



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

April 28, 2003

Subject: INPUT FROM NEW EMPLOYEES IN THE MSA FOR YEARS 2001 and 2002

Dear New Employee in the Mid-South Area:

This letter comes to you on behalf of the Mid South Area Workforce Diversity Committee. This committee is charged with assisting administration in its goals of achieving a more diverse workforce in our area. Please assist us by completing and returning the enclosed survey designed to receive input from permanent employees hired in 2001 and 2002. The committee is interested in determining which recruitment tools have been most effective in bringing new employees to the Mid South Area. We also want to assess the level of employee satisfaction with their new job and to identify possible obstacles that they might be encountering in the early stages of employment. This information will help the committee make recommendations to the Area director and to ARS to facilitate the hiring process and to make the transition of new employees into the workforce as smooth as possible.

We appreciate your help and time in completing a response to the survey. Please consider that the number of new hires in the area is relatively small; this survey will be most valid if we receive full participation from all employees. **We ask that you return the completed survey by May 30.**

The collection of information from this survey is designed to be totally anonymous. The completed survey should be sealed in the enclosed unmarked envelope and then enclosed in the envelope addressed to Katherine Davis, Biological Science Technician. Katherine will keep all the surveys inside their sealed unmarked envelopes until we are ready to summarize all responses as a group. Any individual comments provided at the end of the survey will be transcribed as part of a block of anonymous comments. Once the information has been summarized, all surveys will be destroyed. All staff in the MSA will be informed of the results and subsequent recommendations.

Thank you in advance for your help in making the MSA workplace work for all of us. If you have any questions please call me at 225 767 9293.

Sincerely,

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INPUT FROM NEW EMPLOYEES IN THE MSA – YEARS 2001 and 2002

1. What year were you first hired by ARS: _____
2. What grade were you initially assigned when first hired by ARS:
GS _____
or WG _____
3. Were you initially hired by ARS in a temporary position?
Yes _____ No _____
4. Your current position grade is: GS _____, step _____
or WG _____, step _____
5. How did you first become aware of the existence of the position for which you were hired?
Direct contact with ARS employee in a position to hire you _____
"Word of mouth" through an ARS employee not directly hiring _____
"Word of mouth" through an individual not employed by ARS _____
USDA/ARS job listing _____
Federal job listing _____
Job fair/career day Which one and when? _____
Other _____ (explain)
6. What is your current educational level:
High school _____ 1 year of college _____ Two years of college _____
Three years of college _____ Four years of college _____ Masters _____ Ph.D. _____
7. Has your educational level changed since hiring: Yes _____ No _____
If yes, indicate what it was at the time of hiring:
High school _____ 1 year of college _____ Two years of college _____
Three years of college _____ Four years of college _____ Masters _____ Ph.D. _____
8. Were any of the following a requirement for your position at hiring?
 - a) A college degree? Yes _____ No _____
 - b) Experience equivalent to a college degree? Yes _____ No _____
 - c) Masters degree? Yes _____ No _____
 - d) Experience equivalent to a Masters degree? Yes _____ No _____
 - e) Ph. D. degree? Yes _____ No _____
 - f) Experience equivalent to a Ph. D. degree? Yes _____ No _____
9. The highest grade of your job position as it is written now: _____
10. Do your current duties correspond to the written job description for your job?
Yes _____ No _____

11. Has any supervisor contacted you about the possibility of receiving further training to enhance your career potential? Yes _____ No _____

12. Do you have an IDP (individual development plan)?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, are you completing the training and developmental assignments listed in that plan?

Yes _____ No _____

13. Based upon your educational credentials (i.e. degrees and formal education), how do you perceive your qualifications and training with respect to your current job description?

Underqualified _____ Closely matched _____ Overqualified _____

14. Based upon your work experience, how do you perceive your skills and abilities with respect to your current work responsibilities?

Underutilized _____ Closely matched _____ Overburdened _____

15. Are you interested in obtaining further training to enhance your career potential? Yes _____
No _____

If answer is yes, indicate in which area(s) you would prefer to receive further training:

Academic (leading to formal degrees):

Technical (short courses to enhance specific skills):

Administrative:

16. Looking back at your hiring process, did you encounter any roadblocks which should be corrected for the benefit of future applicants?

17. Check your assessment of new employee orientation after hiring in the following areas:

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Not provided
Agency Policies	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ethics	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
EEO	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
RPES process (for scientific positions)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

18. We would appreciate your comments or observations on any subject that you wish the committee to consider, or that you thought was not covered in this request for your input.