Approved For Release 2006/09/28 : CIA-RDP82-00357R000600170028-1

PERS 73-1661

~~ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNAL USE ONLY~~

Executive Registry
73-1654

22 March 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Secretary/CIA Management Committee

FROM : Management Advisory Group

SUBJECT : Review of Fitness Report Program

REFERENCE : Memo for ExDir-Compt, from D/Pers, dtd. 19 Dec 72, same subject

1. a. The subject memorandum appears to provide a solid basis for projecting improvements to the Agency's Fitness Report (FR) system. The descriptions of the rating procedures employed in large companies reveal the impossibility of finding a single "best way". MAG believes that the comparative stability of the Agency's corps of career employees makes possible a system which will do a much better job of illuminating employees with high potential and identifying "deadwood" at all levels than the present system does.

b. MAG agrees with most - but not all - conclusions and recommendations contained in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the subject memorandum. We believe two recommended changes stand out far above the rest:

(1) training for FR writers, and the role of the parent career service and Directorate therein, and (2) the degree to which the employee should be involved in preparing the FR. MAG believes that the other recommendations, while helpful, will accomplish almost nothing if not done in concert with these more fundamental improvements.

2. a. With regard to training FR writers, MAG strongly recommends action on paragraphs 7c and 8g of the subject memorandum. In perhaps no other segment of his job is a new supervisor less prepared than his responsibility to summarize on a half sheet of paper the strengths and weaknesses of the employees under his command. The only model a new supervisor has before him is the perhaps foggy recollection of the prose

~~ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNAL USE ONLY~~

Approved For Release 2006/09/28 : CIA-RDP82-00357R000600170028-1

Approved For Release 2006/09/28 : CIA-RDP82-00357R000600170028-1

in his own reports, and the report prepared by the employee's previous supervisor. Over the years he gains a feel for what is "acceptable", and learns the difference between describing a really outstanding performance, and damning with faint praise. By the time he reaches the level of responsibility where he has to pass on promotions, approve training requests, interview applicants for vacancies, etc., he has become adept at reading between the lines and reading into the narrative the intent of the FR writers. MAG believes this unhappy situation can be turned around, if not brought to an end, through Directorate-oriented FR writing courses, with senior careerists from the Directorate taking part in the instruction. There should be follow-up, annual or biennial seminars, with all supervisors meeting with their Office heads to hear a reenunciation of the aims of the FR and to hear a statistical recap of extant ratings. MAG believes that detailed guidance by Directorates to FR writers is long overdue. It believes that such guidance, given annually, will not only help the FR system, but will also ameliorate chronic complaints from employees concerning the lack of career planning, downward communication and rotation.

3. MAG considers a modification of recommendation 8b in the subject memorandum (dealing with employee input to the FR) to offer an equally significant advance for the FR system. It disagrees with the general appellate cast D/Pers gives to the proposed attached statement from the employee. MAG believes the employee contribution should not only be permitted; it should be strongly encouraged. This statement should summarize the progress the employee feels he has made during the reporting period to component and personal goals, including accomplishments, training, special assignments, and efforts he may have made to correct personal deficiencies noted in a previous report. It would be the subject of comment, as appropriate, by the FR writer or reviewing official. This information is now unavailable to career service boards and reviewing officials and would be invaluable in providing them with missing brush strokes of the portrait they seek. It appears to MAG that the employee's contribution would promote healthy dialogue of a sort so many employees find lacking today.

4. MAG believes that recommendation 8e (dealing with rating the raters) in the subject memorandum fails to grasp the nettle. The intent of the recommendation can only be to identify FR writers who either through incompetence or lack of motivation fail to write adequate reports. Rating the rater is important but it will be too late for the hapless employees already the victims of an ill-prepared supervisor.

Approved For Release 2006/09/28 : CIA-RDP82-00357R000600170028-1

Approved For Release 2006/09/28 : CIA-RDP82-00357R000600170028-1

5. Implementation of the recommendation in paragraph 8c, "...comments concerning potential should be confined to factors related to job requirements" will remove the Fitness Report as a tool for alerting career service boards and others to employees who do seem to possess qualities equipping them for positions of greater responsibility. MAG agrees that employees need to be protected against unwarranted or gratuitous criticisms over matters having no relevance to performance. MAG members know of many instances where a person has through no fault of his own ended in the wrong spot. A strict interpretation of the recommendation as stated would prevent a statement saying so from being placed in the record. We believe it essential that either in the Fitness Report or in some other periodic evaluation there be statements concerning potential, most particularly in cases where the employee has significant potential, or where he has been placed in a job where his potential can not be properly developed.

Attachment

Approved For Release 2006/09/28 : CIA-RDP82-00357R000600170028-1