

**Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA)  
Office of the Administrator (OA)  
Management and Budget Services (MBS)  
Management Services**

**Training Specialist  
GS-1712-12**

**Master Record Number: 5GH701**

**INTRODUCTION**

This position is located in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA), Office of the Administrator, Management and Budget Services (MBS), Management Services (MSS) in Washington, D.C. MSS is responsible for a wide-range of functions, including all GIPSA-wide, non-technical training.

As a Training Specialist, the incumbent performs a wide array of operational activities to assist in the development and implementation of non-technical training programs in GIPSA. The responsibility of this position is to provide independent technical assistance to the Training Officer by designing and developing multimedia instructional materials, delivering training, and creating written training products and guides. Incumbent is to plan, coordinate, and develop custom interactive content components of web-based instruction based on occupational analysis done in collaboration with subject matter experts; design and display visual materials; assist in prioritization of training and development programs relative to agency needs; evaluate training programs; and administer the AgLearn system - - the USDA learning management system - - including posting authored products and coaching of employees to ensure maximum use of AgLearn.

*Note: This position can be filled at a GS-9/11/12 multi-grade career ladder. At developmental grade levels, assignments will be of more limited scope, performed with less independence and may reflect limited complexity and personal contacts. At developmental levels, the incumbent will be acquiring the background necessary to function at the Full Performance Level.*

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Serves as GIPSA's Administrator for AgLearn, the USDA internet-based learning management system. This duty involves performing training records maintenance and trouble-shooting, technical assistance with user accounts and any user issues that may arise.

Utilizes new distance learning methodologies/technologies, including, but not limited to, web-based, internet, satellite, video-conferencing, CD/DVD, and blended learning training and development options.

Serves as a consultant and troubleshooter relative to programs, techniques, and methods for evaluating the short- and long-range effectiveness of GIPSA non-technical training and education programs. Uses the findings of evaluations to design and develop new and improved training initiatives. In some instances, the incumbent develops and submits to the Training

Officer and senior staff, recommendations to significantly reshape broad training programs.

Develops techniques and surveys to appraise performance, skill, and knowledge levels of personnel, reports results to top managers in GIPSA, and subsequently develops appropriate training and/or education approaches to enhance or realign employee performance.

Applies Agency guidelines and adopts comprehensive new and nontraditional learning and developmental designs to remedy and enhance performance of personnel in GIPSA.

Participates in the design, development and delivery of agency-wide leadership development programs.

Consults with and advises staff and line officials on all phases of the Agency learning and development program by assessing organizational needs and carrying out the planning and delivery of learning and development programs and services offered.

Consistent with the Office of Personnel Management, Departmental, and Agency guidelines and parameters, uses the findings of experimental training and education programs to recommend new programs or learning modules to GIPSA management. Collaborates with senior staff in the development, testing, and promotion of experimental or innovative training activities or approaches in areas where traditional approaches are non-applicable or have proven ineffective. Participates in establishing policy, procedures, and guidelines for delivery of non-technical training and education programs in GIPSA.

## **EVALUATION FACTORS**

### **1. Knowledge Required by the Position**

Comprehensive knowledge of the methods, practices, and techniques associated with evaluation of training/education/development programs for personnel.

Knowledge of testing and measurement techniques and knowledge of techniques to measure the validity and reliability of tests and to conduct correlation studies.

Knowledge of the principles, methods, practices, and techniques of instructional design and a working knowledge of instructional materials development and skill sufficient to review or develop full-length course and curricula for use in learning.

Knowledge and skill in adapting project plans to ensure timely introduction of new or revised procedures, techniques, or operational concepts into a learning curricula and/or employee development program.

A working knowledge of training, educational and learning theories, principles, and applications as well as sufficient knowledge of employee development techniques and practices as required to analyze, plan, develop, implement, and evaluate, training and employee development programs throughout GIPSA.

Knowledge of recent developments in training, education, and employee development practices, with particular emphasis on the specialty fields of evaluation, instructional design, curricula development, and needs assessment.

## 2. Supervisory Controls

The Training Officer assigns work to the employee who has full and continuing responsibility for organizing, implementing and monitoring the functions required to accomplish assigned duties and responsibilities. Although individual tasks are determined by the employee and accomplished according to sound training and development practice and principles he or she may seek out assistance from senior specialists or members of the management team for the most complex endeavors or for those situations where no precedent exists. Generally, the employee is expected to work out any training and development problems encountered, providing options as appropriate to meet the needs of the situation. Supervisory reviews are typically after the fact and conducted from the standpoint of overall effectiveness.

Formal status reports are regularly provided to keep the supervisor informed of overall progress. Senior specialists are also available for assistance.

## 3. Guidelines

Guidelines consist of Federal laws, regulations, policy statements, and written instructions. They also consist of previously completed work or projects, technical manuals, periodicals, research findings, and professional journals in the subject matter field or in the training and education field.

The incumbent exercises initiative, independent judgment, and the capability to develop, implement, and monitor systems, methods, procedures which will effectively resolve problems within Agency guidelines and parameters established by the organization's management and senior staff. The employee uses ingenuity and judgment in arriving at the interpretation of existing guidelines and using them as a foundation for recommending new applications to specific situations.

## 4. Complexity

Efficient performance requires being current about the latest developments in training and education, especially in the specialty areas of evaluation, needs assessment, curricula, and instructional design.

Assignments may require establishing innovative application to problems associated with training evaluation, delivery, and design. This includes the planning and recommendation of new approaches to evaluation, design, and delivery; evaluating the results; and using the findings in planning, developing and installing new or modified training/education initiatives, systems or approaches on a permanent basis after consultation with senior training specialists. Program activities necessitate contact and coordination with program staff, program managers, other Federal agencies, and recognized authorities in the training and development field.

Incumbent uses knowledge of new developments in the techniques, methods, and procedures in training and development to recommend new initiatives and approaches, implementation of changes in existing training and development programs, and incorporation of new methodologies where appropriate. Such recommendations are used to eliminate or alleviate program

deficiencies, problems, or needs. The incumbent is required to utilize considerable ingenuity and creativity in developing and recommending new initiatives to the Training Officer and Agency management.

Incumbent consults and cooperates with diverse audiences and subject matter specialists who may possess differing opinions and interpretations of how to achieve program goals and needs through training and development programs. Incumbent must possess team building and facilitation skills to handle complex interpersonal situations.

#### 5. Scope and Effect

The incumbent provides guidance and makes recommendations to the Training Officer and senior staff within GIPSA on training and employee development matters. Assignments typically involve complex issues or problems relating to skill enhancement or general employee development programs, and may require significant liaison work with GIPSA or other Agency program officials and various members of the Federal training and development community. The program design, development of instructional materials, and evaluation methods are critical to the successful attainment of Agency strategic employee development and training goals. The incumbent's efforts aid management staff in increasing the effectiveness of training and employee development programs within GIPSA. Said efforts have a significant impact on the successful development and skill set of a large number of trainees nationally.

#### 6. Personal Contacts

Program activities necessitate both oral and written communication with program staff; persons in the training and education profession; individuals from other Federal Agencies, public and private entities; and consultants or experts outside of GIPSA. While some contacts are established on a routine basis, the incumbent initiates new contacts which are not routinely established and are necessary to stay current in the training and education profession, as well as to deliver training programs to meet the needs of the programs serviced.

#### 7. Purpose of Contacts

Contacts are made to assess needs and provide advice and guidance on solutions to training and employee development issues and concerns. Contacts are also made, along with the guidance of senior training specialists, to defend recommended approaches for complex training and development problems, which frequently requires considerable negotiating skill in selling new training approaches to program managers. Contacts are also made to exchange relevant information on training and employee development matters.

#### 8. Physical Demands

The work is mostly sedentary and places no special demand on the incumbent.

#### 9. Work Environment

Work is normally performed in an office, classroom, laboratory, and field setting. Occasional travel is required.