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Comparative Evaluation Descriptor Review
 Working Group Meeting
 Seventh Meeting
 16 September 1983

Attending:

DCI Representative -
 DDA " -
 DDI " -
 DDO " -
 OP Representative -
 and Review Coordinator



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1. This was the Working Group's shortest meeting resulting primarily from the fact that discussion tended to center on the affirmation of readily identified positions to be taken on the two major Agenda items.

2. On the question of the exclusion of SIS officers from being placed in a Descriptor Category the Group opted to make that recommendation to management. The rationale for SIS exclusion was based primarily on the opinion that while Career Services may refer to Descriptor placements these references had no great impact on career decisions. Further, the Group believes that in evaluating/ranking SISers for Performance Awards and Stipends, SIS step increases and the Senior Officer Development Program the value of additional categorization was marginal. This was further supported by the belief that upon promotion to the SIS level officers have clearly demonstrated significant potential and are considered to have established themselves as senior managers. It was also believed that assignments to higher levels within the SIS are somewhat personalized, i.e., specific skills, personality traits may be required for one job over another and any reference to Descriptor Category is much less important than at mid-grade and journey levels where overall potential determinations are critical. All agreed, however, that background for a counseling mechanism for SIS officers must be provided, and that such exists in the AWP statements of performance standards and PAR ratings on how established standards are accomplished. The Group agreed to recommend elimination of the Descriptor for SISers in view of the existence of other preferable existing devices.

3. The next item was a discussion of a similar discontinuation of Descriptor placement for professional and technical employees GS-10/11 and below (the issue of the cessation of mandatory panel evaluation for this group was based on a previous misunderstanding; the Group never had such an intention). It is the position of the Group that a recommendation be made to also eliminate mandatory assignment of Descriptors for these employees.

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Rationale focused on the argument that attempting to seriously assess potential at that usually relatively early career stage is somewhat meaningless. That opinion is based on the idea that often the employee is too new and there are too few PARs on which to base judgment. The Group believes that a prediction of the ability to advance to journey level is the first hurdle and this is determined by performance levels. The successful performer is thus assessed to have the ability to reach journey level while the poor performer does (or should) not. The achievement of journey level or just below is the initial critical juncture for assessment of ability to advance to positions of greater responsibility which entail managerial responsibility.

4. In summary, the Group is of the opinion that while all employees should continue to be evaluated each year as provided by the Promotion Precepts the system should be modified to require that only employees in grades GS-10 through GS-15 be subject to assignment to a Descriptor Category. No other problems requiring resolution were identified by the Group.

5. The Group expressed appreciation for receiving summaries of the Career Service draft proposals for revision in the format provided. The undersigned stated that if there are no serious objections to the final draft (to be provided to members in early November) it will be forwarded to D/OP; if problems do arise it would necessitate one additional meeting to settle the issue(s). The undersigned thanked the members for their cooperation in assisting OP achieve the potential revision to the current system.



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