

Classification Appeal Decision

Under section 5346 of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [the appellant]

Position: Maintenance Mechanic
WG-4749-9
Position Number B3885-00133

Organization: U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum
Division of Administration and Finance
Office of the Assistant Museum Director for Administration
Building Management Department
Washington, DC

Decision: Maintenance Mechanic
WG-4749-9
(Appeal denied)

OPM Decision Number: C-4749-09-02

Copy of decision sent to:

[CCs]

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Richard Quasney
Classification Appeals Officer
Washington Oversight Division

July 18, 1997
S)))))))))

Date



U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Washington Oversight Division
Office of Merit Systems Oversight

Introduction

On April 30, 1997 the Washington Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a job grading appeal from [the appellant] , whose job is classified as Maintenance Mechanic, WG-4749-9. However, he believes that the duties and responsibilities of his job warrant upgrading to the WG-10 level. Prior to appealing to OPM,

[The appellant] appealed the classification of his job to his agency, [the department]. In a decision letter to him dated March 20, 1997 the agency sustained the current classification. The appellant works in [the agency]. We have accepted and decided this appeal under section 5346 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C).

This appeal decision is based on a thorough review of all material submitted by the appellant and his agency. In addition, the appellant and his supervisor were interviewed to gain more information about the duties of the job. Both the appellant and his supervisor have certified to the accuracy of his official position description (number B3885-00133), although the appellant submitted additional duties that he believed were not in his position description. In deciding this appeal, we have made our own independent decision based on comparing his duties and responsibilities to current OPM job grading standards and guidelines as required by 5 U.S.C. 5346.

This is the final administrative decision of the Government. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions specified in section 532.705 (f) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

Job Information

The appellant performs a variety of duties involved in the upkeep of building, grounds, related structures, fixtures and utilities at the [the department]. His major duties involve several trades with typical work assignments as follows:

1. Carpentry - The work involves construction, alteration, repair or modification of items and structures (such as wood wall framework, walls, floor covering, tile, drop ceilings, dry wall, doors, door frames, finished paneling, windows, furniture, interior and exterior trim) where accuracy, spacing and fit are essential to structural soundness and appearance. The appellant fabricates or assembles furniture and moldings, and installs items that may be closely joined to other assemblies to strengthen and/or support, or to provide air and weatherproof assemblies. This requires close tolerances, precise fit and finished appearances. He may be assigned more difficult tasks such as cutting bevels, rabbets, dados, grooves and miter joints. He does milling, laminating, veneering, bending, sanding, fine surfacing and finishing of materials and projects. The appellant uses a variety of carpentry tools including hammers, saws, chisels, routers, joiners, band and jig saws, latches, drill presses, disc and belt sanders etc..

Locksmithing- The appellant installs new locks, maintains and repairs locks, latches, mounting brackets, handles, hardware, and panic hardware on Museum and annex doors, which are connected to a security and surveillance system. He installs and adjusts surface and floor mounted door closures. Makes adjustments to pneumatic and hydraulic door operators. He picks locks when keys are lost and repairs door lock, padlocks, desk locks, file locks, etc... and installs locks on doors, desks and other office equipment. He also determines if locks have been tampered with.

Plumbing - The incumbent's plumbing work includes installing, replacing and repairing faucets, sinks, toilets, urinals, flushometer valves, clogged drains, etc... This work includes installing, and adjusting plumbing fixtures and fire sprinkler equipment and performing maintenance to repair and adjust utility and water systems.

Painting - The appellant prepares and coats interior and exterior metal, wood and masonry surfaces. This includes removing old finishes, scraping, and sandpapering. He plasters or spackles small holes and cracks. The appellant mixes and prepares paints, stains and other products.

Electrical - The appellant removes and replaces fixtures and controls. Installs outlets, relays, and switches and tests circuits to see if they are complete after making repairs or installations. He tightens connections, wraps exposed wires with insulating tape and soldering wires leading to contact points and is able to measure, cut and bend wire and conduit to specified lengths and angles. The appellant uses screw drivers, wiring cutters, wire strippers, wire connectors, and test meters.

The incumbent also provides support in the maintenance of the utility systems within the [the department]. Such duties may include but are not limited to: changing oil and filters on 500 ton chillers; cleaning rods and condenser tubes; and replacing seals and gaskets on condenser water pumps. However, these duties are not grade controlling since they do not occupy at least 25 percent of the incumbent's time over a reasonable work cycle. Therefore, they will not be addressed further.

Occupational series, title, and appropriate standards

The agency has classified this position in the Maintenance Mechanic Series, WG-4749, and the appellant does not disagree. We concur with the agency's determination.

As stated in the job grading standard for the Maintenance Mechanic Series, WG-4749, dated May 1974, jobs in this series involve work in the maintenance and repair of grounds, exterior structures, buildings, and related fixture and utilities, requiring the use of a variety of trade practices associated with occupations such as carpentry, plumbing, electrical, painting and other related trades. In order to be classified in the WG-4749 series, two main elements must be met: 1) the work requires the application of more than one trade practice, and 2) the highest level of work is performed in at least two trades involved. The appellant's job meets both of these criteria. His work involves maintenance and repair of structures and buildings at the installation, requiring the application of five distinct trades. In addition, as discussed later in this evaluation, the highest level of work is performed in two of the trades. The job is properly placed in the WG-4749 occupation and titled Maintenance Mechanic. The appellant's job is mixed since he performs work in five occupations as listed below:

1. The appellant performs carpentry work in altering, maintaining and repairing buildings and structures at the museum. Such work is covered and evaluated by application of the job grading standard for Carpenter, WG-4607, dated April 1991.
2. The appellant repairs, modifies, tests and installs locking devices on doors, desks, files, compartments, etc... Such work is covered and evaluated by application of the job grading standard for Locksmith, WG-4804, dated September 1996.
3. The appellant installs, repairs and adjusts plumbing fixtures and fire sprinkler equipment within the museum. This includes removing, cleaning, replacing, packing and sealing dirty traps, sections of dirty title pipes, and leaky drains. Such work is covered and evaluated by application of the job grading standard for Plumber, WG-4206, dated March 1969.
4. The appellant applies coating materials (for example, paint, varnish, and lacquer) on wood, metal, glass and other surfaces. This coating work is done with brushes, rollers, sprayers and is performed inside and outside of buildings. Such work is covered and evaluated by application of the job grading standard for Painter, WG-4102, dated November 1969.
5. The appellant's electrical duties include making repairs that can be accomplished by removing, replacing, and splicing defective wiring, controls and fixtures. This may include buried out switches, loose connections and fittings, and damaged light fixtures. Such work is covered and evaluated by application of the job grading standard for Electrician, WG-2805, dated June 1989.

Grade level evaluation

The grade level of mixed jobs, like the appellant's, are determined by identifying the duties that 1) involve the highest skill and qualification requirements of the job, and 2) are a regular and recurring part of the job. To find out which work

requires the highest skill and qualification requirements, we must compare each type of work performed by the appellant to the appropriate job grading standard (JGS).

Each JGS evaluates the work through four factors: Skill and Knowledge, Responsibility, Physical Effort, and Working Conditions.

Comparison to the JGS for Carpenter, WG-4607

Skill and Knowledge

This factor compares favorably to the WG-9 level as described in the JGS for Carpenter. Similar to that level the appellant has a thorough knowledge of wood and wood substitute materials, and construction techniques. Products the appellant creates include: wood framework, doors, door frames, desktops, and interior and exterior trim. He installs and repairs walls, floor covering, tiles, drop ceilings, dry wall etc.. The appellant is skilled in the set up and operations of general and precision carpentry and woodworking equipment (e.g., miters, rabbets, dados, routes, band saws, drill presses, joiners, shavers, table saws), to produce finished products with precise fits, accurate dimensions, and acceptable appearances. The appellant is able to interpret instructions and sketches, blueprints and building codes. He independently interprets for proper grade, size and type of lumber needed for a job, and is skilled in performing routine maintenance on woodworking equipment.

The appellant's job exceeds the WG-7 level. At the WG-7 level, carpentry workers are not required to interpret complex instructions, sketches, blueprints and building codes. They are only required to work with basic blue prints.

Responsibility

The appellant's level of responsibility is similar to that described for this factor at the WG-9 level. Like WG-9 carpenters, he lays out his work, determines what materials and equipment are needed, plans, and accomplishes a wide range of work sequences on basic to complex projects, with only minimal supervision or review of work in progress. He uses initiative to determine what repairs to make, selects the type and grade of material, and chooses the appropriate tools for the job. He accomplishes all phases of work independently, including jobs requiring close tolerance, precise fit, and a finished appearance. Work is reviewed by the supervisor primarily for compliance with building codes, objectives, timeliness and quality of workmanship.

At the WG-7 level, carpentry workers work under the overall guidance of the supervisor and receives detailed and easily understood instructions for assignments. The appellant exceeds this level, in that he lays out his own work, determines what materials and equipment are needed, and plans how he is going to accomplish his assigned duties.

Physical Effort

The JGS describes this factor the same for both grade levels, WG-7 and WG-9. The appellant's work requires prolonged standing, bending, reaching, lifting and other strenuous physical efforts. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of the position.

Working Conditions

At both the WG-7 and WG-9 levels, the work is performed both indoors and outdoors. Employees are subject to noise, glue fumes, and other hazards, such as cuts, abrasions, and other injuries from power tools and materials. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of the position.

The factors, Skill and Knowledge, and Responsibility both meet the WG-9 level. Factors Physical Effort and Working Conditions have no grade level impact, therefore, the appellant's carpentry duties are evaluated at the WG-9 level.

Comparison to the JGS for Locksmith, WG-4804

Skill and Knowledge

The appellant's job compares to the WG-8 level. He installs, maintains, and repairs door assemblies and operating equipment, which include hardware locks, interior latches, handles, mountings, keepers, mounting brackets and panic bars. The appellant also installs and adjusts surface and floor mounted door closures, makes adjustments to pneumatic

and hydraulic operating systems and performs minor repairs and installation of locks on doors, desks, and other building and office equipment. Many of the locks and equipment the appellant installs and repairs are connected with the Museum and the Annex' security system. The appellant applies sound judgement when selecting, and reworking parts. He is responsible for determining if locking devices have been tampered with by inspecting them for tool marks, abrasions, and misaligned parts.

The appellant exceeds the WG-7 level. At the WG-7 level, the locksmith applies a knowledge of the internal structure and operating characteristics to repair and maintain a variety of standard mechanical locking device. If needed, the locksmith refers problems to a higher level locksmith or supervisor. The appellant exceeds the WG-7 level. He is able to adjust, troubleshoot, repair and install commercially manufactured locks that connect to the security system at the Holocaust Museum. He also receives no technical supervision in performing his required duties.

The appellant does not fully meet the WG-9 level in that he is not responsible for the locking mechanisms located within the locks connected to the security system within the Holocaust Museum. When problems occur with the security system, a locksmith (contractor) is called to address the problem. The appellant also has available guidelines, manufacturer drawings, diagrams and technical manuals to be used in the installations process, where as at the WG-9 level these resources are not always available. The locksmith may have to develop drawings or diagrams.

Responsibility

Like the WG-8 level, the appellant receives assignments orally or in the form of work orders. He is responsible for making independent judgements and determining the work sequence, selection and use of tools. Assignments are reviewed for effectiveness of meeting time frames and job requirements. The WG-8 level is assigned.

The WG-9 level is not met. The appellant is not required to solve problems which require modified trade practices and in reworking locking devices for security needs. It is true that the appellant performs many tasks connected to the security system, however, he does not deal with the locking mechanisms. Therefore, the intent of this level is not met.

The WG-7 level is exceeded. At the WG-7 level, the locksmith refers problems to higher graded workers or supervisors and completed work is reviewed by the user for accomplishing satisfactory results and by the supervisor to ensure compliance to standard trade practices. The appellant exceeds this level in that he independently solves problems and his completed work is not reviewed for compliance to standards.

Physical Effort

At the WG-7 level, the work requires frequent standing, bending, stopping, kneeling, working in awkward positions and unassisted lifting up to 15 pounds. The appellant is required to lift security containers, which can weigh up to 50 pounds, therefore, this level is exceeded.

At the WG-8 and WG-9 levels, the work requires frequent standing, bending, stopping, kneeling, working in awkward positions and lifting up to 50 pounds. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of this position.

Working Conditions

At the WG-7 level, the work is usually performed indoors and in areas that are well lighted, heated and ventilated. Locksmith's at the WG-7 level are exposed to the possibility of cuts, scrapes, and bruises. Since the appellant also uses torches, he can also obtain burns therefore, this factor is exceeded.

At both the WG-8 and WG-9 levels, the work is usually performed indoors in areas that are well lighted, heated and ventilated. The appellant is exposed to the possibility of cuts, scrapes, burns and bruises. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of the position.

The factors, Skill and Knowledge, and Responsibility both meet the WG-8 level. Factors Physical Effort and Working Conditions have no grade level impact, therefore, the appellant's locksmithing duties are evaluated at the WG-8 level.

Comparison to the JGS for Plumbing, WG-4206

Skill and Knowledge: The appellant's job compares to the WG-9 level for this factor. At the WG-9 level, the appellant's plumbing work includes replacing and repairing faucets, sinks, toilets, urinals, flushometer valves, fresh water lines, sewer lines, etc... He maintains, repairs, and replaces fire sprinkler equipment. He estimates material requirements, plans installation, and accomplishes work with little or no supervision. This is in line with the WG-9 level where the plumber must have a knowledge of how various supply, disposal, and utility systems and equipment, such as water and gas systems, fire sprinkler equipment and water closets, are installed and operated. The WG-9 plumber must have the ability to plan and layout the installation and modification of various systems and equipment. To accomplish the above duties the appellant uses power and hand tools and equipment such as plumb bobs, mercury gauges, dividers, and pumps.

At the WG-7 level, the plumber receives oral instructions and sketches that provide specific information on the work to be performed. The work involves making repairs that can be accomplished by removing, cleaning, replacing, packing and sealing defective parts of utility, supply and disposal systems. As described above, the appellant's work exceeds this level.

Responsibility

The appellant's supervisor provides assignments or instructions orally or in writing. The instructions are general in nature, and the appellant is responsible for determining the necessary tools, equipment, and supplies. The appellant uses blue prints and building plans to complete assignments. He locates and marks spots for routing openings, places and connects water fixtures to systems, and assembles, hangs and lays assemblies into position. He tests piping after competing repairs, alterations or additions. The appellant's supervisor reviews the work to ensure it meets acceptable trade standards. This matches the WG-9 level where the supervisor assigns work orally and through work orders. The WG-9 plumber also plans and lays out the systems; he determines parts; and completes work with little or no check.

At the WG-7 level, the plumbing worker installs equipment, such as water heaters and disposal units and replaces sections of pipe and tile by following exactly previously used routes, openings, hangers, and levels and reconnecting equipment units to already-installed systems. As mentioned above, the appellant locates and marks spots for routing openings, places and connects water fixtures to systems, and assembles, hangs and lays assemblies into position. WG-9 level is awarded.

Physical Efforts

At the WG-7 and 9 levels, the plumbing worker makes repairs and installations from ladders, scaffolding, platforms, and other hard-to-reach places. It requires the worker to stand, stoop, bend, kneel, climb, and work in tiring and uncomfortable positions. Lifting and carrying tools, equipment, and parts weighing up to 40 pounds to common. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of this position.

Working Conditions

At both the WG-7 and WG-9 levels, the work is performed both indoors and outdoors. Employees work areas are noisy, dirty, and greasy. The plumber worker can be exposed to the possibility of injury from falling, electrical shock, and burns. They are also exposed to the possibility of broken bones, however, more commonly he is exposed to the possibility of scrapes, burns and infections. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of the position.

The factors, Skill and Knowledge, and Responsibility both meet the WG-9 level. Factors Physical Effort and Working Conditions have no grade level impact, therefore, the appellant's plumbing duties are evaluated at the WG-9 level.

Comparison to the JGS for Electrician, WG-2805

Skill and Knowledge

The appellant's job compares favorably to the WG-8 level for this factor. Like that level, he is able to read and follow wiring diagrams. The appellant removes and replaces fixtures and controls, install outlets, relays, and switches and tests circuits to see if they are complete after making repairs or installations. He tightens connections, wraps exposed wires with insulating tape and soldering wires leads to contact points and is able to measure, cut and bend wire and conduit to

specified lengths and angles. The appellant uses screw drivers, wiring cutters, wire strippers, wire connectors, and test meters. The hand tools used are also described at the WG-8 level.

The appellant's job does not meet the WG-10 level for this factor. Unlike the WG-10 level, the appellant is not required to install and repair a variety of complete electrical systems. The appellant work on limited parts of the system as mentioned above.

Responsibility

The appellant's job meets the WG-8 level for this factor. At this level, the appellant is responsible for independently performing routine repair and maintenance duties under general supervision. The supervisor plans, lays out, and assigns work orally and through work orders and in wiring diagrams. He selects tools, decided on methods and techniques to use and carries out assignment independently. Wiring diagrams and schematic drawings are followed in completing assignments such as installing and/or replacing switches.

At the WG-10 level, electrical workers are responsible for planning, and laying out the routing, placement and arrangement of industrial or similar complex systems, circuits, controls and equipment. They must determine installations and repairs which are to used in a variety of complete electrical systems. This exceeds what is expected from the appellant.

Physical Efforts

At the WG-8 and 10 levels, the electrician makes installations from ladders, scaffolding, platforms, and other hard-to-reach places. It requires the worker to stand, stoop, bend, kneel, climb, and work in tiring and uncomfortable positions. Lifting and carrying tools, equipment, and parts weighing up to 40 pounds is common. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of this position.

Working Conditions

At both the WG-8 and WG-10 levels, the work is performed both indoors and outdoors. Employees work areas are noisy, dirty, dusty and greasy. Electricians can be exposed to the possibility of injury from falling, electrical shock, and burns. They are also exposed to the possibility of cuts and bruises. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of the position.

The factors, Skill and Knowledge, and Responsibility both meet the WG-8 level. Factors Physical Effort and Working Conditions have no grade level impact, therefore, the appellant's electrical duties are evaluated at the WG-8 level.

Comparison to the JGS for Painting, WG-4102

Skill and Knowledge

The appellant prepares and coats interior and exterior surfaces. He mixes and prepares paints, stains and other products. This meets the WG-7 level where the painting worker uses standard surface preparation and coating techniques and methods.

The appellant does not meet the WG-9 level where the coating work is accomplished by any of the accepted methods of the trade including specials finishing techniques such as marbling and graining. The appellant's work is most like the WG-7 as far as preparing surfaces for coating and applying paint coats.

Responsibility

Like the WG-7 painting worker, the appellant receives work schedules and instructions from his supervisor. The appellant is responsible for selecting tools and deciding on the standard techniques to be used.

The appellant does not meet the WG-9 level where the painter has greater responsibility for determining methods, techniques, materials, and devices suited for obtaining smooth-textured and decorative surfaces.

Physical Efforts

At the WG-7 and 9 levels, the appellant prepares and coats surfaces from ladders, scaffolding, platforms, and other hard-to-reach places. It requires him to stand, stoop, bend, kneel, climb, and work in tiring and uncomfortable positions. Lifting and carrying tools, equipment, and parts weighing up to 10 pounds is common. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of this position.

Working Conditions

At both the WG-7 and WG-9 levels, the work is performed both indoors and outdoors. Painter's work areas usually contain dirt, dust and fumes. Painter workers are exposed to the possibility of cuts and bruises. Since this factor is the same at both grade levels, it does not impact on the grading of the position.

The factors, Skill and Knowledge, and Responsibility both meet the WG-7 level. Factors Physical Effort and Working Conditions have no grade level impact, therefore, the appellant's painting duties are evaluated at the WG-7 level.

Grade Determination

The appellant's work is evaluated as follows:

Carpenter Occupation 4607	WG-9
Locksmith Occupation 4804	WG-8
Plumbing Occupation 4206	WG-9
Painting Occupation 4102	WG-7
Electrician Occupation 2805	WG-8

The highest level work performed that is regular and recurring is the WG-9 level work; therefore, the final grade is WG-9.

Decision

The appellant's job is properly classified as Maintenance Mechanic, WG-4749-9.