



Hiring Reform: Human Resources Practitioners Training





Category Rating





Topics

- Overview/Basic Policy Requirements
- Defining Quality Categories
- Job Announcement Requirements
- Ranking Eligibles
- Applying Veterans' preference
- Names Referred to Hiring Managers
- Merging Categories
- Selection Procedures/Pass Over Procedures
- Summary
- OPM Responsibilities



Category Rating

- Mandatory use under the Presidential Memorandum issued on May 11, 2010
- Effective November 1, 2010
- A ranking and selection process
- Applies to all competitive positions
- No “rule of three”
- Veterans’ preference still applies



Category Rating - Purpose

- Increases the number of eligible candidates from which a selecting official can choose while preserving veterans' preference rights



Category - Ranking

Who?

- Applicants who meet basic qualification requirements established for the position *and* whose job-related competencies or Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) have been assessed

How?

- Eligible candidates are ranked by being placed in one of two or more pre-defined quality categories instead of being ranked by individual numeric score order



Category Rating – Basic Requirements

- The Department has an established category rating policy
- Categories consist of Gold (best qualified), Silver (highly qualified) and Bronze (qualified)
- Gold category scores are generally 90 and above, Silver category scores are generally between 80 to 89.9, and Bronze category scores are generally between 70 to 79.9
- May not establish a “**not-qualified**” category



Category - Selection

- The best-qualified candidates in the gold category will be referred on the Certificate of Eligibles to the hiring manager for consideration
- Hiring manager selects from among eligible candidates in the gold category (without being limited to the top three eligible candidates)
- Preference eligibles are listed ahead of non-preference eligibles within each quality category
- Absolute veterans' preference is within each quality category



Flexibility to Refer Preference Eligibles

- HR Practitioners have the flexibility to refer preference eligibles in the highest quality category when it appears likely that non-preference eligibles will not be within reach because:
 - The number of preference eligibles in the highest quality category exceeds the number of jobs to be filled or;
 - The number of preference eligibles equals the number of jobs to be filled.



Job Announcement Requirement

- Describe each quality category in the job announcement
- Describe each category simply by name such as, “Gold” or “Silver” and “Bronze”
- Use the “How You Will Be Evaluated” section of the job announcement to communicate to applicants that category rating and selection procedures will be used
- Describe how veterans’ preference is applied under category rating procedures



Ranking Eligibles

- All applicants who meet the basic qualification requirements established for the position are ranked by being assigned to the appropriate quality category based upon the job-related assessment tool(s)
- Names of eligible candidates may be listed in any order (for example, alphabetical order)



Applying Veterans' Preference

- Identify preference eligibles
- No veterans preference points (5 or 10 points) are added
- Place qualified preference eligibles with their appropriate veterans' preference designation code shown on the certificate (i.e., CPS, CP, XP, and TP), above non-preference eligibles within their respective quality category (preserving veterans' preference rights)
 - List preference eligibles in any order, for example, alphabetically or by veterans' preference designation. Regardless how they are listed, the veterans' preference designation code for the preference eligible must be on the certificate.



Applying Veterans' Preference

- Qualified preference eligibles with a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more (CPS) and those with a compensable service-connected disability of more than 10% but less than 30% (CP) are placed at the top of the gold category (except for scientific or professional positions at the GS-9 level or higher)



Applying Veterans' Preference

Quick Reference

Placement of Preference Eligibles with a Compensable Service-Connected Disability of 10 % or More (CPS and CP)

For scientific and professional positions at the GS-9 or higher...

Place qualified CPS and CP preference eligibles above non-preference eligibles within the same quality category for which they are assessed (CPS and CP eligibles do not "float" to the gold category)

For all other positions (series) and grade levels...

Place qualified CPS and CP preference eligibles at the top of the gold category (CPS and CP eligibles "float" to the gold category)



Applying Veterans' Preference

Example: HR Specialist, Series 201, Grade 11

- Three quality categories (Gold, Silver, Bronze) were established for the position
- Applicants who meet basic qualification requirements established for the position *and* whose job-related competencies or Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) have been assessed are ranked by being placed in one of the three quality categories



Applying Veterans' Preference

Example: HR Specialist, Series 201, Grade 11 (Cont'd)

- A preference eligible with tentative preference (TP) who meets the requirements for the Well-Qualified category is identified and is placed at the top of the Well-Qualified category
- A preference eligible with a service-connected disability of 30% (CPS) who meets the requirements for the Qualified category is identified. Because of the series and grade in this example, the qualified preference eligible must be placed at the top of the Highest-Qualified category



Applying Veterans' Preference

Example: HR Specialist, Series 201, Grade 11 (Cont'd)

Eligibles Ranked by Quality Category Based on Review of Qualifications & Assessment Tool(s)	Identify Preference Eligibles	Apply Veterans' Preference for Certificate of Eligibles
<u>Gold</u> Ben Franklin Thomas Jefferson	<u>Gold</u> Ben Franklin Thomas Jefferson	<u>Gold</u> Cameron Rules (CPS) Ben Franklin Thomas Jefferson
<u>Silver</u> Joyce Rogers George Washington	<u>Silver</u> Joyce Rogers George Washington (TP)	<u>Silver</u> George Washington (TP) Joyce Rogers
<u>Bronze</u> Preston Foster Cameron Rules	<u>Bronze</u> Preston Foster Cameron Rules (CPS)	<u>Bronze</u> Preston Foster



Order of Certification

For most jobs and grade levels under category rating, the Certificate of Eligibles, or equivalent, certifies eligibles in the following order:

1. Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) eligibles on a separate sheet
2. Eligibles who lost consideration due to erroneous certification
3. Eligibles in the highest quality category



Names Referred to Hiring Managers

- All eligible candidates in the gold category are referred/sent on the Certificate of Eligibles to the hiring manager
- “Rule of Three” does not apply under category rating



Merging Categories

- When there are fewer than three eligible candidates in the highest quality category
- Combining (merging) the highest quality category with the next lower quality category and making selections from the newly merged category
- Merging categories based on agency's category rating policy



Merging Categories - Options

The HR specialist, in conjunction with the hiring manager, may decide to merge categories at two places in the hiring process:

- Before certifying/issuing the Certificate of Eligibles *or*
- Before selecting an eligible

The newly merged category is the gold category



Merging Categories – Rule

- Preference eligibles must be listed ahead of non-preference eligibles in the newly merged category
- As long as a preference eligible remains in the merged category, the hiring manager may not select a non-preference eligible unless the selecting official obtains approval to pass over the preference eligible in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 3318



Merging Before Issuing a Certificate

Gold
James John (NV)
Peter Wolf (NV)

Silver
Lisa James (TP)
Harry Upton (NV)
Jackie Downs (NV)

Newly Merged –Gold
Lisa James (TP)
Jackie Downs (NV)
James John (NV)
Harry Upton (NV)
Peter Wolf (NV)

Note: Merging the gold category (Highest Qualified) with the next lower category (Silver) requires placing the qualified preference eligible at the top of the newly merged quality category



Merging Before Selecting an Eligibles

Gold Category

Michael (NV)

Peter (NV) ***Selected***

Quince (NV)

Sam (NV) ***Selected***

Troy (NV) ***Selected***

Qualified Quality Category

Anne (TP)

David (TP)

Homer (NV)

Winston (NV)

Newly Merged Category

Gold Category

Anne (TP)

David (TP)

Homer (NV)

Michael (NV)

Quince (NV)

Winston (NV)



Selection Procedures - Rules

Hiring manager may select from among the eligible candidates in:

- Gold Category *or*
- Newly merged category comprised of the highest and the second-highest quality categories

Example: If there are 20 eligibles in the gold category (no preference eligibles), the hiring manager may select any one among the 20 eligibles including the 20th eligible because they are all equal in the category.



Selection Procedures - Rules

Selection rule: A hiring manager may not pass over a preference eligible to select a non-preference eligible unless there are proper and adequate reasons for passing over the preference eligible and the selecting official obtains approval to pass over the preference eligible in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 3318

Example: If there are 20 eligibles in the gold category and five preference eligibles are at the top of the list, the hiring manager must select from among the five preference eligibles. The hiring manager may not select any non-preference eligible unless the hiring manager obtains approval to pass over all (5) preference eligibles under 5 U.S.C. 3318.



Pass Over Procedures

- Procedures to pass over a preference eligible under category rating are the same as those used in the traditional numeric rating, ranking and selection procedures
- A non-preference eligible may not be selected over a preference eligible unless approval is received by OPM or an agency with delegated examining authority to pass over the preference eligible in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 3318
- Specific steps for pass over procedures are outlined in the *Delegated Examining Operations Handbook*, Chapter 6, Section D, Object to Eligibles



Category Rating - Summary

- Rank eligible candidates by placing in one of two or more pre-defined categories
- Apply veterans' preference by placing preference eligibles ahead of non-preference eligibles within same quality category in which they were placed (see exception for veterans with greater than 10% disability)
- Select from among all eligible candidates in the highest quality category; rule of 3 does not apply
- Select preference eligibles before non-preference eligibles within the same quality category
- Exception: Qualified CPS and CP eligibles "float" to top of gold category for positions other than scientific and professional at the GS-9 level and above



OPM Responsibility

Under category rating OPM retains exclusive authority in the following two situations:

1. Make medical qualification determinations pertaining to preference eligibles:

Submit a request to pass over a preference eligible, with supporting documentation (5 U.S.C. 3312(b)) to:

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Associate Director
Employee Services
1900 E Street, NW., Room 7470
Washington, DC 20415



OPM Responsibility

Under category rating OPM retains exclusive authority in the following two situations:

2. Grant or deny an agency's request to pass over a preference eligible with a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more:

Submit a request to pass over a preference eligible, with supporting documentation (5 U.S.C. 3318(b)(2)) to:

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Associate Director
Employee Services
1900 E Street, NW., Room 7470
Washington, DC 20415



Category Rating - References

- 5 U.S.C. 3319
- 5 CFR part 337 subpart C
- *Delegated Examining Operations Handbook*, Chapter 5, Section B
- Category Rating web page (see
Category Rating (see
)
- *The Presidential Memorandum – Improving the Federal Recruitment and Hiring Process* issued on May 11, 2010 (see
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Thank You!

