



Forced Distribution & NSPS Ratings

Forced distribution occurs when managers assign performance ratings based on a pre-determined ratings distribution by percent of the population or number of employees. In forced distribution rating systems, employees are ranked relative to one another, rather than through the evaluation of individual employee job performance assessed against rating criteria. An example of forced distribution is grouping employees into multiple segments, e.g., the top 20 percent, the middle 70 percent, and the bottom 10 percent, and assigning ratings based on those relative groupings.

How can organizations best reinforce the process for rating and rewarding performance? Interim reviews and mock pay pools are excellent opportunities to remind rating officials, higher level reviewers, pay pool panel members, and employees that ratings under NSPS are based on assessment of performance against standard performance indicators. These processes also reinforce that changing performance ratings to fit a pre-determined distribution pattern or to achieve a certain share value is not permitted. In addition, rating officials, higher level reviewers, and pay pool panel members should engage in ongoing dialogue about performance and must properly apply NSPS performance criteria to ensure meaningful performance distinctions among employees.

It is important for higher level reviewers to carefully examine the recommended ratings assigned by rating officials to ensure that rating officials apply criteria consistently and rigorously. When questioning the recommended rating during the pay pool panel process, pay pool managers must ensure that rating officials have an opportunity to justify the recommended ratings and inform the rating official of the rationale for changes to recommended ratings, share assignments or payout distribution. Having this communication is important to ensure all information is appropriately considered and employees are given appropriate feedback on their performance.

What recourse does an employee have if he or she thinks that the assigned rating doesn't reflect actual work performance? Under NSPS, the employee has the right to request a reconsideration of the rating of record or the rating assigned to individual job objectives. The reconsideration request is adjudicated by the pay pool manager with final determinations made by the performance review authorities (PRA). For more information on performance management contact your servicing LMER Specialist. *(Applies to Appropriated Funded Personnel Only)*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**NSPS
Forced
Distribution** 1

Interview Tips 2

**Tips Cont'd
Gatekeeper** 3

**Workers' Comp
The Crone Corner** 4

**-Filling Vacancies
-DD 214 copies
-Probationary
Periods** 5

**NAF INFORMER
Workers' Comp** 6-7

TIPS FOR INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

The selection interview is conducted primarily to impart and elicit information regarding the job, the candidate, and to gain the overall impression of the candidate that you will want before making a final selection decision. There is a great deal of information to be shared in an interview. It is generally best that all candidates referred be provided the opportunity to interview, but the hiring official decides, unless the merit promotion plan states otherwise. Interviews may be conducted over the phone or in a face-to-face meeting. The hiring official should prepare the questions in advance and they should always be job related. It is very important that all interview proceedings be well-documented to protect the hiring official and the candidate.

During preparation, the hiring official should customize questions pertaining to the job requirements and review the resumes and other documents. Potential problems that could occur would stem from lack of preparation, inappropriate questions, interviewer too dominating, questions are inconsistent across the candidates, poor selection criteria for questions, interview bias, using questions that make binding contractual statements, and using prohibited interview questions. An interview process which is as standardized as possible will assure coverage of the same areas for each candidate and will allow each candidate to respond to the same interview experience. You should strive for consistency in areas such as questions asked, length of the interview, physical setting, individuals present and information provided to candidates.

During the interview process the hiring official should put the candidate at ease, build a rapport, and show that the organization cares about people. It is also important to tell the candidate what will be covered in the interview, such as who the interviewers are and the requirements of the position. This includes organization structure, mission requirements, promotion opportunities, exciting projects, overtime, TDY requirements, etc. This is your opportunity to verify the information provided on the resume with the candidate.

There are different types of questions that can be asked during an interview:

- ◆ *Open-ended questions (5 “Ws” – who, what, where, when, and why or how)*
- ◆ *“Tell me about” questions (Allow candidate to describe a previous challenge or situation)*
- ◆ *Closed questions (Use only to verify key facts or points)*
- ◆ *The “non-question” question (Less threatening for some candidates)*
- ◆ *Discuss accomplishments, education, past job experiences*

(Continued on next page)

Interview Tips Cont'd



Hiring officials CANNOT discriminate due to: age, sex, marital status, ethnic origin, religious preference, sexual preference, disabilities.

Remember interview questions should be concerned with the experience, training, skills, etc. Example question: What experience have you had in presenting technical information to large groups?

The answers should provide evidence of whether the candidate possesses the knowledge, skills and/or abilities (KSA) set by the supervisor of the position. During questioning, you could ask about the size of the group addressed, if audience addressed challenged the information being presented, and to what extent the candidate participated in preparing the presentation. This type of question is objective; it does not "lead" the candidate to an answer and serves to find job related information. Less effective questions for this KSA would be: "Do

you have trouble speaking before large groups?" "Can you speak well?"

Do not formulate hypothetical cases and ask the candidate to provide possible solutions.

For example, a typical KSA for supervisory positions is the "ability to delegate work." A good interview question would state: "What experience do you have in delegating work; what was the workload, how many subordinates did you supervise, what situations were encountered?" Do not ask: "What would you do in the following situation: You have 1,000 cartons of widgets to deliver.....your clerk is on leave; how do you get the cartons delivered?" This type of questions is not objective and there are no right answers.

There are also prohibited questions selecting officials need to be aware of such as:

- Federal law states that hiring must be based on bona fide occupational qualifications

- Interviewers and hiring officials CANNOT discriminate due to: age, sex, marital status, ethnic origin, religious preference, sexual preference, disabilities.

At the end of the interview provide an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions. Explain to the candidate that you would like to do reference checks and ask them who you may contact. (It is recommended that you contact at least one former supervisor.) Provide the candidate an approximate date by which a selection will be made. Finally, thank the candidate for his/her time.

GATEKEEPER MOVES TO NEW LOCATION

The Gatekeeper modules that are currently in ART 1.1 have moved to a new Gatekeeper Portlet in CPOL as of 5 February 09. Users will find a notice placed on the ART application directing them to CPOL and the Gatekeeper Portlet. In general, the operation and functions of the Portal Gatekeeper will be the same as they were in ART, but there are some differences. The DCPDS Desk Guide was updated as of 5 February 09 to reflect the new look and changes of the Gatekeeper Portal to assist managers. If users have further questions on use of the tool through the Portal, you may contact your servicing HR Specialist for assistance. *(Applies to Appropriated Funded Actions)*

The Fort Belvoir, CPAC

LMER BRANCH

OWCP SUBJECT OF THE MONTH: PROPHYLACTIC TREATMENT

(Prophylactic treatment is the institution of measures to protect a person from a disease to which he or she has been, or may be, exposed. Also called *preventive treatment*)

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act does not authorize preventive measures such as vaccines and inoculations, and in general, preventive treatment is a responsibility of the employing agency under the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 7901. However, preventive care can be authorized by OWCP for the following: **(1)** Complications of preventive measures which are provided or sponsored by the agency, such as adverse reaction to prophylactic immunization. **(2)** An injury involving actual or probable exposure to a known contaminant, thereby requiring disease-specific measures against infection. Included among such treatments would be tetanus antitoxin or booster toxic injections for puncture wounds; administration of rabies vaccine where a bite from a rabid animal, or one whose status was unknown, is involved; or AZT where exposure to HIV virus has occurred. **(3)** Periodic examination of the uninjured eye may be authorized where injury to the other eye has resulted in loss of vision, so that possible sympathetic involvement of the uninjured eye may be detected at an early stage. The frequency of these examinations should be determined on the basis of the attending physician's recommendations. If sympathetic involvement of the uninjured eye is found, appropriate medical and surgical treatment for this condition will be authorized. **(4)** Conversion of tuberculin reaction from negative to positive. In this situation INH therapy may be authorized. Treatment is limited to the injured employee and cannot be extended to others who may, for example, have been exposed to an infectious agent by the employee. Worker's Compensation POC: Cisy Newman, 703-704-3023 (*Applies to Appropriated Funded Employees Only*)

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUIZ***The Crone Corner*****Question: Why do we discipline employees?**

- (A) Because the LMER Specialist said I could do it
- (B) Because my boss said I had to do it
- (C) To correct behavior and promote the efficiency of the federal service

Choice "A" is actually an answer some supervisors have given their employees believe it or not, but it is **WRONG**. Same with choice "B", it is **WRONG**. It is always recommended that you keep your chain of supervision informed of upcoming disciplinary actions, but you as a supervisor need to come to an independent decision on what action is appropriate to take to correct an employee's behavior. And that leads me to the correct answer, choice "C". We discipline employee's to correct behavior and promote the efficiency of the federal service.

Supervisors also need to be mindful to address disciplinary problems early and to try to resolve them at the lowest level possible. Usually that will entail verbal or written counseling, although formal disciplinary action may be warranted right of the bat in some cases. Employees with conduct issues usually do not self-correct and the problems only get worse with age. Other employees watch how supervisors handle (or do not handle) problem employees, and a supervisor's failure to properly address their difficult employees leads to morale and efficiency problems that adversely affect the mission.

So remember, we discipline employees to correct behavior and to promote the efficiency of the federal service. If you have questions or need assistance in dealing with problem employees, you should contact your servicing Labor-Management/Employee Relations (LMER) Specialist.

(Applies to Appropriated Funded Employees Only)

Does Anybody *Really* Have Time!!

Vacancies, RPAs, Announcements, Applicants, Rating, Referral. A challenging string of events that you hope will lead to appointing the best qualified applicant for your position. It is a fact that the recruitment process takes time from initiation of the RPA to having the employee report for duty. However, once you get the referral

list, what can you do to get the best qualified applicant into your position? Here are some tips that may help expedite the process:

Make timely selections. There is no way around this one. Through the ease of automation, applicants apply on numerous positions with the hope of landing one. Referred candidates will disappear quickly if selections are not made in a timely manner. This is especially important in view of Belvoir's proximity to D.C. where there are many agencies and grades available for applicants to apply. If you want the best candidate, you have to move quickly.

If you plan to interview, reserve some time for the interviews before you get the referral. Contact your HR representative who can provide you an approximate date for receipt of the referral. Project a week or so out from that date to give you time to review the resumes. Schedule interview times on your calendar. Once you have determined whom you want to interview, slot them in your interview times. You may need to make some scheduling changes but this will give you a jumpstart and reserving the time on your calendar early may eliminate other scheduling conflicts.

When time constraints necessitate, consider the use of a panel to screen the applicants down to the top candidates. You can use subordinate supervisors or staff members to do this for you. If you choose this method, panel members must understand the job requirements and be at or above the grade or equivalent level of the position you are filling. Once the list is screened down, you can either make your selection or choose to interview the top candidates.

The time you invest in finalizing your selections quickly may be the most important factor in filling your job with the very best candidate.

(Applies to Appropriated Funded Employees Only)



**NEED
A
COPY OF
YOUR
DD 214?**

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has a website where veterans (or a veteran's family member) can obtain a copy of a DD-214 online for personal or employment purposes. Use this address: <https://vetrecs.archives.gov>

PROBATIONARY PERIODS!



What should managers evaluate during an employee's probationary period?

1. Overall ability to perform current duties. This should include the supervisor's judgment about how well the employee understands, and is able to perform the key duties and responsibilities of the position.
2. The ability to assimilate into the work group/team. While this is subjective, is important to make this assessment during the probationary period to determine whether the employee will be a contributor or will the employee avoid assignments with others.
3. Overall work habits. Is the employee a self motivated performer or one who disappears throughout the workday and requires constant supervision.
4. Conformance to workplace rules and requirements. Employees who break the rules while in a probationary period or likely to continue this non-conformance.

What should a manager do if there are concerns during a probationary period?

If concerns are discovered during this period, managers should contact their LMER Specialist to discuss their options.

(Applies to Appropriated Funded Employees Only)

NON-APPROPRIATED FUNDED (NAF) EMPLOYEES' ARMY NAF WORKERS COMPENSATION PROGRAMS

The NAF Workers Compensation Program (NAF WCP) is not only a benefit for NAF employees injured on the job, but is mandated by Federal Law. This program is overseen by the Army Central Insurance Fund (ACIF) and the Department of Labor. It protects NAF employees from total loss of income due to an on-the-job injury. Employees are covered under the Non-appropriated Fund Instrumentalities (NAFI) Act, which extends the provisions of the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act (LHWCA). Benefits under this program are provided to NAF employees who are employed in the United States (U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the U.S.), and outside the U.S, including volunteers. However, active duty military personnel and Local citizens employed by NAF are not covered under this program.

Contract Claims Services Inc. (CCSI) is the insurance company and processing center for all NAF workers' compensation claims. The NAF WCP covers 100% of reasonable and necessary medical expenses and supplies. Employees who loose time from work due to a work related injury are paid at 66 and 2/3 percent of the employees average weekly wages. There is a 3 day waiting period before benefits are paid, however, if the employee has been unable to work for more than 14 days due to the injury, the first 3 days will be covered. Under the NAFI Act, Death Benefits are paid to the spouse at 50 percent for life unless the spouse remarries, and to dependents at 16 and 2/3 percent (with no more than 66 and 2/3 paid to the family in total). Generally, dependents are covered to age 21, but if the dependent is attending college, they are covered up to age 23. Funeral expenses are also covered under this Act, up to \$3,000.

When an employee is injured on the job, it requires action from both the employee and supervisor to ensure that benefits are calculated and paid accurately, fairly, and in a timely manner. During in-processing, employees are made aware of the Workers Compensation Program and proper procedures to follow, which are located in the NAF Employee Handbook. Here are some key steps for an employee and supervisor to take in case of an injury in the workplace:

1. When an employee is injured on the job, they must notify their supervisor immediately, even if at the moment they feel fine and continue their work.
2. The supervisor will fill out a Form LS-202, which is the report of the accident. It explains what happened, what the injury is, when the injury occurred, and if the employee lost time because of the injury. (Must be submitted to NAF Human Resources Office (NAF HRO) within 10 days of

the injury).

3. If the employee was injured severely enough to warrant medical attention, supervisors must provide Form LS-1 to the employee to take to their choice of doctor upon the initial doctor's visit. This form authorizes medical treatment for the injured employee. The doctor should fill out the reverse side of the form and give it back the employee for submission to the supervisor.



4. Employees in a Regular status (RPT or RFT) who are incapacitated for work for more than 3 days must complete a Benefit Option Form, indicating whether they want to use sick leave or be placed on leave-without-pay (LWOP). If the employee elects to be placed on sick leave, they can buy back their leave (66 2/3 percent) by endorsing the workers compensation checks that are received by the NAF HRO. If the employee elects to be placed on LWOP, the employee will receive workers compensation benefits equal to 66 and 2/3 of their average weekly salary for the time lost. This benefit is tax free.

5. When the employee loses time from work, supervisors must fill out Form LS-210 every pay period the employee is absent from work due to the injury and submit to the NAF HRO. This form reflects employees time lost from work to help CCSI calculate the appropriate benefit amount due to the employee.

6. For any follow up doctors visits, the employee must obtain Form LS-20 from the supervisor to take to their doctor. The doctor will complete the form showing their report of findings during their visits.

7. Supervisors will provide the NAF HRO with all workers compensation related paperwork such as the LS-202, LS-1, LS-210, LS-204, and any medical documentation regarding the employees injury, including medical bills. The NAF HRO will forward this paperwork to CCSI for processing and payment.

8. Supervisors must ensure that all forms are filled out completely. Incomplete forms can result in delays in processing claims. References made in this article are outlined in AR 215-1 and AR 215-3.

For more information concerning the NAF Workers' Compensation Program, please contact Teresa Young at 703-704 3013.