Cyber Excepted Service (CES)
HR Elements Occupational Structure

Instructor Guide

Instructor Guide
Lesson 3 Occupational
Structure

This page intentionally left blank

Cyber Excepted Service (CES) HR Elements Course, Lesson 3 Occupational Structure

COURSE OUTCOME

The overall course goal is to prepare HR Professionals to guide supervisors and employees covered under CES for transition to the new personnel system with an overview of the benefits of the Occupational Structure, sub-elements of the Occupational Structure, position alignment process for CES positions, and requirements for CES position descriptions.

METHODOLOGY

Lecture: Transmit information which supplements or enhances reading; promote understanding via explanations; respond to student misconceptions or difficulties; create or engage interest in a new area; and motivate reading or other assignments. Examples of lecture content includes: Create interest in the performance management program, promote understanding via explanations; and respond to student misconceptions or difficulties.

Discussions: Practice thinking and communicating in the subject/discipline; evaluate positions, arguments, or designs; defend own position; identify problems, conflicts and inconsistencies; get feedback from/about students; draw on students' expertise and prior knowledge.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The primary target audience is HR Professionals who service a CES designated component or organization.

About Facilitating

MATERIALS NEEDED

Be sure you have the following materials, which will be needed to complete the activities:

- Instructor Guide/Slides
- Copies of Lesson 1- Ice Breaker Participant Activity Sheet

- Chart paper/easel (at least 3)
- 3"x3" Post-It notes
- Markers for Chart paper
- Computer
- Microphone

SETUP

Prior to a training session, be sure that the following setup has been completed:

- Practice with slides on session computer
- Test slides/practice in room
- Test microphone if used

SPECIAL FACILITATION REQUIREMENTS

Keep the participants actively involved, but watch the time!

BEST PRACTICES

Here are some best practices for facilitating an instructor-led training course.

1. Refer to the Instructor's Guide and rely on the script. Rehearse the script several times so that you can paraphrase it in a natural way. To the degree the schedule allows, try to add information that supports or highlights the points being made in the slide (e.g., add examples from your own experience).

2. Encourage participation. Accomplish this by asking questions and by having the participants interact as directed.

3. Encourage participants to speak in turn.

4. Encourage participants to follow along on the slides.

5. At the end of a lesson, ask the participants what they remember. Let them summarize the major instructional points, if time permits.

6. Keep the atmosphere informal so that the participants are comfortable asking questions, participating in activities, and sharing their knowledge or concerns.

COURSE Introduction and Overview

COURSE NAME

Lesson 3 Occupational Structure

Duration 60

minutes

PURPOSE

The purpose of this lesson is to prepare HR Professionals to guide supervisors and employees covered under CES for transition to the new personnel system with an overview of the benefits of the Occupational Structure, sub-elements of the Occupational Structure, position alignment process for CES positions, and requirements for CES position descriptions.

LESSON 3: Occupational Structure

PURPOSE

The purpose of Lesson 3 is to prepare HR Professionals to guide supervisors and employees covered under CES for transition to the new personnel system with an overview of the benefits of the Occupational Structure, sub-elements of the Occupational Structure, position alignment process for CES positions, and requirements for CES position descriptions.

LEARNING TOPICS

When participants have completed Lesson 3, they will be able to:

- Explain the benefits of the Position Management Structure
- Describe the CES Occupational Structure
- Explain the significance of Grades
- Describe Occupational Group and Series
- Define the corresponding sub-elements of the Position Management
- Describe the Position Alignment process
- Identify the requirements for Position Management descriptions
- Describe the coverage of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- Discuss Implementation Considerations for Occupational Structure
- Practical Exercise
- Conduct a Lesson Review

TIME

The following is a suggested time plan for this lesson. The instructor(s) may adapt it as needed. Note this table does not reflect breaks – use your judgement to determine the timing of breaks for participants.

LESSON	SUGGESTED TIME
Lesson 3: Occupational Structure	50 minutes with one 10 minute break

Instructor Notes

LESSON 3: Occupational Structure

DO - Display the course title slide as participants arrive for training each morning.

- Welcome participants as they arrive for the class
- Thank them for coming

SAY: Welcome participants as they arrive for the class. Thank them for coming.
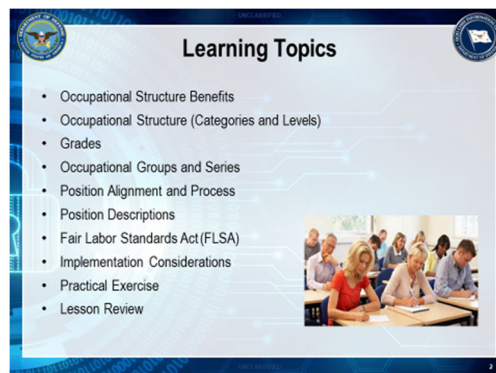
DO - Show Slide 2

SAY: After completing this lesson, you will be able to:
- Explain the benefits of the Occupational Structure
- Describe the Occupational Structure
- Explain the significance of Grades
- Describe Occupational Group and Series
- Define the corresponding sub-elements of the Occupational Structure
- Describe the Position Alignment process
- Identify the requirements for Occupational Structure descriptions
- Describe the coverage of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- Discuss Implementation Considerations for Occupational Structure
- Complete a Practical Exercise
- Conduct a Lesson Review

*Transition:* Now let's take a look at the Occupational Structure benefits.
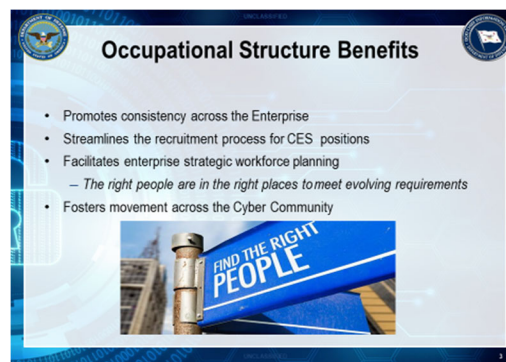
DO - Show Slide 3

SAY: By aligning all CES positions to one common Occupational Structure of the Defense Cyber Enterprise, as a whole, we can:
- More effectively recruit, motivate, develop, and retain highly qualified cyber professionals.
- Better manage and allocate personnel resources across the Defense Cyber Enterprise to meet changing mission requirements.
- Allow DoD Leaders to have greater insight into the capabilities of their human capital resources, and ultimately be able to quickly adjust as required by the mission.
- Facilitate strategic workforce planning across the entire Defense Cyber Enterprise, including developing more horizontal integration, enhanced developmental strategies, and rotational opportunities across the Enterprise.

*Transition:* Now, let's begin exploring the elements of the Occupational Structure.
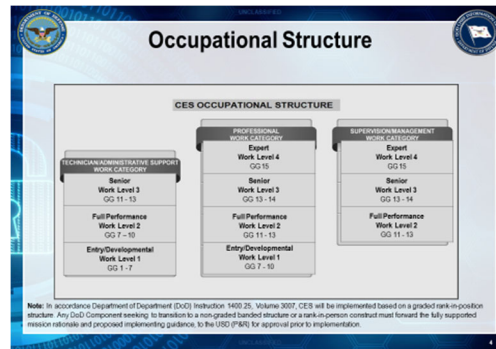
DO - Show Slide 4

SAY: The Occupational Structure allows for work to be assigned and positions to be organized in a way that best accomplishes the Department's cyber mission, while upholding the merit principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

The Occupational Structure follows common core policies and processes for structuring, categorizing, and aligning civilian work that supports both position-based and person-based structures.

Mission categories, work categories, work levels, and grades comprise the Occupational Structure for all Defense Cyber Components.

Transition: Let's discuss Mission Categories
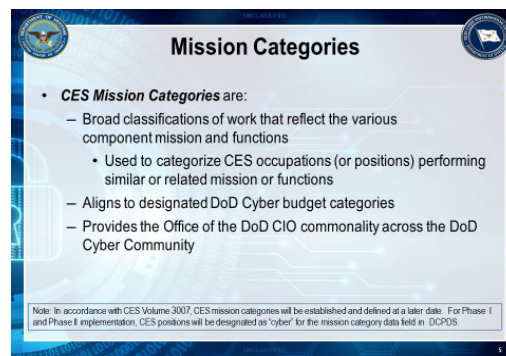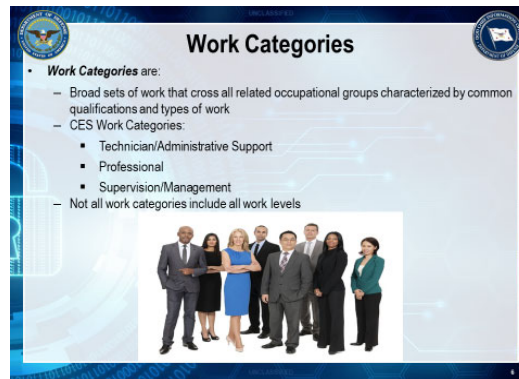

DO - Show Slide 5

SAY: In the near future, the Office of the Department of Defense (DoD) Chief Information Office (CIO) will be establishing mission categories to facilitate strategic alignment and consistency across the Cyber Community.

Mission Categories are broad classifications of work that reflect the various Defense Cyber Component missions and functions, and that align to designated budget categories for the DoD Cyber Budget.

Specifically, there are groups of occupations or positions whose incumbents engage in a specific mission or function.

For Phase I and Phase II implementation, CES positions will be designated as "cyber" for the mission category data field in the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS).

Transition: Let's discuss Work Categories

DO - Show Slide 6

SAY: Work categories are broad sets of work that cross all related occupational groups and are characterized by common qualifications and types of work.

There are three work categories:

- Technician/Administrative Support

- Professional

- Supervision/Management

Transition: Let's closely examine each of the work categories. First, we'll start with the Technician/Administrative category.

DO - Show Slide 7

SAY: The Technician/Administrative Support Work Category includes positions that **primarily involve support** for the operations and functions of a particular type of work or organizational unit, fulfill a mission support role and include activities that are technical or administrative in nature with **qualifications generally acquired through practical experience supplemented by on-the-job and/or specific skills training.**

All employees whose work, or the work of the employees they supervise, is Technician/Administrative Support work are in this work category, including supervisory employees.

The work aligned to this work category is typically 1-grade interval and found in the first three work levels. We will discuss concept of work momentarily.

Transition: Let's review Professional Work Category

DO - Show Slide 8

SAY: The Professional Work Category includes positions where professional or specialized work requires the interpretation and application of concepts, theories, and judgment.

At a minimum, positions in this work category require either a bachelor's degree or equivalent experience.

Transition: Let's examine Supervision/Management Work Category
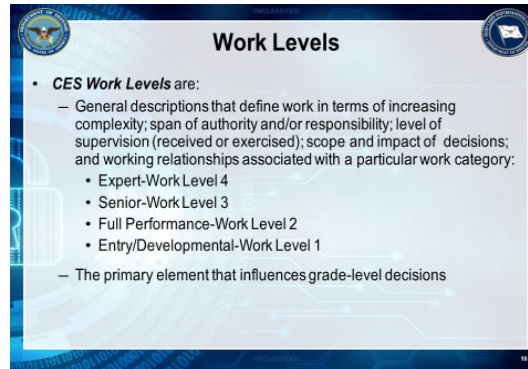

DO - Show Slide 9

SAY: The Supervision/Management Work Category includes positions that primarily involve supervisory and management responsibilities such as planning, directing, and coordinating the operation of units within the Components, executing strategy, overseeing daily operations, managing material, financial or and/or human resources, and so forth.

At a minimum, positions in this work category require either a bachelor's degree or equivalent experience.

Transition: Let's talk about Work Levels.

DO - Show Slide 10

SAY: Work levels are standards that define work in terms of criteria such as increased complexity, span of authority and responsibility, level of supervision, scope and impact of decisions, and working relationships as it relates to a particular work category.

There are four work levels:

- Entry/Developmental

- Full Performance

- Senior

- Expert

These are the primary elements that influence grade-level determinations.

Not all of the work categories that we just discussed are found in all the work levels.

Transition: First, let's go into Entry/Development – Work Level 1

DO - Show Slide 11

SAY:

Entry/Developmental (1):

In both the Professional and the Technician/Administrative Support Work Categories, work at this level includes learning and applying basic procedures and acquiring competencies through training and/or on the-job experience.

Positions in the Technician/Administrative Support Work Category at this level may involve independent performance of duties.

Technician/Administrative Support positions should be placed in this work level when their primary function is the execution of established office procedures and standard program practices, and when typical career patterns for the occupation do not extend to the complexity, variety, and scope of the Full Performance Work Level.

Transition: Second, let's talk through Full Performance – Work Level 2

DO - Show Slide 12

SAY:

Full Performance (2):

Work at this level involves independently performing the full range of non-supervisory duties assigned to the employee.

Employees at this level have successfully completed required entry-level training or developmental activities either within the employing organization or prior to joining the organization.

Employees at this work level have a full understanding of the technical or specialty field; independently handle situations or assignments with minimal day-to-day instruction or supervision; and receive general guidance and direction on new projects or assignments.

Within established priorities and deadlines, full performance employees exercise independent judgment in selecting and applying appropriate work methods, procedures, techniques, and practices in accomplishing their duties and responsibilities. Actions at this level may have impact beyond the work unit and, as a result, employees at this level typically collaborate internally and externally with their peers.

Transition: Third, let's move onto Senior – Work Level 3
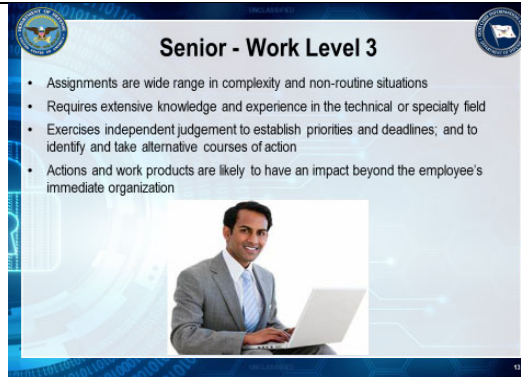
DO - Show Slide 13

SAY:

Senior (3):

Work at this level involves a wide range of complex assignments and non-routine situations that require extensive knowledge and experience in the technical or specialty field.

Receiving broad objectives and guidelines from the supervisor, senior employees independently handle a wide range of complex assignments and non-routine situations and exercise independent judgment to identify and take alternative courses of action.

Following broad objectives and guidelines, employees act independently to establish priorities and deadlines within expectations established by the supervisor and exercise individual judgment to choose alternative guidelines to complete assignments.

Employees may lead and coordinate special projects, teams, tasks, and initiatives and may be required to build and utilize collaborative networks with key contacts within and outside of their immediate organization. Actions at this level are likely to have an impact beyond the employee's immediate organization.

Examples include a (an):

- **Analyst** with broad regional knowledge whom his or her peers seek for his or her experience, or who is selected to lead analytical teams on the preparation of a topical analysis

- **HR professional** who serves as a business partner to management of a significant operating unit with several hundred widely dispersed employees within a Component

- **Facilities (civil) engineer** with design oversight for construction of a major new building

Transition: The very last work level is Expert – Work Level 4
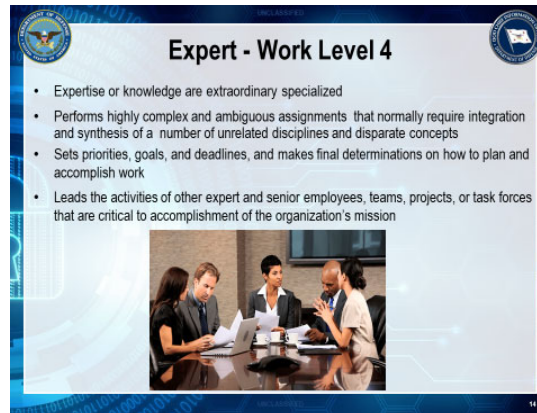
DO - Show Slide 14

SAY:

Expert (4):

Work at this level involves an extraordinary degree of specialized knowledge or expertise to perform highly complex and ambiguous assignments that normally require integration and synthesis of a number of unrelated disciplines and disparate concepts.

Work at this level is only in the professional and supervision/management work categories. Employees at this level set priorities, goals, and deadlines and make final determinations on how to plan and accomplish their work.

Components rely on employees at this level for the accomplishment of critical mission goals and objectives and, as a result, employees may lead the activities of senior and other expert employees, teams, projects, or task forces. Employees at this level create formal networks involving coordination among groups across the Cyber Community and other external organization.

Expert-level positions require DoD leadership and recognition within the DoD or Component as a thought or action leader in a substantive areas.

An Expert is a recognized authority who leads cross DoD working groups; develops new technological, analytical, or operational methods; or applies methods across disciplines to address problems of critical national interest.

Examples include a cyber-analyst who is leading Intelligence Community (IC) thinking on how to use cutting-edge technology or other methods to penetrate hacker and/or threat actor communications or an analyst who is addressing complex relationships in economics and politics.

(Pause)

ASK: Are there any questions on what we have discussed this far in this lesson?

Transition: Now, let's take a look at the Grades.
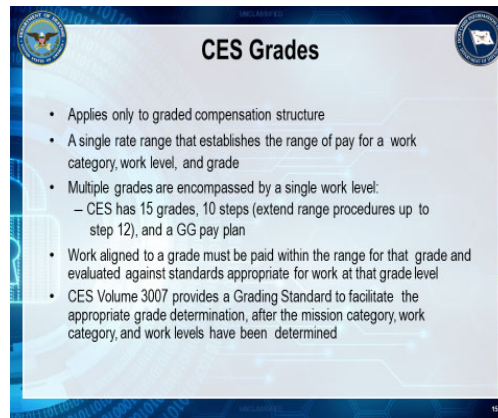
DO - Show Slide 15

SAY: Earlier we learned that once the work level is determined, the next step for those Components operating under the graded structure is to determine the grade to which a position aligns.

CES Grades align with the standard 15 grades used by the GS system and applies the standard 10 steps within each grade, with the exception of the extended range composed of steps 11 and 12.

Grades provide a single rate range that establishes the range of pay for a work category, work level, and grade. Multiple grades are encompassed by a single work level in cases except at the Expert work level, which includes only the GG-15.

The graded Pay Plan is "GG."

Work aligned to a grade must be paid within the range for that grade and evaluated against standards appropriate for work at that grade level.

A CES Grading Standard for supervisory and non-supervisory positions is provided in Volume 3007, to help Component Position Classifiers to identify the appropriate grade **only after** the mission category, work category, and work levels have been determined.

The grading criteria for nonsupervisory and supervisory and managerial positions assesses five job content factors. For each factor, a degree of difficulty and its associated point total is assigned to a position. The points for each of the five factors are then totaled and compared to the grade conversion tables in Volume 3007, which identifies the GG Grade that corresponds to the point total. There are two grade conversion tables, one for nonsupervisory positions, and one for supervisory and managerial positions. Because the work level has already been determined, the grade alignment must be to a grade that is included in the appropriate work level.

While all Professional Work Category employees are expected to attain the Full Performance Work Level, not all positions in the Technician/Administrative Support Work Category progress to the Full Performance Work Level because work in this work category is often specific to the position or location. Also, Component position structures and work available may not support such progression.

Transition: Let's review Occupational Group and Series.

DO - Show Slide 16

SAY: Occupational groups are one or more functionally related occupations, specialties, families, or classes of positions that share distinct, common technical qualifications, competency requirements, career paths, and progression patterns.

A term you'll frequently hear related to occupational groups is occupational series. These are classes of positions that share distinct, common technical qualifications, competency requirements, career paths, and progression patterns (0201, 2210, 1550, etc.).

Selecting the Occupational Group isn't officially part of the top-down approach process, but at some point in the process, Component Position Classifiers will consider the appropriate occupational group for a position.

The continued usage of OPM occupational groups, series, and titles are based on CES policy and Component guidance.

Transition: Let's review Position Alignment.
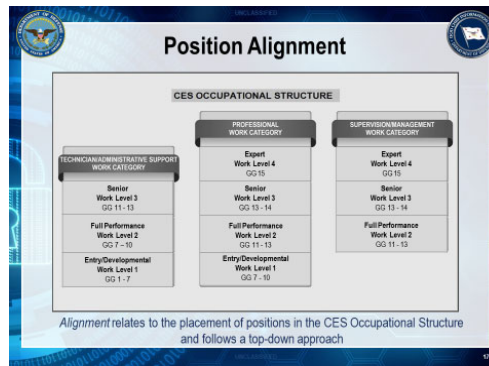
DO - Show Slide 17

SAY: CES is exempt from Title 5 position classification procedures. Hence, the process for CES position classification, although similar in nature, differs from that of the competitive service.

The CES Alignment Process, places positions in the CES Occupational Structure.

Transition: Let's take a look at this top-down approach in relation to the elements of the Position Alignment Process.

DO - Show Slide 18

SAY: Alignment follows a top-down approach, starting with identifying the appropriate mission category, followed by the work category, work level, and appropriate pay grade.

DO - **(Walk participants thru the steps)**

SAY: At some point in the top-down process, a Component alignment specialist will consider the appropriate occupational group for the position. The occupational group, series, and title are based on component guidance in accordance with CES policies.

Transition: Let's continue with Position Alignments

DO - Show Slide 19

SAY: As a reminder, Position Alignment requires determining the mission category, work category, and work level of a position before determining the grade.

Position Alignment considers the position's level of difficulty, mission of the organization, and comparison of work to specific CES standards.

Position Alignment determines the best alignment, focusing on regular and recurring work and responsibilities.

Position Alignment under CES policy considers the overall nature and purpose of the position's duties and responsibilities, along with the requisite qualifications in determining appropriate alignment to the CES Occupational Structure.

Therefore, accurate descriptions of work are key, to correct position alignment outcomes and serves as documentation.

Transition: Let's now take a closer look at Position Descriptions.
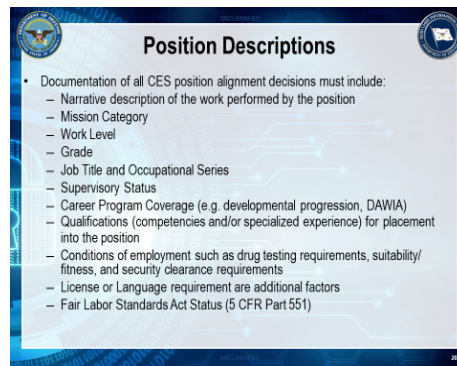
DO - Show Slide 20

SAY: A position description is a description of the duties and responsibilities assigned to a specific position (or group of positions performing the same duties). The position description is the document used to assign the appropriate occupational series, title, mission category, work level, and grade.

CES policy provides Component flexibility for the form and format of the document that describes the work, so long as CES policy for position alignment is followed.

Accurate position descriptions document:
- The proper alignment of each position to the Occupational Structure
- Status under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- Career program coverage (e.g. developmental progression, DAWIA)
- Qualifications for placement into the position
- Conditions of employment such as drug testing requirements and security clearance requirements
- Additional factors such as a license or language requirement
- Information from position descriptions can be used:

o   To establish well-founded recruitment and staffing plans and ensure qualified candidates are selected for assignment to the position.
o   To develop meaningful performance plans aligned to the requirements of the position and the mission of the organization.
o   To identify job-related training requirements.

Inaccurate position descriptions can:
- Cripple efforts to find qualified candidates.
- Cause alignment of positions to incorrect work categories, work levels or bands/grades.
- Lead to the placement of unqualified candidates.
- Impede mission accomplishment.

Transition: Let's pause for just a moment, and explore the Fair Labor Standards Act.

DO - Show Slide 21

SAY: FLSA coverage is established using guidance contained in Part 551 of the Code of Federal Regulations (5 CFR, Part 551).

Exemption status is based on the job position, not on the individual employee, and may be based on the geographic location of the positions (5 CFR 551.104).

An FLSA exempt employee is one who is not covered by the minimum wage and overtime provisions of FLSA.

An FLSA nonexempt employee is one who is covered by the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Act.

As a rule of thumb, assume that FLSA covers the position (non-exempt status) unless there is a clear determination that one or more of the FLSA exemption criteria apply.

Typically, FLSA covers technician and administrative support positions unless they are geographically located in an exempt area, e.g., foreign area.

To determine the exemption status of the position, carefully consider the actual work in relation to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) criteria found at 5 CFR, Part 551

Movement of an employee to a different work category or work level may affect the employee's FLSA exemption status. Remember, exemption status is based on the position, not the employee.

In applying FLSA rules to CES positions, you should interpret the CFR language as follows: "Grade controlling duties" are those duties that serve as the basis for determining the position's alignment to a work category, work level, band or grade.

Only two of the work levels for the Technician and Administrative Support Work Category, work levels 2 and 3, require decisions as to whether a position is FLSA exempt or not.

Work Level 1 is automatically considered non-exempt because of the duties and requirements of positions in this work level.

Transition: Let's discuss some implications for CES Implementation.

DO - Show Slide 22

SAY: There are some special considerations that all DoD Components must remember as they begin implementing CES.

DO - **Walk thru the slide in detail with the participants.**

SAY: CES implementation at your organization does not equate to position upgrades and position downgrades. Remember the nature of work, position duties, occupational series, and grade will not change at the point of conversion.

If there is no change in the job duties then there is no change to the position description that was previously classified.

Therefore, the only requirement for aligning positions of employees that elect to OPT-into CES is a new Position Description Cover Sheet that documents the alignment to CES Occupational Structural Elements.

However, new or vacant positions must be classified or re-classified in accordance with the CES Occupational Elements and Grading Standards.

In accordance with CES Volume 3007, position classification and position management responsibilities are delegated down to the Component's Servicing HR Office.

Therefore, any pre-exiting desk audits, organizational structural reviews, established billet structures (i.e. full performance grade levels) will remain and should be handled in accordance with local Component guidance. It is highly recommended that any pre-exiting matters such as these, be placed on hold until after CES position alignment is completed, and handled as separate actions.

Transition: Let's now do a Practical Exercise and apply the Occupational Structure information learned.

Position Alignment Exercise

- Instructions:
  - Each group will be given 20 minutes to review and assess an assigned position description:
  - Task:
    - Identify the appropriate work category and work level
    - Record the rationale for each determination
    - Deliver a 5 to 8 minute presentation to the larger group with your findings

DO - Show Slide 23

Prepare for Interactive Group Exercise

Pass out Participant Work Sheets

Instructions:

Have the participants break up into small groups. Pass out the Position Alignment - Participants Exercise Sheets. Assign each group a different exercise to work on. Then begin reading the exercise purpose and instructions.

SAY: The goal of the Position Alignment exercise is to practice aligning a description of work to the CES Occupational Structure. For this exercise you are a team of Position Classifiers. You will have 20 minutes to complete this exercise.

First read the position description that your team has been assigned to. Then, work as a team to identify the appropriate work category and work level for a position. When needed, please refer back our discussion on Work Categories and Work Levels.

Please develop a rationale for your determinations.

Select a spokesperson to deliver a 5 to 8 minute presentation of your group's findings.

Transition: Now it's time to do a Lesson Review of Occupational Structure.
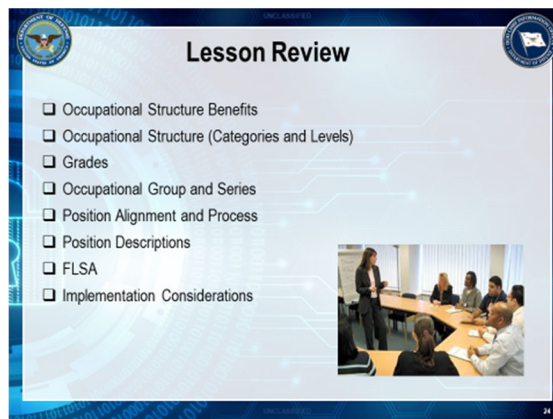
DO - Show Slide 24

SAY: This is the end of the Occupational Structure lesson, you should now be able to do the following:

- Explain the benefits of the Occupational Structure
- Describe the Occupational Structure
- Explain the significance of Grades
- Describe Occupational Group and Series
- Define the corresponding sub-elements of the Occupational Structure
- Describe the Position Alignment process
- Identify the requirements for Position Management descriptions
- Describe the coverage of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- Know the Implementation Considerations for Occupational Structure

This page intentionally left blank