

STATEMENT OF  
JOHN U. SEPÚLVEDA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT,  
RESTRUCTURING AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
UNITED STATES SENATE

on

TRAINING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES TO BE THEIR BEST

May 18, 2000

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE:

THANK YOU FOR INVITING US TO TESTIFY TODAY. WE APPRECIATE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO ASSESS AND ENHANCE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO TRAINING ITS EMPLOYEES.

WITH YOUR PERMISSION, MR. CHAIRMAN, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE SOME COMMENTS ABOUT FEDERAL EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING IN GENERAL, AND ABOUT EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT IN PARTICULAR, BEFORE I TURN TO THE SPECIFIC ISSUES YOU ASKED US TO ADDRESS.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

FIRST, THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (OPM) SHARES YOUR FIRM BELIEF THAT FEDERAL EMPLOYEES MUST HAVE THE TRAINING AND EDUCATION THEY NEED TO DO THEIR JOBS AND MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE RAPIDLY CHANGING WORKPLACE. IN FACT, ONE OF THE MERIT SYSTEM PRINCIPLES THAT OPM IS DEDICATED TO ENSURING THROUGHOUT GOVERNMENT STATES THAT EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE PROVIDED EFFECTIVE EDUCATION AND TRAINING WHEN IT WOULD RESULT IN BETTER INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT YOU ARE CONCERNED THAT FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ARE NOT GETTING THE TRAINING AND EDUCATION THEY NEED TO MAXIMIZE THEIR TALENTS AND TO REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. LET ME ASSURE YOU THAT WE ARE "ON THE SAME PAGE." AT OPM, WE ARE WORKING WITH THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB), OTHER AGENCIES, AND THE CONGRESS TO BUILD A WORLD CLASS WORKFORCE THAT CAN COMPETE WITH THE BEST THAT INDUSTRY HAS TO OFFER. THE GOVERNMENT'S HUMAN RESOURCES - OUR PEOPLE - ARE OUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET AND WE MUST NURTURE THEIR POTENTIAL AND INVEST IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT.

STUDIES DONE BY THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SHOW THAT SUCCESSFUL CORPORATIONS CONTINUALLY INVEST IN THEIR

PEOPLE. RESEARCH OF PRIVATE SECTOR PRACTICES SHOWS THAT LEADING EDGE COMPANIES VIEW ENHANCING EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE AND INVESTMENTS IN WORKFORCE TRAINING AS GOOD BUSINESS PRACTICES THAT POSITIVELY AFFECT THEIR BOTTOM LINES. MOTOROLA, FOR EXAMPLE, CALCULATES THAT EVERY DOLLAR IT SPENDS ON TRAINING TRANSLATES INTO THIRTY DOLLARS IN PRODUCTIVITY GAINS.

LIKE THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE GOVERNMENT MUST CONSIDER EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AN INVESTMENT THAT HELPS US ATTRACT, DEVELOP, AND RETAIN THE TALENTED PEOPLE WE NEED TO ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSIONS. IT HAS BEEN SAID "IN A KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY, THE NEW COIN OF THE REALM IS LEARNING." IF THIS IS TRUE, AND WE BELIEVE IT IS, THEN AGENCY INVESTMENTS IN WORKFORCE KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING WILL PAY HUGE DIVIDENDS.

RECOGNIZING THIS, IN JANUARY 1999, PRESIDENT CLINTON ISSUED EXECUTIVE ORDER 13111 ON USING TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES. OUR DIRECTOR, JANICE LACHANCE, IS THE CHAIR OF THE TASK FORCE IMPLEMENTING THAT ORDER. I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN FEDERAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION IS INCREASING. WE EXPECT THAT INCREASE TO BE ACCELERATED AS A RESULT OF THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE.

SPURRED BY THE BELIEF THAT MOST FEDERAL EMPLOYEES WILL NEED

SPECIALIZED TRAINING TO HANDLE THE CHALLENGES OF THE NEXT DECADE, TASK FORCE MEMBERS HAVE WORKED HARD IDENTIFYING ISSUES AND EVALUATING POSSIBLE OPTIONS THAT WILL PROVIDE BETTER AND MORE ACCESSIBLE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO EVERY FEDERAL EMPLOYEE THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY. OPM HAS BEEN LEADING THE TASK FORCE IN THIS EFFORT. I WILL TALK MORE ABOUT THE GROUNDBREAKING WORK OF THE TASK FORCE LATER IN MY TESTIMONY.

OPM HAS ALSO BEEN WORKING HARD TO ANTICIPATE THE SPECIFIC NATURE OF WORK, AND THE SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES NEEDED FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY. WE ARE COLLABORATING WITH THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS COUNCIL, THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICERS COUNCIL, THE ACQUISITION COMMUNITY, AND OTHERS TO HELP THEM REDEFINE THE COMPETENCIES NEEDED FOR THEIR PROFESSIONS TO REMAIN EFFECTIVE AND CURRENT IN THIS FAST-PACED GLOBAL ECONOMY. WE ARE ALSO HELPING THEM TO IDENTIFY INNOVATIVE WAYS OF OBTAINING THESE NEW SKILLS.

GOVERNMENT HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING SYSTEMS THAT WERE DESIGNED FOR THE STABLE BUREAUCRACIES OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY ARE NOT KEEPING PACE WITH THE LEARNING NEEDS OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY WORKFORCE. ONE OF OUR MAJOR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES IS TO LEAD THE TRANSFORMATION OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE FEDERAL

GOVERNMENT TO FOCUS ON PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT AND RESULTS WHICH SUPPORT AGENCY MISSIONS AND GOALS. FIRST, AND FOREMOST, AS YOU POINTED OUT, WE MUST ENSURE THAT FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HAVE THE TRAINING TO MAXIMIZE THEIR TALENTS AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

### **EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT**

OPM HAS TWO PRINCIPAL ROLES WITH RESPECT TO THE TRAINING OF THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE. THE FIRST IS TO SET THE GOVERNMENTWIDE TRAINING POLICIES THAT FEDERAL AGENCIES USE TO ADMINISTER THEIR INTERNAL TRAINING PROGRAMS. THE SECOND IS TO PROVIDE EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGERIAL TRAINING FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S LEADERS WHO DIRECT THE WORK OF OUR MORE THAN 1.8 MILLION EMPLOYEES. OPM CONTINUALLY SEEKS WAYS TO IMPROVE THE SKILLS OF GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVES. IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS, WE FOUND THAT CONTINUAL LEARNING FOR CURRENT EXECUTIVES AND DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES FOR FUTURE EXECUTIVES ARE CRITICAL FOR DELIVERING AGENCY RESULTS EXPECTED BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. WE VIEW CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT NOT AS AN "ADD-ON" FOR A SUCCESSFUL EXECUTIVE, BUT WHAT YOU DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL.

TO HELP PRODUCE THE BEST EXECUTIVE CORPS, OPM HAS KEPT AGENCIES

FOCUSED ON DEVELOPING WELL-ROUNDED LEADERS WHO EXCEL IN OUR EXECUTIVE CORE QUALIFICATIONS. THESE QUALIFICATIONS, OR ECQ'S, ARE BASED ON OPM RESEARCH ON LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES AND ARE CALLED "RESULTS DRIVEN," "LEADING CHANGE," "LEADING PEOPLE," "BUSINESS ACUMEN," AND "BUILDING COALITIONS/COMMUNICATION." THEY ARE USED IN THE SELECTION PROCESS AND TO IDENTIFY DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS IN FORMAL OPM-APPROVED CANDIDATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF SERVICE OF A NEWLY-APPOINTED SES MEMBER. OUR RECENT SURVEY OF SES MEMBERS CONFIRMED THAT THE ECQ'S ARE NOT ONLY VERY IMPORTANT NOW, BUT ARE EXPECTED TO BE MORE IMPORTANT IN THE FUTURE.

FOR OUR CURRENT EXECUTIVES, WE CONDUCT BRIEFINGS FOR NEW SES AND SCHEDULE C MEMBERS AND SYMPOSIUMS ON CURRENT LEADERSHIP TOPICS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO MEET OUR STATUTORY MANDATE TO APPROVE AND MONITOR FORMAL AGENCY CANDIDATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, AND WE ARE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE THESE PROGRAMS AND TO ASSIST ANY AGENCY THAT DOES NOT HAVE A PROGRAM IN STARTING ONE. TODAY, THERE ARE SIXTEEN FORMAL PLANS IN PLACE, AND WE ARE ADVISING A NUMBER OF AGENCIES THAT HAVE PROGRAMS IN THE WORKS. WE LOOK AT THESE PLANS AS A PIECE OF A SUCCESSFUL SUCCESSION PLANNING PROGRAM. WHEN OPM PRIVATIZED MOST OF ITS TRAINING OPERATIONS, WE

PURPOSEFULLY HELD ON TO EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT. THE BEST WAY TO INFLUENCE TRAINING POLICY GOVERNMENTWIDE IS TO MODEL THE BEST EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT OURSELVES, SO WE FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP AT THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE INSTITUTE (FEI) IN CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA AND OUR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT CENTERS IN SHEPHERDSTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA AND AURORA, COLORADO. IN ADDITION, CUSTOMERS ARE INCREASINGLY USING OUR RECENTLY CREATED CENTER FOR EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP AT FEI AS A WAY TO BRING CUSTOMIZED LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT TO THE AGENCIES.

WHAT DO WE HAVE IN STORE IN THE NEAR FUTURE FOR EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT? WE WANT TO FOSTER MORE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES WHERE EXECUTIVES MEET AND INTERACT WITH OTHER EXECUTIVES. WE WILL BE OFFERING MORE LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUMS AND OTHER FORUMS FOR EXCHANGING IDEAS AND NETWORKING. IN RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR A CENTRALIZED INFORMATION DATABASE OF EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, WE ARE PARTNERING WITH AGENCIES TO PROVIDE AN ELECTRONIC CLEARINGHOUSE FOR SUCH OPPORTUNITIES.

TRADITIONALLY, EXPERIENCE IS VIEWED AS THE BEST TEACHER. WE BELIEVE THAT EXECUTIVES WITH BROADER VIEWPOINTS AND EXPERIENCES BRING MORE TO THE TABLE THAN THOSE WHO HAVE WORKED IN ONE ORGANIZATION IN A SINGLE CAREER PATH, OR BEEN “STOVEPIPED, AS IT IS SOMETIMES TERMED.” IN MARCH OF THIS YEAR, WE RELEASED THE RESULTS OF OUR

SURVEY OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE. ALMOST HALF OF THE SES MEMBERS RESPONDING TO OUR SURVEY BELIEVE MOBILITY IMPROVES JOB PERFORMANCE. WE WANT TO INCREASE THIS NUMBER AND CHANGE THE WAY EXECUTIVES VIEW MOBILITY TO FOCUS AWAY FROM GEOGRAPHIC MOVES AND CONCENTRATE MORE ON BROADENING THEIR EXPERIENCE.

TO ASSIST IN THIS, WE ARE DEVELOPING AN INTERNET FORUM TO FACILITATE VOLUNTARY MOBILITY BY LINKING INTERESTED EXECUTIVES WITH AGENCY OPPORTUNITIES. WE ARE CONSIDERING A GOVERNMENTWIDE AUTHORITY FOR PRIVATE SECTOR EXCHANGES TO GIVE SES MEMBERS EXPOSURE TO THE BEST PRACTICES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND TO ENRICH AGENCY LEADERSHIP WITH PRIVATE SECTOR EXPERTISE.

NOW LET ME TURN TO THE ISSUES YOU SPECIFICALLY ASKED US TO ADDRESS, NAMELY, THE GOVERNMENT'S INVESTMENT IN TRAINING, THE OPM ROLE IN SETTING POLICIES, AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET IN DEVELOPING THOSE POLICIES.

### **STRATEGICALLY PLANNING FEDERAL TRAINING RESOURCES**

OPM RECOGNIZES THAT CONTINUOUS INVESTMENT IN LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IS CRITICAL FOR IMPROVED GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE. EACH DAY BRINGS FRESH EXAMPLES OF HOW A BETTER-TRAINED WORKFORCE



CORRELATES WITH REDUCED COSTS, IMPROVED SERVICE, AND INCREASED CUSTOMER AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION. UP-TO-DATE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES ARE CRITICAL FOR INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEE SUCCESS.

WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT MANY FEDERAL AGENCIES NEED TO DO A BETTER JOB OF ALIGNING THEIR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES WITH THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF THE ORGANIZATION. RECENT STUDIES CONDUCTED BY OUR OFFICE OF MERIT SYSTEMS OVERSIGHT AND EFFECTIVENESS, AND THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE FOUND THAT MANY AGENCIES ARE STILL STRUGGLING WITH INTEGRATING HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES INTO AGENCY STRATEGIC PLANS. HAVING RECOGNIZED THIS PROBLEM, THE PRESIDENT, IN HIS FY 2001 BUDGET, ADDED A NEW PRIORITY MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE WHICH CHARGES OPM WITH HELPING AGENCIES TO “ALIGN FEDERAL HUMAN RESOURCES TO SUPPORT AGENCY GOALS.”

THE PRESIDENT PROVIDED PIVOTAL DIRECTION TO GOVERNMENT LEADERS ABOUT WORKFORCE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN JANUARY 1999, THROUGH EXECUTIVE ORDER 13111, USING TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

THE ORDER HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR EVERY AGENCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN TO

IDENTIFY TRAINING AND EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF ACHIEVING AGENCY CORPORATE GOALS. IT FURTHER CALLS ON AGENCIES TO INCLUDE A SET OF GOALS AND ALIGNED PERFORMANCE MEASURES TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AS PART OF THEIR ANNUAL BUDGET SUBMISSION. AGENCIES ARE TO IDENTIFY THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS IN THEIR ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLANS. THIS PLANNING PROCESS IS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN INTEGRATING AND LINKING LEARNING TO THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES.

THE TASK FORCE IS WORKING ON A FINAL REPORT WHICH MAY INCLUDE SUCH OPTIONS AS ESTABLISHING A TRAINING TECHNOLOGY STEERING COMMITTEE AND A TRAINING TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE CENTER WHICH WILL SERVE AS A ONE-STOP SHOP FOR PROVIDING INFORMATION AND PROMOTING LEARNING TECHNOLOGY. THIS INITIATIVE WILL HELP TO GALVANIZE EFFORTS WITHIN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO TRANSFORM THE FEDERAL WORKPLACE.

WE BELIEVE THAT THE WORK OF THE TRAINING TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE PROVIDED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR OPM TO HELP AGENCIES FOCUS MORE ON TRAINING IN THEIR STRATEGIC PLANS. WE HAVE ASKED THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, TO ASSIST US IN THIS IMPORTANT ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVE BY INSTITUTIONALIZING THE NEED FOR INTEGRATED TRAINING GOALS AND MEASURES AS PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF AN

AGENCY'S ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN. SPECIFICALLY, WE HAVE ASKED THAT THIS REQUIREMENT BE INCLUDED IN THE GUIDANCE FOR PREPARATION OF FY 2002 BUDGETS. WE HAVE WORKED WITH OMB STAFF TO DEVELOP LANGUAGE TO BE INCLUDED IN CIRCULAR A-11 GUIDANCE.

THIS SPRING, OPM WILL ALSO PROVIDE AGENCIES ASSISTANCE WHEN WE PUBLISH A GUIDE TO STRATEGICALLY PLANNING TRAINING AND MEASURING RESULTS, WHICH WILL SERVE AS A VALUABLE REFERENCE FOR AGENCIES TO LINK TRAINING STRATEGIES AND RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS WITH THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF AGENCY GOALS.

#### **INVESTMENTS IN LEARNING TECHNOLOGY**

TECHNOLOGY IS REVOLUTIONIZING THE WAY WE LEARN AND MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE FEDERAL WORKPLACE. MANY FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE USING LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES IN INNOVATIVE WAYS ALREADY. OPM HAS CONVENED MORE THAN 31 FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE WORKING ON PROJECTS THAT ILLUSTRATE DIFFERENT APPLICATIONS OF LEARNING TECHNOLOGY IN A FEDERAL ENVIRONMENT. THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR IS DELIVERING EMPLOYMENT LAW TRAINING TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES AND SMALL BUSINESSES BY USING "EXPERT SYSTEMS." TRAINING FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS IS BEING DELIVERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WITH NETWORKED PC'S COUPLED WITH SOPHISTICATED 3-D VIRTUAL SIMULATIONS.

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE IS TEACHING 60 FOREIGN LANGUAGES USING A HYBRID APPROACH – COUPLING COMPUTER-BASED TRAINING, SATELLITE DOWNLINKS, VIDEO AND AUDIO, AS WELL AS THE INTERNET. THROUGH OPM'S LEADERSHIP IN THIS FORUM, AGENCIES ARE ABLE TO BENEFIT FROM EACH OTHER'S EXPERIENCES AND FORM COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS.

OPM ALSO SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH TECHNOLOGY LEARNING PROJECTS THROUGH THE TRAINING AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE (TMA) PROGRAM. THE TMA PROGRAM PROVIDES AGENCIES WITH IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO HIGHLY-QUALIFIED, COMPETITIVELY-SELECTED CONTRACTORS THROUGH A STREAMLINED PROCUREMENT MECHANISM. THESE CONTRACTORS DEVELOP AND DESIGN A WIDE RANGE OF HUMAN RESOURCE AND TRAINING SOLUTIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, OPM IS ASSISTING THE DEFENSE ACQUISITION UNIVERSITY (DAU) WITH THEIR CURRICULUM MODERNIZATION PROJECT. THIS EFFORT INVOLVES THE CONVERSION OF APPROXIMATELY 80 CLASSROOM COURSES TO COMPUTER-BASED AND WEB-BASED TRAINING. DAU IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAINING MORE THAN 250,000 PERSONNEL WORLDWIDE IN 11 ACQUISITION CAREER FIELDS. THE ACCELERATION OF THE USE OF LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES ENABLES AGENCIES TO MORE READILY TRAIN THEIR GEOGRAPHICALLY-DISPERSED WORKFORCES AND PROVIDE REAL-TIME SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND KNOWLEDGE ENHANCEMENT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORKPLACE AND TO PREVENT SKILL OBSOLESCENCE. FURTHER, IT WILL ENABLE AGENCIES TO QUICKLY DELIVER SOPHISTICATED, TECHNOLOGICALLY-

ADVANCED LEARNING TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS WHO MUST KEEP PACE WITH THE CONSTANTLY CHANGING, HIGHLY COMPLEX REQUIREMENTS OF THEIR OCCUPATIONS.

### **TRAINING POLICY AND INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS**

I AM PLEASED TO SAY THAT OPM PLAYS AN ACTIVE ROLE IN SETTING TRAINING POLICY, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME STRIVING TO GIVE AGENCIES THE FLEXIBILITY THEY NEED TO MEET THEIR DIVERSE MISSIONS. TRAINING LAW GIVES BOTH OPM AND THE HEADS OF AGENCIES SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING THE TRAINING OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.

OPM HAS STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNMENTWIDE TRAINING POLICY AND GUIDANCE. THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WHICH SUPPORTS THE MISSION OF THE ORGANIZATION RESIDES WITH THE HEAD OF EACH AGENCY. OPM ISSUES REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE THAT GOVERN THE SCOPE AND CONDUCT OF AGENCY PROGRAMS AND ASSIST AGENCIES IN ESTABLISHING AND EFFECTIVELY MANAGING THOSE PROGRAMS. WE REVISE OR DEVELOP NEW REGULATIONS AS REQUIRED BY CHANGES IN THE WAY WE LEARN AND MANAGE OUR HUMAN RESOURCES.

OPM HAS WORKED HARD TO REMOVE BARRIERS AND MAKE TRAINING A

FLEXIBLE MANAGEMENT TOOL. WE HAVE WORKED WITH THE CONGRESS TO AMEND OUTDATED PROVISIONS OF TRAINING LAW; REVISED TRAINING REGULATIONS TO REFLECT THOSE CHANGES; PROVIDED MORE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO AGENCIES; AND PUBLISHED THE TRAINING POLICY HANDBOOK AS A HANDY REFERENCE TOOL. IN RESPONSE TO WIDESPREAD AGENCY REQUESTS, WE ARE MAKING MORE TRAINING POLICY INFORMATION EASILY ACCESSIBLE ON THE OPM WEBSITE. WE ALSO REGULARLY CONDUCT POLICY BRIEFINGS AND PRACTITIONER UPDATES FOR AGENCIES HIGHLIGHTING EXISTING TRAINING FLEXIBILITIES.

WE CONTINUALLY STRIVE TO IDENTIFY NEW FLEXIBILITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, OPM HAS DEVELOPED A LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL TO PERMIT AGENCIES TO PAY THE COST OF ACADEMIC DEGREES WHEN SUCH TRAINING IS PROVIDED BY AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL AND MEETS AN IDENTIFIED AGENCY NEED. CURRENTLY, AGENCIES CAN PAY FOR DEGREE TRAINING RELATED TO SHORTAGE CATEGORY POSITIONS ONLY.

AN ADDITIONAL LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL WOULD ALLOW AGENCIES TO PAY THE COST OF EMPLOYEES' LICENSES, CERTIFICATES AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS. BOTH PROPOSALS WOULD GIVE AGENCIES ADDITIONAL FLEXIBILITY TO HELP ADDRESS THEIR RECRUITMENT OR RETENTION PROBLEMS AND PROVIDE NECESSARY TRAINING FOR IMPROVING THE TALENTS AND SKILLS

OF THEIR EMPLOYEES.

THE MANY FLEXIBLE MANAGEMENT TOOLS FOR TRAINING AVAILABLE TO MANAGERS AND TRAINING SPECIALISTS ARE STILL UNDERUTILIZED. FOR EXAMPLE, FOR MANY YEARS AGENCIES HAVE HAD THE AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH TUITION ASSISTANCE AND REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAMS. THESE ARE PROGRAMS THAT PAY SOME OR ALL OF THE COSTS OF COLLEGE COURSES. THEY PROVIDE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO ROUND OUT THEIR ACADEMIC BACKGROUNDS AND BROADEN THEIR TECHNICAL OR PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE.

OPM IS LAUNCHING EFFORTS TO PROVIDE MORE INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE REGARDING THE CONSIDERABLE DISCRETION AGENCIES HAVE WHEN IT COMES TO TRAINING, INCLUDING THE AUTHORITY TO SHARE THE COSTS OF TRAINING AND EDUCATION WITH EMPLOYEES AND TO ADJUST EMPLOYEES' WORK SCHEDULES FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES.

THE PRESIDENT'S EXECUTIVE ORDER ON TRAINING TECHNOLOGY LAST YEAR GAVE US AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP AGENCIES USE THE EXISTING FLEXIBILITIES IN A MOST CREATIVE AND EXCITING WAY. IN THE ORDER, THE PRESIDENT ASKED FOR OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ESTABLISHING

AN INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNT FOR EACH FEDERAL WORKER TO USE FOR TRAINING RELEVANT TO HIS OR HER FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT, USING EXISTING RESOURCES.

BECAUSE THE CONCEPT IS RELATIVELY NEW, AFTER SOME PRELIMINARY RESEARCH, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDED THAT AGENCIES EXPERIMENT AND PILOT INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS. THE PRESIDENT AGREED.

AGENCIES HAVE BEGUN THEIR PILOTS. UNDER THIS INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO LIFE-LONG LEARNING, MANAGERS PUT MONEY, OR HOURS, OR BOTH INTO AN "ACCOUNT" THAT AN EMPLOYEE CAN USE FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT.

PROGRAMS ARE BEING PILOTED BY THIRTEEN FEDERAL AGENCIES, AND THE PILOTS COVER SEVERAL THOUSAND EMPLOYEES. SOME TARGET SPECIFIC WORK GROUPS -- SUCH AS THE WELFARE-TO-WORK POPULATION OR THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE. OTHERS COVER AN AGENCY'S ENTIRE WORKFORCE -- SUCH AS GIVING OFFICIAL TIME FOR LEARNING TO EVERY EMPLOYEE. ALTHOUGH THE PILOTS ARE JUST BEGINNING, WE ANTICIPATE POSITIVE RESULTS, BOTH IN EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND IN PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT.



AS AN EXAMPLE, OPM HAS A PILOT IN THE RETIREMENT AND INSURANCE SERVICE THAT PROVIDES AN ACCOUNT OF DOLLARS AND TIME FOR EACH EMPLOYEE WHICH ALLOWS ACCESS TO MENTORS. THIS PILOT IS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO PROMOTE SUCCESS IN THE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS MODERNIZATION PROGRAM..

WE ARE VERY EXCITED TO HAVE THIS NEW TOOL, INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS. IT HELPS US PROMOTE WORKFORCE LEARNING USING EXISTING FLEXIBILITIES IN TRAINING LAW.

#### **OPM'S ROLE IN FORMULATING TRAINING BUDGETS AND ACTIVITIES**

FEDERAL AGENCIES HAVE THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR FORMULATING THEIR TRAINING BUDGETS BASED ON ANALYSES OF THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS AND STRATEGIC GOALS. OPM SUPPORTS AND ASSISTS THEM IN THIS RESPONSIBILITY.

WE HAVE ISSUED PUBLICATIONS, SPONSORED TRAINING, AND SUPPORTED INTERAGENCY GROUPS DEDICATED TO PLANNING FOR TRAINING AND MEASURING THE RESULTS OF TRAINING. FOR EXAMPLE, IN 1993, WE PUBLISHED "ESTABLISHING THE VALUE OF TRAINING, A BASIC GUIDE ON EVALUATING TRAINING." IN 1994, WE PUBLISHED "MAKING THE BUSINESS CASE FOR TRAINING AND TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT, A PRIMER ON ASSESSING

INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS." SHORTLY AFTER THE ENACTMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS ACT, OPM DEVELOPED A STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT COMPONENT FOR OUR MANAGEMENT TRAINING SEMINAR, WHICH IS CONDUCTED AT OUR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT CENTERS. WE ALSO DEVELOPED AN ORIENTATION ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FOR NEW SUPERVISORS. WE CONTINUE TO OFFER RESULTS ACT- RELATED COURSES AT THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE INSTITUTE AND THE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT CENTERS.

TO SUPPORT AGENCIES' PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND MEASUREMENT EFFORTS, WE CONVENED AND HOSTED A RESULTS ACT INTEREST GROUP FOR THE LAST SIX YEARS. THIS MULTI-AGENCY GROUP HAS MORE THAN 330 MEMBERS, ITS OWN WEBSITE, AND ATTRACTS BETWEEN 75 AND 100 PEOPLE TO ITS MONTHLY MEETINGS. MANY OF THESE MEETINGS FOCUSED ON THE ALIGNMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT WITH AGENCY STRATEGIC PLANS.

#### **WORKING WITH THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET**

AS WE DISCUSSED EARLIER, THE WORK WE ARE DOING TO HELP AGENCIES ALIGN TRAINING WITH THEIR STRATEGIC PLANS IS CERTAINLY ONE EXAMPLE OF HOW OPM WORKS WITH OMB TO DEVELOP GOVERNMENTWIDE TRAINING POLICIES AND ESTABLISH INNOVATIVE TRAINING PRACTICES.

FURTHER, OMB REVIEWS OUR PROPOSALS FOR REGULATORY, LEGISLATIVE, AND EXECUTIVE ACTION ON TRAINING, AND COORDINATES THE AGENCY COMMENT PROCESS. FOR EXAMPLE, OMB CURRENTLY HAS OUR PROPOSED STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT REGULATIONS UNDER REVIEW.

WE WORKED WITH OMB'S OFFICE OF FEDERAL PROCUREMENT POLICY IN ISSUING OMB POLICY LETTER NO. 97-01, A POLICY LETTER ON THE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS OF NON-DEFENSE DEPARTMENT CIVILIAN ACQUISITION PERSONNEL. THE LETTER IMPLEMENTED SECTION 37(B)(3) OF THE OFFICE OF FEDERAL PROCUREMENT POLICY ACT.

## **CONCLUSION**

OPM'S LEARNING AND EDUCATION POLICIES AND INITIATIVES UNEQUIVOCALLY SUPPORT OUR CONTENTION THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S MOST VALUABLE ASSET IS THE TALENTED AND DIVERSE MEN AND WOMEN WHO WORK EVERY DAY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THEY SERVE.

THAT CONCLUDES MY PREPARED REMARKS. I WOULD BE PLEASED TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.