

**Department of Homeland Security (DHS):
Development of Enterprise-wide, Integrated Competency-Based Staffing and
Performance Management Systems (MaxHR)**

Intended Results

DHS's Goals:

- Integrated, state-of-the-art, results-oriented human capital systems to support the mission of maintaining homeland security, in accordance with President's Management Agenda.
- Implementation of effective, automated staffing, performance management, compensation, progression, and training and development systems.
- Centralized human capital systems to facilitate integration of previously separate agencies and a workforce of hundreds of thousands that have now merged to form DHS.

Achieved Results

Well after the DHS contractor team began work, PDRI was sought out directly by DHS to provide performance management and staffing system design and validation capabilities.

PDRI achieved the following results:

- Job groups defined by categorizing jobs with similar performance requirements and using these as the foundation for integrated human capital systems.
- A *Results-Oriented* performance management process developed to effectively and defensibly support compensation decisions.
- Customized competency models, including key work behaviors that captured the full range of performance requirements for DHS jobs developed by 1) conducting benchmarking studies, 2) facilitating focus groups with Agency-wide representation, and 3) surveying the entire DHS workforce using web-based job analytic surveys.
- Performance standards describing "Below Expectations," "Achieved Expectations," and "Achieved Excellence" developed and implemented for all DHS professional jobs.
- "*Achieving Results*" performance standards developed and implemented for evaluating extent to which employees meet individualized goals/objectives; these aid managers in accurately distinguishing employees' level of contribution on the job.
- A process for making competency-based qualifications and staffing decisions designed; this innovative approach of basing staffing on competency qualifications can serve as an effective model for other Federal agencies.
- A comprehensive analysis of Federal Staffing and Qualifications guidelines and procedures performed; ensured that proposed competency-based qualification system design was consistent with regulatory, legal, and professional standards.
- Job-specific work requirements, employee competencies, and certification and training requirements currently being developed for each of DHS' approximately 200 occupations.
- Qualification standards currently being developed for approx. 200 DHS jobs to make (1) entry-level selection decisions, (2) developmental progression/pay decisions for entry band, and (3) progression decisions for other bands (journeyman, expert, supervisor, and manager).

- Tools to assess candidate competency qualifications and job relevant education and experience requirements currently being developed; will be automated.
- All tools, products, and processes validated to comply with legal and professional standards necessary to withstand legal challenges.
- All products and services delivered on schedule and within budget.

PDRI successfully utilized its standard project management process to perform this work. Specific challenges related to the current project included:

- An extremely aggressive timeline. Because PDRI was brought in after the work had begun, it was necessary to get up to speed quickly, effectively leverage past work, and perform with utmost efficiency to complete the required work in less than six months.
- Continual requests for changes to schedules and requirements. PDRI worked in a collaborative, responsive, and flexible manner to address these changes.
- The need to incorporate feedback early and often. PDRI used rapid prototyping so that stakeholders would have a concrete understanding of deliverables as early as possible.
- A highly charged, complex political environment. PDRI had to help sell an approach, develop consensus between DHS component organizations, and coordinate and collaborate with representatives and members from multiple unions.
- Use of customer personnel and facilities. Developed a specific breakdown of requirements and schedule to facilitate tracking and delivery of customer materials/personnel.
- The need to quickly integrate and work effectively with several other contractors. PDRI engaged other contractors as full, integrated partners, resulting in a shared understanding of requirements, expectations, and the customer's environment.