



United States Office of Personnel Management

Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions
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Standard: [Secretary, GS-0318](#) (TS-34; 1/79)
Factor: I--Knowledge required by the position
Issue: Distinguishing between Work Situation A and Work Situation B

Identification of the Classification Issue

A Secretary in a major Department of Defense command requested a position classification review by the Office of Personnel Management. The employee was seeking a higher grade. Her immediate supervisor was a military officer who had the responsibility of managing a personal service program for the command. The supervisor served in a staff capacity where the program was carried out at 21 military bases, 22 support sites, 6 national guard units, and 7 reserve units.

The immediate organization of the program office consisted of the supervisor's office and four subordinate divisions, each staffed with 2-3 military officers responsible for segments of the total program.

In her request to the Office of Personnel Management, the secretary argued that her position fully met the characteristics of Work Situation B as described under Factor I.

Resolution

The Office of Personnel Management found that Work Situation A was most appropriate for this environment. In its evaluation, the Office of Personnel Management noted that the subelement "Work Situation" is designed to measure the complexity of the organization served, i.e., the immediate office of the supervisor and any subordinate offices. The Office of Personnel Management expanded on the terms "immediate office of the supervisor and subordinate offices" as being those units under the direct line authority of the supervisor. Organizations which receive staff supervision cannot be considered as subordinate offices under this subelement.

Although the supervisor's immediate organization did have four subordinate divisions, the Office of Personnel Management still found that Work Situation A was proper since--

Work Situation B involves a segmented organization where each group differs in such aspects as subject matter, functions, relationships with other organizations and administrative requirements. There must be a system of formal internal procedures and administrative controls, and a formal production or progress reporting system which requires continuous attention on the part of the secretary. Although the organization is segmented, there is no evidence that the formality typical of Work Situation B is present or required.

Therefore, in evaluating the subelement it is important that the classifier go beyond the organizational structure, and, in fact, examine the nature and degree of interaction and administrative controls among the subordinate units. It is this lack of interaction, procedures and controls which precluded an evaluation as Work Situation B.