



# Hiring Reform : Specialized Experience Training





# Topics

- What is Specialized Experience?
- Legal Requirements
- Minimum Qualification Requirements
- Importance of Specialized Experience



# Definition of Specialized Experience

- Specialized experience is an explicit description of required general or specialized experience to ensure that applicants possess the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to perform the work of a position
- To be creditable, specialized experience must be one year equivalent to at least the next lower grade level or equivalent in the Federal service



# Legal Requirements

- OPM's Operating Manual for Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions: 5 CFR 338.301 or
- Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures:



# Minimum Qualification Requirements

- Specialized experience requirements are covered in the *qualification standards* established by OPM and is mostly used for positions above entry level
- *Minimum qualification requirements* always include the *qualification standards* that OPM validates and sets for occupations in the Federal Government
  - *Minimum requirements* (e.g. education, training, experience, or any other requirements) are intended to reduce the processing of unqualified applicants by screening out those who are unlikely to succeed in the job
  - Most *qualification standards* permit applicants to qualify on the basis of education/training, experience, or a combination of the two



# Importance of Specialized Experience

- Directly relates to the major duties of a job
- By identifying the most critical elements of a job, an applicants who does not meet the minimum qualification requirements (including specialized experience) is screened out
- Determines whether an applicant is 'qualified' or 'not qualified' for a job



# Defining Specialized Experience

## Reference tools to be used when defining specialized experience:

- Position Description
- Job Analysis
- Consultation with hiring manager
- Position Classification Standards
- Position Qualification Standards
- Job Announcements
- Old crediting plans
- Internet searches



# Defining Specialized Experience

*For multi-grade recruitments, specialized experience must be defined at each grade level advertised*

Well defined specialized experience statements:

- Are as clear and concise as possible
  - Written in plain language
  - Government jargon or acronyms are well defined
- Measure the most critical elements of a job
- Avoid use of qualitative adjectives
  - Words such as knowledge of, basic knowledge of, considerable skill in, demonstrated ability to, or familiarity with
- Avoid requiring job-specific or agency-specific knowledge that could be learned in a reasonable period of time on the job



# Defining Specialized Experience

## Examples of specialized experience statements

- **Poorly Written:** Specialized experience for this position includes considerable skill in directing work in classification and recruitment within a federal agency; familiarity with HR program evaluation and oversight activities; extensive experience advising senior agency leaders
- **Well Written:** Specialized experience for this position includes experience performing and managing or directing work in classification and employment/staffing/recruitment; conducting HR program evaluation and oversight activities; and providing comprehensive management advisory services to senior management



# Sources of Additional Information

- Delegated Examining Operations Handbook:
- Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures:
- Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures:
- DOC HR Bulletin- Job Analysis Roles and Responsibilities:



**Thank You!**

