

## Management Identification of Candidates

I have two vacancies in my organization. I know that there are a number of good candidates right here who I know could do the work required quite well. Do I have to go through all the effort of writing the crediting plan, advertising the positions, waiting for an announcement to close and assessing the candidates? Isn't there an easier way to fill these positions, since I really would like to fill the positions from within my organization?

Yes, there is something that removes some of the steps, *but not all*. It is called management identification of candidates. Merit Systems Principle #1 guides what flexibilities are available.

### **MERIT SYSTEMS PRINCIPLE #1**

(From 5 United States Code Section 2301)

**Recruit qualified individuals from appropriate sources representing all segments of society; select and advance individuals solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge and skills, after fair and open competition, that assures equal opportunity.**

The basic principle is that there must be fair and open competition, that there must be selection from among qualified candidates, and that the candidates must be assessed in terms of their relative ability,

## The Flexibility

knowledge and skills. Equal employment opportunity, affirmative action and priority placement program requirements also apply.

Department of the Navy guidance allows that some positions may be filled competitively *without issuing a formal vacancy announcements*. Management officials *may* select a candidate for promotion without formal announcement when the area of consideration is small enough that the selecting official knows all potential applicants. There is no requirement for a formal announcement but the position is filled through the competitive procedures. So, if this method is used, the selecting official **MUST** evaluate each candidate equitably.

Now exactly how does this work?

- First, the selecting official must know that there will be a sufficient number of best-qualified candidates to consider without formally announcing the vacancy. E.g., if you were the head of the Resources Department for an organization and you know that in your organization alone there are *seven to nine* excellent candidates for a vacancy you have, then you could consider this flexibility. A sufficient number of best-qualified candidates are generally considered three to five per vacancy. This process would not be appropriate if there are only one or two qualified candidates within the area of consideration.

- **Second, if the selecting official chooses NOT to advertise the vacancy formally, then he or she *MUST* possess enough information about abilities, knowledge, skills and experience of each of the candidates to ensure they are *assessed fairly and completely*.**

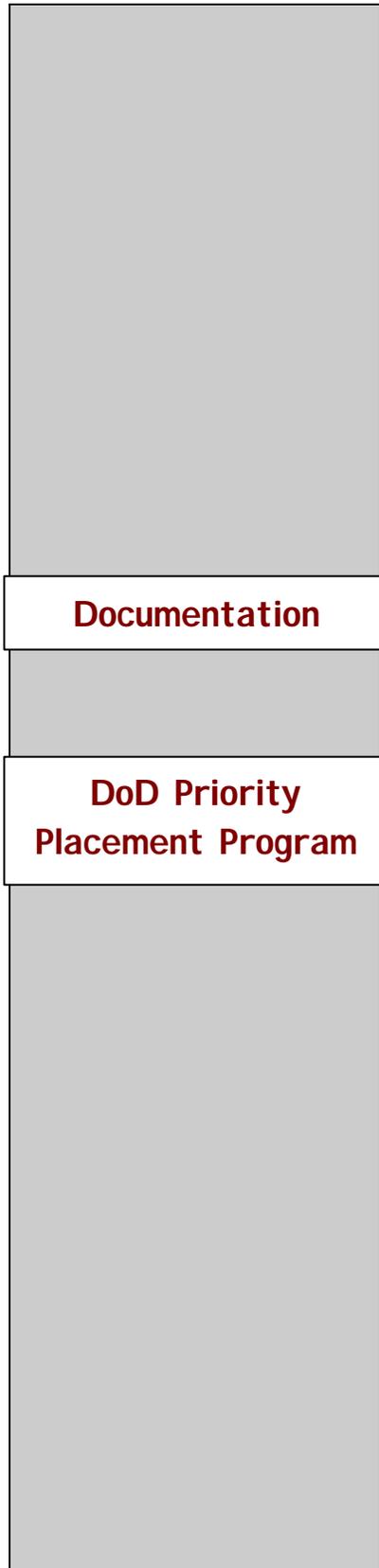
- **Third, the selecting official must document who was selected and why. Documentation must include a list of all qualified candidates considered, the evaluation criteria upon which the candidates were evaluated and a brief justification of why one or more candidates were selected.**

**Example**

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**John Cervantes has two Budget Analyst GS-560-12 positions which he has recently been authorized to fill. John has eight GS-11 Budget Analysts in his office, any of whom could easily do the work successfully at the GS-12 level. The potential candidates are all dead-ended, dedicated employees, and a number of them are women and minorities. John would like to fill these two positions from within his existing work force.**

**John considers the eight in-house candidates sufficient to give him a reasonable number of best-qualified candidates from which to fill his vacancy. So John decides that he will restrict competition for his vacancies to his own office. John then prepares a “Management Memorandum” (in this case an e-mail) to his staff telling them how he plans to fill the vacancies. He asks**



**those who are NOT interested in the positions to let him know within a week.**

**Two analysts inform him that they are not interested in being considered for the positions. Using the information that John has concerning the abilities, knowledge, skill and experience of the remaining six candidates, John makes two selections. He documents his reasoning for selecting the two people he did and forwards the file to his HRO for review and forwarding to the regional HRSC for processing.**

**A sample “Management Memorandum” that discusses several options for evaluating candidates and how to document a selection is provided at the end of this discussion.**

**The provisions of the Department of Defense Priority Placement Program (PPP) DO apply to positions filled under management identification of candidates. For this reason, a Request for Personnel Action should be forwarded (identifying in the remarks section that the position will be filled by management identification of candidates) via the PERSACTION System (often called PPIs) to the HRO/HRSC just prior to preparing the “Management Memorandum.” The HRO should also be notified concerning when you expect to have determined the final list of candidates who will be considered. That date will be the date of final clearance of the PPP for the action.**

**Some Cases to Consider**

***Case 1: Tonya supervises twelve voucher examiners. One of her two Lead Examiners has announced her retirement effective in three months. Tonya knows that there are several people on her staff who could perform successfully as Leads. Plus she wants to make a selection in time for some overlap before the retirement takes place.***

**Comment:** Tonya should certainly consider using management identification of candidates, especially if she desires to fill the position from within her existing staff. She should begin by preparing a Request for Personnel action stating that she is filling the position using management identification of candidates and then inform her staff of her intent to fill the positions. She might want to send her staff an e-mail and attach a copy of the PD.

***Case 2: Melba has just been informed that her only Management Assistant is leaving to accompany her spouse overseas. She has an excellent secretary who she thinks would be excellent in the position. Should you use management identification of candidates to make it easier to select her secretary?***

**Comment:** There is nothing wrong with a manager wanting to offer career advancement to his or her staff. In this case, there is not enough information about how many other candidates there are to be considered for the vacancy. Management identification is a *competitive action*, so care must be taken to ensure that there are a number of best-qualified candidates

## Cases (con't)

available for the selecting official to consider. The rule of thumb is three to five best-qualified candidates for a vacancy.

**Case 3:** *Caleb supervises all the painters on the base. He has just been promoted and now he has to fill his former position. All of the painters have worked for him for at least five years. Does he have to go through the process of writing a "Management Memorandum" and getting it to each painter to see who is interested? He knows that there are four of the painters who would make excellent supervisors, can he just select one of them?*

**Comment:** **YES, he can.** He still has to make sure that the PPP listing is cleared and he must document whom he considered and why he selected one over the others. Because Caleb knows all his staff so well, he probably possesses enough information to justify such a decision.

Of course, the downside of not sending out some notice of the process that he is using is that those not selected may believe that there was "pre-selection" and that they were not given fair consideration for the promotion. Generally, it is better to issue some form of notice (e-mail or hard copy) that can be seen by all interested. Also if Caleb has EEO representation issues to consider, he may want to prepare a notice. The provisions in labor contracts also continue to apply regarding the posting of vacancies, so that agreements need to be checked before Caleb begins.

**Questions and  
Answers**

**Question 1: *Who decides whether management identification of candidates is appropriate, management or the HR people?***

**Answer:** It is not a simple either/or situation. Managers should discuss the pros and cons with their HR advisors, prior to preparing a Request for Personnel Action or sending out any notice or memorandum. It is the HR staff that must ensure that the PPP provisions have been satisfied. In short, it is a management option, but it is an option that should be exercised with care and deliberation.

**Question 2: *I know the candidate that I want and I can't afford to add another billet because of the Priority Placement Program. Can't I just save the taxpayer and the HR staff a lot of time by picking that person through management identification of candidates?***

**Comment:** Probably, not. It does not appear that there is any real competition in this case. If there were a number of best-qualified candidates *along with the "person wanted,"* then management identification of candidates might be appropriate. The appearance of "pre-selection" can easily result in grievances and complaints being filed.

**Question 3: *How detailed does the notification to candidates and the documentation for selection have to be?***

**Questions and  
Answers (Con't)**

**Comment:** Remember that we are dealing with a simplified version of merit competition, so the notification should be brief and to the point. It should tell what the position is, where it is and how it will be filled. The documentation for the selection should be done in a signed memorandum (or e-mail if certified) which (a) lists the names of the candidates considered, (b) clearly identifies who is selected, (c) shows the reasons why the candidate was selected and (d) provides a copy of the evaluation documents used. The staff at the HRSC will then ensure that the PPP is clear and will then make the official offer to the successful candidate.

**Question 4:** *If I know that all the conditions for management identification of candidates apply, wouldn't I have less chance of getting a placement from the PPP if I make the selection and prepare the documentation AND THEN SUBMIT THE REQUEST FOR PERSONNEL ACTION TO THE HRO/HRSC?*

**Comment:** NO, this would simply delay getting the action effected. The PPP MUST be checked PRIOR TO taking action to fill the position. In this case the PPP check would have to be "re-constructed" back to the initial date that the manager took action to fill the job (probably a week to two weeks before the selection), and that takes considerable time to do.

12335

From:

To: Human Resources Service Center, Capital (HRSC Capital)

Via: Human Resources Office, Washington (HRO-W)

Subj: MANAGEMENT IDENTIFICATION OF CANDIDATES

Ref: (a) HROWASHDCINST 12335.1F

(b) PPI no. \_\_\_\_\_

Encl: (1) Supporting documentation

1. In accordance with the requirements set forth in reference (a) the following information regarding the criteria used under the “Management Identification of All Candidates” evaluation method to fill the position identified in reference (b) is provided:

Area of Focus: **IDENTIFY AREA OF FOCUS**

Names all of the promotional candidates:

**LIST ALL CANDIDATES IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER**

2. The following evaluation method was used to differentiate between the “best qualified” and “qualified” candidates:

**Example: All promotional candidates were evaluated based on a general overview of their qualifications as they relate to the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA’s) identified for the position. The following KSA’s were used:**

- **Knowledge of budget formulation and execution process;**
- **Ability to use analytical software used in budget analysis;**
- **Knowledge of XXX command and field structure and mission;**
- **Ability to write**

**The evaluation of the KSA’s for each candidate has been documented in the form of a short narrative explaining the**

**difference between candidates determined to be “best qualified” and those determined to be “qualified.” Enclosure (1) contains the narrative.**

**OR**

A summary ranking factor was used alone to evaluate the promotional candidates:

**LIST THE SUMMARY RANKING FACTOR**

The supporting documentation for the use of this factor and the assessment of each candidate with relationship to the factor is attached as enclosure (1).

**OR**

A crediting plan or job element rating guide was used to evaluate the promotional candidates. The crediting plan, scoring sheet and other supporting documentation are attached as enclosure (1).

3. Based upon the above evaluation the following promotional candidates are determined to be best qualified:

**LIST BEST QUALIFIED CANDIDATES IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER**

4. I select \_\_\_\_\_ for the subject vacancy. Please review the information contained in enclosure (1) and upon approval make the offer.

SELECTING OFFICIAL