

Summary of Discussions with Focus Groups from the Economic Development Reps, H&E Program Analysts and Planning Consultants, Planners, and Program Consultants Occupational Groups

Overview of Findings

In the economic development representatives, health and environment program analysts and planning consultants, planners, and program consultant's occupational groups, there are different competencies and skills sets needed of employees in different positions within a class or class series. In the Economic Development Representatives, there are positions that provide financial consultation to industrial firms and businesses as well as processing of industrial financing applications which require employees to have a financial management/legal background and education; positions that promote the development of quality industry and industrial growth in Kansas and assist counties and municipalities in preparation for industrial development which require business management/marketing/business planning background and education; positions that calling on industrial firms and familiarizing them with the benefits of locating in Kansas which require international marketing background as well as being fluent in a specific language; positions that gather, analyze and market data for agricultural commodities and disseminate and reporting on the information through various media outlets which require agricultural and journalism background; etc. These are only a few examples of the diverse backgrounds needed just in the Economic Development Representatives class series. The other classes and class series are as diverse in competencies and skills sets needed of employees. Some examples of the other classes are program consultants that perform public relations, coordinating community-based programs; and inspecting and auditing services, etc; health and environmental program analysts that perform grant management, program coordination, accounting, etc; and planners that perform land use and urban design, transportation design, research reporting, and environmental impact reporting, etc.

Therefore, it may be more appropriate to discontinue the agency specific classes and move these positions into classes or create new classes that are more descriptive of competencies and skills required. In doing this, it would allow different compensation rates for these positions that reflect the job market rate in which their special background and job assignments are better matched. It may also make it easier to recruit and hire the right persons for the job.

In addition, there was diversity between the participants on how their agency manages or assigns work. Employees from several agencies indicated there is disparate how work is dispersed within their agency. The employees mentioned several reasons for this disparate. The reasons given were favoritism, non-performing employee, "top-heavy" organization, managers who are not technical proficient in their jobs, constant change, how monies are appropriated and distributed. There was a consensus among these employees that these issues need to be addressed to help create more equity among employees as it relates to job assignments and competition. On the other side of the spectrum, there were employees that felt their agency is a great place to work and have great managers and supervisors to work with.

Minimum Requirements

The majority of the participants agreed that the current minimum requirements were sufficient. Some of the reoccurring comments from the participants are as follows:

- Additional requirements are necessary for some positions.
- Working experience in the organizational area of the position would be helpful. In some positions it is essential due to have the organizational or program knowledge as a requirement.
- For some positions an advanced degree is necessary.

Full Performance

Amount of Time to Reach Full Performance

Participants indicated the time it takes to reach full performance varies among positions. Employees generally agree the minimum amount of time was one year to a maximum of two years. Some participants indicated that this length of time can be dependent on cyclical or seasonal issues, depending on the particular discipline. Participants did agree though, an agency should know if a person will be successful in their positions by six months. They also indicated it would take a new employee from outside the work unit, agency or discipline much longer to be capable of full performance due to need to understand agency processes, rules and procedures, learning to whom to contact, program knowledge, etc. Participants also agreed that it will take two or three years or more to be seen as being experienced. There is constant learning and adaptation to changes to programs, agency mission, rules and regulations, etc.

Type of Supervision Received

Participants generally agreed that they receive limited supervision and the work requires employees to use independent judgment or act on their own discretion, requiring the use of initiative and creativity to resolve problems or interpret policy to develop solutions. As employees become more experienced, direction becomes more general and employees have greater and greater independence and accountability. Major work assignments are examined for soundness or technical judgment and for general effectiveness and adequacy. Supervision exists to provide administrative direction in the planning, organizing and implementation of the program activities, respond to legislative and media inquiries and complaints, and to see to human resource issues. In general, the supervisors and managers handle the more potentially controversial matters, or far-reaching implications, and other administrative/managerial types of problems.

What Criteria Should Compensation be Based? There seemed to be a consensus that performance and other personal characteristics that the employee brings to the job (such as initiative, ability to work well with others, etc.) should be one of, if not the primary criteria for the basis of compensation. There was also consensus that longevity needs to be part of the determination on how one is compensated. Longevity coincides with an employee's continued career growth and additional responsibilities. Pay for an employees' certification, continual education or completion of specific training, where such accomplishments enhance the

employee's ability to perform the duties of their position or allow the employee to perform additional duties associated with their position, was also agreed to be something that would be a benefit to positions in their classifications.

Occupational Survey Summary on the Economic Development Reps, H&E Program Analysts and Planning Consultants, Planners, and Program Consultants Occupational Groups

SUMMARY BY ROLES

	Program Analysts/Consultants	Econ Dev Rep/Planners
<u>Participation Rate:</u>	26% of the 561 Total positions.	53% of the 81 Total Positions
<u>Time Worked in Occupation:</u>	Approximately 80% of the employees in this field have over 1 year or more work experience; 36% have five or more years; and 16% have ten or more years.	Approximately 68% of the employees in this field have over 1 year or more work experience; 30% have five or more years; and 14% have ten or more years.
<u>Education, Training and Experience:</u>	90% of the participants indicated at entry you need more than a high school education. 57% of the participants indicate you need bachelor's degree or higher	91% indicated at entry you must have acquired a bachelor's degree or higher.
<u>Skills:</u> (Extremely or Very Important)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service Orientation 2. Complex Problem Solving 3. Instructing 4. Coordination 5. Judgment and Decision Making 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service Orientation 2. Complex Problem Solving 3. Coordination 4. Judgment and Decision Making
<u>Work Context:</u> (Every Day)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact with others 2. Interaction with external customer/public 3. Decisions affect other people 4. Face to face discussions 5. Working with a team 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact with Others 2. Interaction with external customer/public 3. Decisions affect other people 4. Face to face Discussions 5. Working with a team
<u>Level of Complexity:</u> (Level 4 or Higher)	75% - Level 4 or higher –You evaluate the relevance and importance of theories, concepts, and principles. You develop different approaches or tactical plans to fit specific circumstances. Guidelines may exist, but are flexible and open to considerable interpretation. Independent	57% - Level 5 or higher –Work involves the development of new guidelines and techniques, establishing criteria or developing new information. Guidelines may not exist for all situations. Considerable independent judgment, personal discretion, and resourcefulness

	judgment, personal direction, and resourcefulness are needed to interpret and apply guidelines.	are needed to interpret circumstances, and to make decisions in major areas where there may be uncertainty in approach, methodology, and interpretation.
<u>Supervision Received/Independence:</u> (Level 4 or Higher)	96%- Level 4 or higher - Receive limited supervision and the work requires employees to use independent judgment or act on their own discretion. Requires the use of initiative and creativity to resolve problems or interpret policy to develop solutions. A manager may be available to provide general direction or advice, but employees usually act independently based on their own judgment.	55% - Level 5 or higher – Employees in this job receive General Direction, working from broad goals and policies. Desired results are communicated to the employee and alternative methods may be suggested but are not explicitly prescribed. Major work assignments are examined for soundness or technical judgment and for general effectiveness and adequacy.
<u>Supervision Given:</u>	64% - Majority of positions have no supervisory responsibilities.	64.1% - Majority of positions have no supervisory responsibilities.
<u>Knowledge within the Field or Specialty:</u>	91.4% - Majority of positions require at a minimum an in-depth knowledge of concepts, practices and procedures with ability to use in varied situations.	84.3% - Majority of positions require at a minimum an in-depth knowledge of concepts, practices and procedures with ability to use in varied situations.
<u>Decision Making:</u>	62.6% - Decisions have major implications on the management and operations of an area with a department/division. Job may contribute to important strategy, operational and business decisions that affect the department/division.	52.4% - Decisions have major implications on the management and operations of an area with a department/division. Job may contribute to important strategy, operational and business decisions that affect the department/division.
<u>Problem Solving:</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 39.7% - Problems are varied, requiring analysis or interpretation of the situation. Problems are solved using knowledge and skills, general precedents and practices. 39.7% - Problems are highly varied, complex and often non-recurring, requiring novel and creative approaches to resolution. New concepts and 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 54.8% - Problems are varied, requiring analysis or interpretation of the situation. Problems are solved using knowledge and skills, general precedents and practices 33.3%.- Problems are highly varied, complex and often non-recurring, requiring novel and creative

	<p>approaches may have to be developed.</p> <p>3. 19.8% - Problems are broad, complex and abstract, often involving agency-wide issues. Must develop solutions using substantial creativity, resourcefulness, innovation, negotiation and diplomacy</p>	<p>approaches to resolution. New concepts and approaches may have to be developed.</p> <p>3. 11.9% - Problems are broad, complex and abstract, often involving agency-wide issues. Must develop solutions using substantial creativity, resourcefulness, innovation, negotiation and diplomacy</p>
<u>Fiscal Responsibility:</u>	Only 32% of the positions require assisting in planning, monitoring and/or managing budget in functional area of a program.	71% of the positions require assisting in planning, monitoring and/or managing budget in functional area of a program.
<u>Licenses/Certifications:</u>	Approximately 18% of the positions require a license or certification.	Approximately 4% of the positions require a license or certification.