmarks for product quality, and testing products to check for statistically significant variations.



QC not only helps to improve the quality of our product for our customers, but it can also help us to improve production processes and efficiency.

QC has been around for since as far back as 3000 B.C. in Babylonia where the code of Hammurabi stated "The mason who builds a house which falls down and kills the inmate, shall be put to death." While we've evolved since then to be somewhat less vengeful, it is significant to note the importance in which quality was measure even that long ago.

Here at our CPAC, QC reviews include seven quality control check points for various recruitment phases to be reviewed, Classification, Pre-Announcement, Pre-Cert (Referral), Pre-Selection (Tentative Job Offer), Pay Setting and Comp or Non-Comp Actions.

To determine what is acceptable for our product and what is not, we utilize a checklist that covers the seven checkpoints. This checklist clarifies the quality control process and reduces our cost in terms of training, time saved, and less rework. This also allows us to apply quality controls at every step while increasing effectiveness and efficiency of our product.

As Aristotle stated "Quality is not an act, it is a habit."



FSH CPAC OPERATING HOURS



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our staff is working virtually. Our doors are currently closed to walk-in customers until further notice. However, you may contact your servicing specialist directly via email or ARMY 365 MS Teams. For additional information, questions, or inquiries please call (210) 221-1425.

We appreciate your patience and support during this time.
