

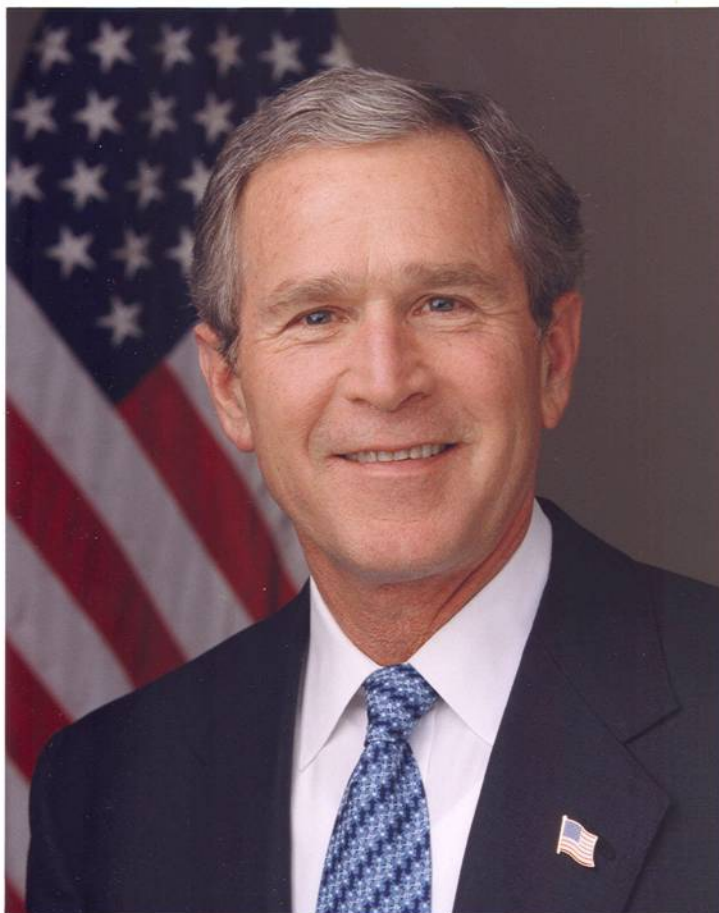


# Automated Pre-Screen Assessments

*Working for America*



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT



***“An organization needs a good idea and a good product or a good service. It certainly needs a good strategic plan. But more than anything, it needs good people – men and women of integrity, who understand their duties to each other and to the public interest.”***

President George W. Bush



*“The Government needs new talent, new energy, and new creativity to do the work of Government in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It needs the best and the brightest – go-getters with fresh ideas who are eager to make a contribution.”*

Kay Coles James  
Director  
Office of Personnel Management



# Program Overview

- Prepare persons capable of assuming operational positions critical to the future of the Postal Service
- Provide opportunities for highly qualified management professionals
- Carry out program objectives through multiple components:
  - Quality selection and orientation
  - Field assignment
  - Ongoing mentoring
  - Strategic outplacement



# Evaluating Inflation

- Nonsense tasks (Experimental items)
  - Breaks response pattern and reduces response bias
  - Evaluates self-inflation
  - *Example:* Resolve customer service issues using a latent-source line of questioning
- Primer tasks (Experimental items)
  - Reduces applicant sensitivity to nonsense tasks
  - *Example:* Formulate contingency plans for use in rapidly changing environments.





# Addressing Transparency

## Activity/Achievement Ratings (Experimental items)

- Develops less-transparent, competency-based self-rated questionnaire items (Ash, 1986)
- Requires applicants to choose one behavioral scenario that corresponds to the level of activity most representative of their background
- *Sample Scenario for Interpersonal Skills:*

A new e-procurement system was scheduled to be introduced at our agency. As Senior Project Analyst, I lead transition efforts by ensuring users of varying abilities, personalities, and backgrounds understood why a change was being made, the benefits of the new system, and how to successfully utilize the new application once implemented. The project was successfully implemented.

# Results for FY04



<b>Eligibility Criteria (Self-Ratings)</b>	<b>Number Falling Out</b>
Education requirement	303 (17%)
U.S. Citizenship requirement	20 (1.4%)
Availability to begin on designated start date	8 (.5%)
Availability to work nights, weekends and holidays	7 (.5%)
Availability to participate in assessment center	6 (.4%)
Willingness to undergo background investigation	2 (.1%)
Willingness to undergo drug screening	17 (1.2%)
Verification of the accurateness of responses	42 (3%)
Minimum task rating	11 (.8%)
Minimum competency rating	529 (39%)
<i>Summary: Applicants identified as ineligible</i>	945 (53%)
<i>Applicants identified as eligible</i>	835 (47%)



## Results FY02 – FY04

<b>Year/Step</b>	<b>FY02</b>	<b>FY03a</b>	<b>FY03b</b>	<b>FY04</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Applied</b>	935	2508	--	1780	5223
<b>Identified as Eligible</b>	500*	1485/ 308	--	200	2185
<b>Attended Assessment Center</b>	439	245	--	164	848
<b>Completed Interview</b>	81	86	60 (from same pool)	84	311
<b>Hired</b>	22	30	12	36	100

\*Prescreen process not in place. Candidates identified as eligible based on appropriate education (degree) and complete application.





# Preliminary Research Findings

- Positive relationship between scores on nonsense items and Occupational Questionnaire
- Negative relationship between scores on nonsense items and assessment center performance
- Increased warnings and verification statement may have improved the accuracy of competency ratings
- Minimal support for improved validity of Activity/Achievement Ratings over other competency-based self-ratings

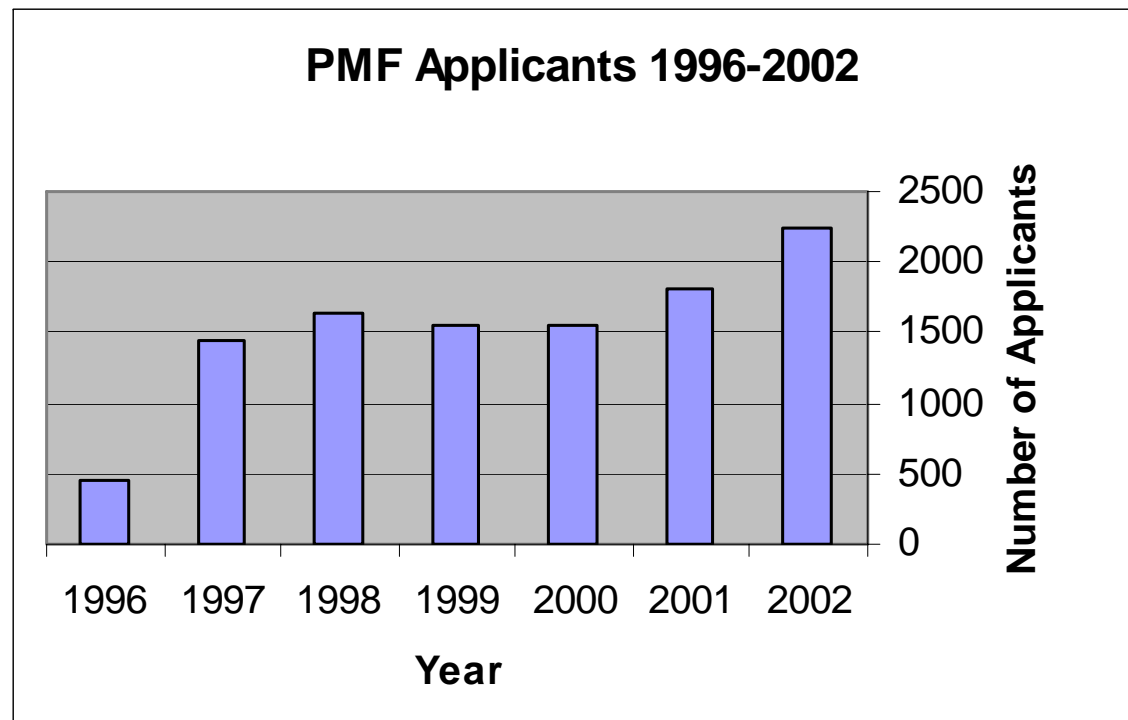


# Overview

- Background on the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program
- Development of the accomplishment record
- Outcomes of accomplishment record implementation
- Considerations for the future



# PMF Selection Challenge



- Increasing numbers of applicants
- Increasing resource requirements to assess all applicants via the one-day assessment center



# Sample Accomplishment

Analytical Thinking: PMFs are expected to use analytical thinking skills to solve problems and make recommendations on complex issues. They must use their creativity and analytic skills to understand the situation and its implications and to draw appropriate conclusions about the best approach for resolution.

*“During employment with the local head start program, I had to assess each student’s level of knowledge and then put together an individual education plan. The children were ages 3 years old to 5 years old. From September to May each year I was responsible for finding new creative ideas to stimulate the children in my class. I have had volcanoes erupt in my class and for parent night all of my parents sang along with their children. The children leave my class with positive self-esteem and a positive opinion regarding school.”*



# Outcomes

- 2,503 applicants in 2003
- 1,277 selected to progress to the assessment center
- 1,226 fewer assessment center candidates than under previous process
- 30% cost savings
- Candidates who passed the assessment center had significantly higher scores on the accomplishment record than those who did not pass, despite restriction of range





# Future Directions

- Accomplishment record will be used again in the 2004-2005 assessment process
- OPM will collect performance ratings later in 2004 to facilitate a criterion-related validation of the full assessment process
- OPM is considering the inclusion of situational judgment items on the application as a lower-cost pre-screen
- May include experimental items on the 2004-2005 application



# Overview

- Increased loss of Senior Executives over the next five years
  - Need for succession planning
  - Need for qualified pools of Senior Executive candidates
- Increased use of Federal Executive Candidate Development Programs (CDPs) to meet needs
  - Department of Justice's Executive Candidate Development Program (DOJ)



# Strengths of Stage 1 Process

- Provides candidates with a realistic job preview
- High face validity for applicants
- Low development and administration costs
- Quick method for determining who is and is not minimally qualified
- Incorporation of experimental items to assess inflation and understand which applicants inflate their ratings



# Overall Results

- 193 applicants completed the online screening questionnaire
- 90 applicants were found to be minimally qualified (Stage 1)
- Out of those 90 applicants, 50 candidates were identified as best qualified (Stage 2)
- These 50 candidates were invited to participate in the assessment center and structured interview process (Stage 3)
  - Approximately 25 candidates were selected for participation in DOJ's CDP



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