

Category Rating and Selection Procedures for Selecting Officials

Information on the mandatory use of category rating.

President Obama's 11 May 10 Memorandum (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/presidential-memorandum-improving-federal-recruitment-and-hiring-process>) on "Improving the Federal Recruitment and Hiring Process" directs all agencies to use category rating, rather than the traditional "rule of 3" approach, not later than 1 Nov 10. This is applicable to all agencies with delegated examining authority under 5 USC 1104(a) (2). That means this applies to our AFRC Special Examining Unit (SEU).

The purpose of category rating is to increase the number of qualified applicants who may be considered for a particular selection while preserving veterans' preference rights.

Applicants who meet basic qualification requirements established for the position are ranked by being placed in one of three pre-defined quality categories instead of being ranked in individual numeric score order as is done with traditional rating. An "eligible" or "ineligible" rating will be based upon the applicants responses to job assessment questions and the information stated in their resume. Veterans' preference applies to category rating but no additional points will be provided since applicants no longer receive a numerical score.

Selecting officials have the flexibility to select any applicant in the highest quality group without regard to the "rule of 3." Each vacancy request will be announced on a case-by-case basis for all positions. A link to the vacancy announcement will be provided to the selecting official when the announcement is posted. Selecting officials should ensure all interested applicants are notified and apply in accordance with announcement instructions.

Veterans' preference eligibles are listed ahead of non-preference eligibles within each quality category. 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) move from the category in which they were placed to the top of the highest quality category (except for scientific or professional positions at the GS-9 level or higher).

For scientific and professional positions at the GS-9 or higher, qualified CPS and CP preference eligibles are placed above non-preference eligibles within the same quality category (i.e., CPS and CP eligibles do not float to the highest quality category).

Attached are:

- A 19 Jul 04 DoD memorandum on "Category Rating and Selection Procedures" which provides the required agency category rating policy. Please note that although this memorandum identifies category rating as an alternative procedure, President

Obama's memo overrides this portion of the DoD policy and directs mandatory use of category rating. All other guidance and procedures within the DoD memorandum remain applicable.

- A "Category Rating Fact Sheet" that provides answers to commonly-asked questions on category rating.

- "Category Rating Module Slides" that provides additional guidance and should be distributed to all selecting officials.

Chapter 5 of the Delegated Examining Operations (DEO) Handbook (http://www.opm.gov/deu/Handbook_2007/DEO_Handbook.pdf) also provides additional helpful guidance on the use of category rating.