



**COLORADO**  
**Division of Human Resources**

Department of Personnel  
& Administration

# Statewide Personnel Certification Program

*JOB EVALUATION MODULE THREE: THE THREE FACTORS*

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Total Rewards – Compensation  
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## CHAPTER ONE – THE THREE FACTORS

### DEFINITION

The goal of a job evaluation is to place the position into the appropriate class. In the State personnel system, positions are placed into the appropriate class using three factors that are a common ruler or standard that all jobs are evaluated against in order to establish the type and level of work. Each factor has five degrees or levels that are logical separations. Just like classes, the factors and each degree are broadly defined. This means that each degree in a factor covers a wide range of jobs.

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Know and understand the three factors.
- Understand why each is important to Job Evaluation.
- Identify and know how many degrees are in each.
- Know and understand what a staff authority is.
- Know and understand what level is considered fully operational.

### REQUIRED READING MATERIALS

Selected Job Evaluation Reading

- Job Evaluation Glossary

## CHAPTER TWO – DELIVERABLES

Student Name:	
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### DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUR MENTOR

- Why are the levels for decision making so important?
- What is the fully operating concept?
- What are the three factors for system evaluations?

- An individual who is at the operational level of decision making handles what types of decisions?
- What level of complexity is someone who evaluates the importance of theory, concepts and principles?

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## DEVELOPMENT – FACTOR I: DECISION MAKING

**DEFINITION:** The decision making factor measures the complete range and impact of decisions regularly made, from those dealing with the actual carrying out of decisions at higher levels to those adapting the organization to new circumstances. When discussing impact, the impact on the organization is key. As a State of Colorado employee, outside impact on the public is almost universal and does not help distinguish the job for job evaluation purposes.

The decision making factor helps;

- Understand the complete range and impact decision making has.
- Understand the impact the decision levels have on the organization.
- Recognize the different levels of decision making and compares them with the skills at each level.

**DEGREES:** (Use levels as a whole, meaning there is no fraction or decimal assigned. For example, if a PD does not quite meet the 2 level, but it is very close, it is a 1, not a 1.8)

1. **Defined.** There is choice in selecting alternatives that affect the manner and speed but there is typically only one correct way to carry out the operation.
  - Limits are set by the prescribed operation.
  - Data can be numerous but are clear, unambiguous, and understandable.
  - Can be taught what to do and any deviation in the manner in which work is performed does not change the end result.
  - At this level, the work will not alter systems, procedures or operations, as they are set by a higher level.
  - Positions often recommend changes to procedures or operations, but do not have the authority to independently alter them.

2. **Operational.** In carrying out the process, there is a choice as to what and how operations will be completed.

- Limits are set by the specific process.
- Data are numerous and variable.
- Requires reasoning to produce practical courses of action within the established process.
- Choices fall within the range of specified, acceptable standards, alternatives, and technical practices.

At the Operational level, decisions involve responsibility for determining the operations, without prior approval; however, focus is still on the practical as opposed to the theoretical.

3. **Process.** There is choice in determining the process to accomplish the work. The choice includes designing the set of operations. Positions do not necessarily perform the operations.

- Limits are set by professional standards; available technology and resources; and, program objectives and regulations established by a higher management level.
- The general pattern, program, or system exists but must be individualized.
- Data are complicated.
- Requires analysis before alternatives can be determined. Analysis is breaking the problem or case into parts, examining these parts, and reaching conclusions that result in processes. This examination requires the application of known and established theory, principles, conceptual models, professional standards, and precedents in order to determine their relationship to the problem.
- New processes or objectives require approval from a higher management level or the agency accountable for the program or system.

Process level decisions are more theoretical in the sense that positions must evaluate and apply theories, models, etc., as part of the assignment. This is an analytical level where fully operational professionals and some senior level technicians are found.

4. **Interpretive.** There is a choice in determining the tactical plans to achieve the objectives established by a higher management level. There is choice in establishing what processes are to be done, developing the budget, and developing the staffing patterns and work units in order to deploy staff. Establishes what is to be done in similar circumstances in the future. Included are inventing and changing systems and their guidelines that will be applied by others statewide.
  - Limits are set by the strategic master plan and allocated human and fiscal resources. This is the first level not bound by operations and processes for making decisions.
  - Novel or unique situations produce uncertainties that must be addressed. Through deliberate analysis and experience with these unique situations, determines the systems, guidelines, and programs for the future.

Interpretive level decisions involve the tactical planning needed to interpret and implement management strategy. Operating Managers are often found at this level.

5. **Programmatic.** In determining strategic plans, overall purpose, and staffing, there are choices in formulating or adjusting programs, specifying program objectives, and allocating human and fiscal resources among constituent programs. Determines what has been done, what can be done, proposals for long-term policy, and estimates of what new resources are required.
  - Limits are set by organizational policy, general directives, overall goals and objectives, and allocated resources established at a higher policy-making level.
  - Strategic plans require integration with other programs in the overall plan. Decisions are made under conditions of uncertainty. Program, as used here, is defined by the mission of an agency or division as opposed to a segment or piece of a program, such as planning, program evaluation, etc.
  - Not concerned with the daily management but with longer-term strategic plans, overall purpose, and staffing.

Excluded are those applying a program that is controlled by another agency that has authority and accountability for it.

**NOTE:** There is one higher level of organizational decision making which is included for illustrative purposes only. It describes policy-making executives who are exempt from the state personnel system. They decide what the entire organization will or will not do. Within legal and economic constraints, they establish the scope, direction, overall goals, major programs, and limit the level of resources available to each program. Examples of this level include the legislature, governor, boards, commissions, executive directors, and presidents.

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## **FACTOR 2: COMPLEXITY**

**DEFINITION:** This factor measures the nature of, and need for, analysis and judgment within the context of available guidelines, including written or verbal procedures, policies, regulations, references; precedents and practices; and methods and techniques of a profession.

**DEGREES:** (use levels as a whole)

1. **Prescribed.** Applies established, standard guidelines, which cover work situations and alternatives.

- Chooses the correct action from learned, specified guidelines that permit little deviation or change as tasks are repeated.
- Alternatives are clearly right or wrong at each step.

Alternatives are generally covered by established guidelines. For example, fees to charge, proper calculations to use, computer system procedures, software packages, and eligibility or licensing requirements. Deviations from the guidelines are typically not allowed.

2. **Patterned.** Studies information to determine what it means and how it fits together in order to get practical solutions.

- Guidelines exist for most situations.
- Judgment is needed in locating and selecting the most appropriate guidelines that may change for varying circumstances as tasks are repeated. All alternatives

at each step are correct but one is better than another depending on the given circumstances of the situation.

Focuses on practical solutions that involve more multiple choice situations where the guidelines are not as clear.

3. **Formulative.** Evaluates the relevance and importance of theories, concepts, and principles, and tailors them to develop a different approach or tactical plan to fit specific circumstances.
  - Guidelines exist but are inadequate.
  - Judgment and resourcefulness are needed because guidelines are relevant only through approximations or analogy to fit particular circumstances and to deal with emergencies.
4. **Strategic.** Develops guidelines to implement a program(s) that maintain the agency's mission.
  - Guidelines may not exist for all situations.
  - In directive situations, judgment and resourcefulness are needed to interpret circumstances in a variety of situations and establish guidelines that direct how a department/agency program will be implemented.
5. **Unprecedented.** Originates models, concepts, and theories that are new to the professional field AND where no prototype exists in state government.
  - Guidelines do not exist.
  - Judgment and resourcefulness are needed to develop new guidelines.
  - This level is fairly rare.

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### **FACTOR 3: LINE/STAFF AUTHORITY**

**DEFINITION:** This factor measures the direct field of influence the work results have on the organization using two components.

- **Line authority** is direct accountability for the quantity and quality of the work product of others by indicating what is to be done, by when, and how.

- **Staff authority** describes those relatively rare positions that are required to function as a pacesetter in their profession. Such a position is acknowledged by peers as a leader in their field **and** management must recognize such a leader by delegating primary responsibility to recommend the direction of policy and programs. It is **not** a function of longevity or serving as a resource because of being the only one in the work unit, agency, or specialized field. It is more than performing the full range of problem solving and advising others on processes as a result of experience. There must be evidence that this authority or expertise is a critical part of the work assignment delegated by management to the position.

In general, a minimum of two, permanent full-time equivalent (FTE) positions (4160 hours per year as documented by time records) is required at the second degree and three, permanent full-time equivalent positions (6240 hours per year as documented by time records) is required at the third degree and up. At least one of the subordinate positions must be in the same series or at a comparable conceptual level. The minimum number may increase for some occupations. The minimum number and level of positions supervised may be specified in the class description. For an FTE to be counted towards supervision there must be an employee-employer relationship. Contractors **ARE NOT** employees and cannot count for supervision. Students and inmates may count, if the criteria above are met.

#### DEGREES:

1. **Individual Contributor** – no supervisory accountability.
  - Positions may explain work processes and train others, serve as a resource or guide by advising others on how to use processes within a system, or serve as a member of a collaborative problem-solving team.
2. **Work Leader** – partially accountable for the work product of at least two subordinate FTE, including timeliness, correctness, and soundness.
  - Typical elements of direct control over other positions include assigning tasks, monitoring progress and workflow, checking the product, scheduling work, and establishing work standards.

- Provide input into supervisory decisions made at the higher levels, including signing leave requests and approving work hours.

OR

**Staff Authority** – influence is through direct impact within agency boundaries.

- Expert on the application of a program or system in a state agency or to its clients.

3. **Unit Supervisor** – accountable, including signature authority, for actions and decisions impacting the pay, status, and tenure of at least three subordinate FTE.

- Elements must include providing documentation to support corrective and disciplinary actions, signing performance plans and appraisals, resolving informal grievances. Positions start the hiring process, interview applicants, and recommend hire, promotion, or transfer.

OR

**Senior Authority** – influence is through direct impact beyond the immediate principal department/agency.

- Designer of a statewide program or system and/or expert in a subject area for all state government.

4. **Manager** – accountable for multiple units through the direct supervision of at least two subordinate Unit Supervisors.

- Elements must include providing documentation to support corrective and disciplinary actions, second level signature on performance plans and appraisals, resolving informal grievances. Positions start the hiring process, interview applicants, and recommend hire, promotion, or transfer.

OR

**Leading Authority** – influence is through direct impact beyond state boundaries.

- Recognized as a regional, national, or international expert.

5. **Senior Manager** – accountable for multiple units through the direct supervision of at least two subordinate Managers.

- Elements must include providing documentation to support corrective and disciplinary actions, second level signature on performance plans and appraisals, resolving informal grievances. Positions start the hiring process, interview applicants, and recommend hire, promotion, or transfer.

The staff authority concept can be very difficult to apply. It was intended to provide a parallel career ladder for non-supervisors. Positions that meet this concept are pacesetters or experts in a subject matter area whose influence on management direction can be equal to, or greater than the act of supervision. These individual positions are relatively unique and rare.

**The Three Factors** – For further illustration, here is a comparison of the full operating vs. general staff authority concepts.

**Full Operating Concept**

Practitioner: Work is typically on a case-by-case basis in a particular specialty, e.g., field, grant, study, specific or defined organism/population, behavior, etc. Adapt policy, rules, etc., as needed. Ensure compliance.

Direct impact is on a portion of a department's program as it relates to the specific specialty or field. Indirect impacts on broad program/policy direction, e.g., advise, input/suggestions, as requested.

Resource to others, explain or advise others on results, system and processes, concepts or theories. Serve on collaborative teams. Report results in both written and oral form. Train others. Represent management in meetings or on teams as a resource (not a policy maker).

Defend individual actions/results. Testify to present information regarding work or facts in a case. Persuade others to support activity.

Routinely requires creativity and independence. Develop work plan: identify the problem/issue, devise the process, define the sample, create the operating procedures/processes for the study/process, and interpret results. Solve full range of problems as they arise.

Greatest number of positions in a work unit should be at this fully experienced level which carries out the ongoing business of the unit.

**General Staff Authority Concept**

Beyond expertise. unique level, relatively rare – “The Guru”. Work units should not have (or need) many of these positions. Not the result of resource/advisor expected from fully operational professional. Not a substitution for the former multiple range practice. Not a reflection of an individual's personal experience or achievements—based in management's need of the position.

Must be delegated and authorized by department management. At a minimum, requires the endorsement of and recognition by division management or appointing authority, e.g. 2<sup>nd</sup> level supervisor or above, depending on position's place in the organization.

Characterized by management's routine reliance on essential consultation when deciding broad, critical program/policy direction. Non-contestable broad policy/program recommendations to management that are accepted as fact and not refuted on technical merit, but may not be acted for political or budgetary reasons.

Directly impact the department (division) ongoing operation through overall/broad/general policy, program, or services as defined by the mission. Scope and level of direct impact on the department's program and mission is equivalent to or exceeds the supervisor exercising direct control over the program's work.

Establish/develop effective and efficient strategies, guidelines, rules etc. that improve overall / broad policy, program, and level of service. Must be able to substantiate management's (inside or outside the department) ongoing reliance on such a broad level.

## The Three Authorities

Staff Authority	Senior Authority	Leading Authority
<p>Direct authority is within department (includes clients*) on its broad program/policy direction.</p> <p>Department authority in adaptation/application of program/system (depth of knowledge).</p>	<p>Direct authority extends to management in other departments (not clients*) on their broad program/policy direction.</p> <p>Designer of system used by others in state government</p>	<p>Direct authority extends to management in entities beyond state government (region/nation; not clients*) on their broad program/policy direction.</p> <p>Impact profession where specialties not unique to state's/department's setting.</p>

\* Department includes clients -- those who must abide/comply by an agency's rules/requirements. Note: those who attend meetings as the department's representative do not necessarily meet the concept of a staff authority at any level.

### A. REVIEW THE JOB EVALUATION GLOSSARY

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- a. What are the three factors?
- b. List all of the Factors and why each is important to Job Evaluation.
- c. How many degrees are in each?
- d. What is staff authority?
- e. What level is considered fully operational?
- f. What is the difference between a Senior Authority and a Manager?

### B. OCCUPATIONAL GROUP DEFINITIONS

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Identify each occupational group, write a brief synopsis of each, and identify what types of jobs would be in each group.

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### REQUIRED PRACTICE

- Evaluate **Five** Position Descriptions and identify the levels of decision making, complexity and line/staff authority.
- Define what is considered fully operational.
- Define each “authority” and the scope of authority each one has.

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### ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Please complete the online assessment questions.