



Core Competencies in Financial Management for Management Analysts and Financial Specialists

**A Joint Project of the
Human Resources Committee of the
Chief Financial Officers Council
and the
Joint Financial Management Improvement Program**

U.S. Government Chief Financial Officers Council

The members of the U.S. Government Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Council—the CFOs and Deputy CFOs of all the 24 largest Federal agencies and senior officials of the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of the Treasury—work collaboratively to improve financial management in the U.S. Government. The CFO Council has become a strong force for active cooperation among agencies dealing with common problems. Its composition of both political appointees and senior career civil servants ensures collaboration and continuity of effort.

Under the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, the CFO Council was established to advise and coordinate the activities of the agencies of its members on such matters as consolidation and modernization of financial systems, improved quality of financial information, financial data and information standards, internal controls, legislation affecting financial operations and organizations, and other financial management matters.

The CFO Act legislated broad authority for each CFO to oversee all financial management activities relating to the programs and operations of the agency. With this authority, the CFO will ensure that sound financial management practices are applied in all organizational components of his or her agency and that modern automated financial systems and tools are used. Specific CFO authority varies agency by agency, but may include some or all of the following financial and general management components: budget formulation and execution, facilities or property management, financial operations and analysis, financial systems, grants management, information resources management, personnel, and procurement. Information of the CFO Council can be found at its website:

www.financenet.gov/financenet/fed/cfo/cfo.htm

The Joint Financial Management Improvement Program

The JFMIP is a joint and cooperative undertaking of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the General Accounting Office, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Office of Personnel Management working in cooperation with each other and other agencies to improve financial management practices in government. The Program was given statutory authorization in the Budget and Accounting Procedures Act of 1950 (31 USC 65). Leadership and program guidance are provided by the four Principals of the JFMIP—Comptroller General of the United States, Secretary of the Treasury, and the Directors of the Office of Management and Budget, and the Office of Personnel Management. Each Principal designates a representative to serve on the JFMIP Steering Committee, which is responsible for the general direction of the Program. The JFMIP Executive Director, and a program agency representative (who serves for 2 years) are also on the Steering Committee.

The Program promotes strategies and guides financial management improvement across government; reviews and coordinates central agencies activities and policy promulgations; and acts as catalyst and clearinghouse for sharing and disseminating information about good financial management practices. This information sharing is done through conferences and other educational events, newsletters, meetings with interagency groups and agency personnel, and through FinanceNet, an electronic clearinghouse on the Internet.

The JFMIP has worked on interagency projects that developed a financial systems framework and financial systems requirements. For the future JFMIP plans to assist Federal agencies in improving their financial systems through its Program Management Office. The Office will work on revising the Federal government's requirements definition, testing, and acquisition processes; the first target of opportunity is core financial systems. The objectives of the Office are to develop systems requirements, communicate and explain Federal and agency needs, provide agencies and vendors information to improve financial systems, ensure that products meet relevant system requirements, and simplify the procurement process.

Information on JFMIP can be found at its website: www.financenet.gov/financenet/fed/jfmip/jfmip.htm or call 202/512-9201.

FOREWORD

The Human Resources Committee of the U.S. Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Council and the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP) have undertaken efforts to improve the recruitment, training, retention, and performance of Federal financial management personnel. Since 1995, the Human Resources Committee and JFMIP have been jointly developing and issuing core competencies for various disciplines that are involved in financial management.

The documents are:

Framework for Core Competencies for Federal Financial Management Personnel, which established core competencies for accountants, budget analysts, and financial managers;

Core Competencies in Financial Management for Program Managers in the Federal Government;

Core Competencies for Financial System Analysts in the Federal Government; and

Core Competencies in Financial Management for Information Technology Personnel Implementing Financial Systems in the Federal Government.

This document, *Core Competencies in Financial Management for Management Analysts and Financial Specialists*, will complete the series of core competencies that were developed jointly by the CFO Human Resources Committee and JFMIP. The traditional functions of management analysts and financial specialists have changed with the passage of the Government Performance and Results Act. The Results Act requires greater integration among the planning, budgeting, analysis, and accountability activities. This requirement for integration is bringing management analysts and financial specialists closer together. When we were establishing the core competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities) in financial management for both of these disciplines, we found that they were the same. This document identifies the core competencies for entry level (level 1), mid-level (level 2), and senior non-managerial staff (level 3), and the appropriate learning objectives and developmental activities.

It is expected that this document will be used in conjunction with the other core competencies documents issued, and that these documents will promote a better understanding of human resources development governmentwide. If you have any comments or changes to this document, please contact the CFO Human Resources Committee or JFMIP.

Core Competencies in Financial Management for Management Analysts and Financial Specialists

INTRODUCTION

Core Competencies in Financial Management for Management Analysts and Financial Specialists is the fifth in a series of core competencies publications developed by the Human Resources Committee of the U.S. Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Council and the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP). This document, like its predecessors, concerns the recruitment, development and retention of staff for key financial management positions.

Management Analysts and Financial Specialists

Management analysts and financial specialists play critical roles in the financial management and budgeting communities. Employees occupying these positions serve as the office "generalists," participating in a broad range of activities related to the budget and accounting practices of their agencies. While lacking the specific expertise or educational background of many of their colleagues (e.g., accountants), management analysts and financial specialists often possess a broad array of personal qualities, including strong organizational, analytical, and communications skills, that make them valuable to management and capable of leading office-wide exercises such as planning, training or program liaison.

While management analysts traditionally performed functions requiring program reviews, coordination and analysis, financial specialists provided expertise and technical assistance to core financial operations. The gap between the two positions closed considerably when Congress passed the Government Performance and Results Act (Results Act). Under the Results Act, agencies need to ensure greater integration among their planning, budgeting, analysis and accountability activities. Agencies can no longer run their management processes as a series of independent activities. As a result, financial specialists need to be aware of, and participate in planning and budgeting activities to make accounting information more relevant to program managers.

On the other hand, management analysts must be able to understand the value of financial information in order to analyze accountability information and make appropriate recommendations to management. While specific tasks assigned to management analysts and financial specialists may continue to reside in different parts of the organization, the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform both positions have become remarkably similar.

An interagency working group began the core competencies project by identifying knowledge, skills and abilities for each position. After the first draft, it became apparent to the working group that a single set of core competencies was required for both management analysts and financial specialists. Therefore, this document embodies these core competencies.

The competencies are divided into three general categories: Basic Government Operations; Planning, Budgeting and Accountability; and General Management. These are the three general areas that every management analyst and financial specialist should seek to develop. Because employees in these positions cover such a broad range of functions, it is likely that managers and employees will need to tailor the competencies to fully reflect what management analysts and financial specialists in their organizations should be learn or be able to do. In addition, the document indicates the appropriateness of the core competencies for three distinct levels:

- Level 1** Entry level; typically consisting of introductory fundamental, basic, and routine activities; normally 1 to 3 years of experience.
- Level 2** Journey level; typically consisting of activities which address specifics, proficiency, applications, and local missions, normally a minimum of 4 years of experience.
- Level 3** Senior level; normally a team leader or first level supervisor, typically consisting of activities which address complex, expertise, program impact, or extended operations involving multiple organizations.

The knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) are listed in the first column of the following matrix. In the center of the matrix, the column entitled "Learning Objectives" describes what developmental activities should provide to the individual in order to achieve the competencies. Examples of the types of developmental activities one should consider are listed in the final column. These activities include on-the-job training and formal training courses.

This document reflects contributions from many agencies. Source documents prepared by the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and Environmental Protection Agency served as models for these core competencies. In addition, several agencies participated on the workgroup developing the language for the specific competencies.

How to Use This Document

This document should be used as a guide for making a multitude of workforce decisions from considering what type of staff to hire, to planning and executing staff development programs. This document can be the centerpiece for discussion between management and staff regarding training choices or rotational assignments. This document assists management to communicate its expectations to staff. It also provides a mechanism for staff members to request assistance from management to help them grow personally and professionally. The document is just one tool to assist you with difficult personnel issues. For additional assistance, you are encouraged to turn to human resource professionals in your agency.

Employees should be aware that they have a responsibility for building these core competencies in order to prepare themselves for effectively executing their duties. However, this document is merely a guide. While following the advice found in this document will help you become a more effective employee, it does not guarantee promotions or necessarily qualify you for a specific position.

CFO Council's Core Competencies Series

The Framework for Core Competencies for Financial Management Personnel in the Federal Government is intended as a reference tool. It is intended for persons in financial management, human resources management, and other related fields who have a need to understand what constitutes core competencies, learning objectives, and related developmental activities.. This document is considered to be applicable to personnel at all levels and in any organizational component performing financial management functions.

The Core Competencies are intended for the respective disciplines. The CFO Human Resources Committee and JFMIP established review boards to ensure the currency of these documents.

MANAGEMENT ANALYSTS / FINANCIAL SPECIALISTS

	CORE COMPETENCIES (Knowledge of, Ability to Use, or Skill in Using)	Levels			LEARNING OBJECTIVES	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES
		1	2	3		
A. Basic Government Operations						
1	Knowledge of basic missions, functions, and organizational structure of the agency and its offices.	X	X	X	Understand the organization’s mission in context of its legislative mandates and Administration priorities for the agency. Comprehend how the agency is organized to achieve its mission.	Courses: Internal orientation briefings Work Experiences: Read and discuss with supervisor agency authorizing legislation and agency mission statements. Rotational assignments to agency planning office, program office planning staff, or Congressional liaison office.
2	The roles central agencies such as OMB, Treasury, GSA and OPM play in government operations.	X	X	X	Comprehend the relationships of central agencies to agency operations. Maximize support for agency mission by working with central agencies.	Courses: Federal government operations Public administration Work Experiences: Rotational assignment to finance office. Details to central agencies. Projects working on functions requiring interaction with central agency staff.
3	Public laws, executive orders, OMB circulars, bulletins, agency directives, Comptroller General decisions and court opinions governing the agency’s management processes.	X	X	X	Comprehend and incorporate legislative and administrative requirements into all work products.	Courses: Appropriations law Budget formulation Management integrity Work Experience: Details to planning, budget, and finance offices.
B. Planning, Budgeting, and Accountability						

	CORE COMPETENCIES (Knowledge of, Ability to Use, or Skill in Using)	Levels			LEARNING OBJECTIVES	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES
		1	2	3		
4	Strategic planning process		X	X	<p>Comprehend the requirements of Federal planning.</p> <p>Participate in and/or lead the development of organizational strategic plans.</p> <p>Ensure cohesive integration of strategic planning, budgeting and financial management.</p>	<p>Courses: Strategic planning Customer service Creative decision making Leadership Government Performance and Results Act Business process re-engineering</p> <p>Work experience: Participating in agency strategic planning process. Reviewing strategic plans for cross-cutting agencies.</p>
5	Basic budgeting, accounting and program concepts and principles including agency budget procedures and its financial management system(s).	X	X	X	<p>Understand budget and accounting terminology and application.</p> <p>Appropriately apply budget and accounting principles and procedures to work products.</p> <p>Understand the functions of agency financial systems. Efficiently retrieve, use and analyze information pertinent to daily work.</p>	<p>Courses: Budget formulation Budget presentation Budget execution Government accounting Cost accounting Standard General Ledger Accounting standards Managerial accounting</p> <p>Work experience: Rotational assignments to planning, budgeting and finance offices.</p>
6	Structure of appropriations and other funds which support the agency's mission.	X	X	X	<p>Comprehend the statutory and regulatory requirements associated with budget execution. Develop and apply funds control and internal policies that ensure administrative control of funds. Demonstrate the</p>	<p>Courses: Federal budget process Budget planning and formulation Appropriations law</p>

	CORE COMPETENCIES (Knowledge of, Ability to Use, or Skill in Using)	Levels			LEARNING OBJECTIVES	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES
		1	2	3		
					necessary budget functions to accomplish organizational mission within legal parameters. Develop and present options for maximizing resources in complex operating environment.	Cash management Government accounting Work experience: Participating in preparation of organizational budget submissions. Supporting manager in budget execution.
7	Agency's budget operations and processes and how obligations and expenditures are incurred for assigned program areas.		X	X	Identify priorities and mandates for designated program area in order to competently estimate spending and manage funds.	Courses: Program regulations and operations Budget execution Work Experience: Details to program offices. Joint projects with program office staff.
8	Current program, budget, and accounting issues and state-of-the-art developments in resources management field. Areas outside of the budget which have financial importance to the programs of the agency.			X	Explain importance and impact of specific budget and accounting issues to high-level program officials.	Courses: Relevant graduate-level management courses. Continuing education in the budget and accounting fields. Work experience: Interacting with peers and customers. Participating in and attendance at professional seminars and symposia.
9	The Congressional appropriations and Federal budget preparation processes as they apply to the agency.		X	X	Prepare budget narratives and exhibits for inclusion in OMB and Congressional budget proposals. Outline possible agency responses to potential Congressional reactions to proposed agency budgets.	Courses: Federal budget processes Budget formulation Budget estimating techniques Budget presentation and justification Congressional appropriation process

	CORE COMPETENCIES (Knowledge of, Ability to Use, or Skill in Using)	Levels			LEARNING OBJECTIVES	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES
		1	2	3		
C. General Management						
10	Basic techniques of financial management, economic analysis, internal controls, auditing, and program evaluation.	X	X	X	Comprehend the fundamentals of financial management. Apply range of bench marking, analysis and program evaluation techniques. Convey fundamentals of internal management controls and control techniques. Explain principles of Federal auditing and their application to program management.	Courses: Accounting controls Business administration Analytical techniques Process re-engineering Program evaluation Fundamentals of Federal procurement

	CORE COMPETENCIES (Knowledge of, Ability to Use, or Skill in Using)	Levels			LEARNING OBJECTIVES	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES
		1	2	3		
						Contract management Grants management Management integrity Economics Federal auditing principles Work experience: Serving on process reinvention team Projects involving in-depth program evaluation Evaluating internal controls
11	Performance measures, cost accounting and analysis.		X	X	Understand the principles and possible application of cost accounting in the Federal government. Review the uses and possible application of performance measurements, particularly in relation to the Results Act. Demonstrate how performance measurement can be integrated into the budget process.	Courses: Cost Accounting Information Systems Performance measures Program analysis Government Performance and Results Act Work experience: Detail to office coordinating agency cost accounting Projects involving analysis of cost and/or performance data
12	Generally accepted management principles and practices.	X	X	X	Understand accepted management principles and practices, organizational development concepts and principles.	Courses: College management courses Conferences and workshops Work Experience: Process Reengineering Team Human Resource Projects Organizational Reviews
13	Organizational development concepts and organizational analysis techniques,		X	X	Understand and apply principles and applications of organizational assessment, management intervention and	Courses: Organizational development

	CORE COMPETENCIES (Knowledge of, Ability to Use, or Skill in Using)	Levels			LEARNING OBJECTIVES	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES
		1	2	3		
	performance effectiveness concepts, productivity measurement and measurements system.				change management, management indicators, effectiveness and efficiency measures, and measurement system design techniques.	Change Management Benchmarking Program Analysis Performance Management Work experience: Rotating to Human Resource Office Participating on performance measure development teams
14	Federal procurement, contract management and grants management		X	X	Identify and interpret Federal policies regarding procurement, contract management, cooperative agreements and grants.	Courses: Federal procurement Grants Contract management Project officers training Work experience: Serve as DOPO for work assignment Developing statement of work for contract Rotational assignments
15	Productivity improvement systems and business reengineering processes.		X	X	Understand processes for reviewing and reengineering business practices. Interpret and apply knowledge and design, acquisition process, procedures, terminology and documents, and implementation of productivity improvement systems.	Courses: Productivity improvement Benchmarking Process reengineering Workflow analysis Work experience: Reengineering team Rotation to planning office

	CORE COMPETENCIES (Knowledge of, Ability to Use, or Skill in Using)	Levels			LEARNING OBJECTIVES	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES
		1	2	3		
D. General						
16	Oral and written communication	X	X	X	Prepare and present analyses, reports and budget justifications to officials. Conduct and/or participate in effective meetings.	<p>Courses: Basic communications skills Briefing and presentation techniques Facilitation skills Writing skills</p> <p>Work experience: Incorporate learned skills into day-to-day work assignments.</p>
17	Basic computer applications	X	X	X	Apply computer application skills to present financial data using the appropriate format (i.e., spreadsheet, narrative, graphic).	<p>Courses: Basic computer use Software packages used by agency (i.e., spreadsheets, graphics, presentation</p>

	CORE COMPETENCIES (Knowledge of, Ability to Use, or Skill in Using)	Levels			LEARNING OBJECTIVES	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES
		1	2	3		
						software) Work experience: Incorporate learned skills into day-to-day work assignments, as applicable.
18	Stress and time management techniques	X	X	X	Understand stress and time management techniques used to meet tight deadlines and promote effective use of time.	Courses: Stress management Time management Work experience: Incorporate learned skills into day-to-day work assignments, as applicable.

Appendix

Major Contributors to Core Competencies in Financial Management for Management Analysts and Financial Specialists

Leonard Bechtel, Environmental Protection Agency

Terry Conroy, Department of Labor

David Therer, Department of Agriculture

Walter Wright, Department of Agriculture

This document was done under the auspices of the CFO Council Human Resources Committee and JFMIP:

Kenneth M. Bresnahan
Acting Chief Financial Officer, Department of Labor, and
Chair, CFO Human Resources Committee

Karen Cleary Alderman
Executive Director, JFMIP

Requests for Publications

JFMIP documents may be accessed electronically on FinanceNet Internet site:
<http://www.financenet.gov/financenet/fed/jfmip/jfmip.htm>

The JFMIP uses the General Accounting Office's Document Distribution Center to fulfill publication requests which are made after mail list distribution. The first copy of each publication requested is free. Additional copies are \$2 each. Orders for 100 or more copies to be mailed to a single address are discounted 25%. Orders should be sent to the following address accompanied by a check or money order made out to the Superintendent of Documents, when necessary.

Orders by mail:
U.S. General Accounting Office
PO Box 37050
Washington, DC 20013

Orders may also be placed by calling 202/512-6000, by fax 202/512-6061 or TDD 202/512-2537.