Making the Difference: The Presidential Management Fellows Program

Owen Highfill
Federal Housing Finance Agency

University of Georgia
September 7, 2011
The Partnership works to revitalize our federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and by transforming the way government works.
On July 30, 2008, President Bush signed the Housing and Economic Recovery Act (HERA)
Agenda

★ Government Mythbusting
★ My Federal Story
★ The Presidential Management Fellows Program
  • Requirements, Application, Nomination, Assessment, Appointment
★ Resources for Students and Jobseekers
★ Q&A
Federal Employment Myths

- The political science major myth
- The low pay myth
- The Washington, D.C. myth
- The bureaucracy myth
Myth #1: The Political Science Major Myth

★ Federal employees are all social sciences majors. The government doesn’t need people with other backgrounds.
### Busting Myth #1: Find Your Federal Fit

#### 2010 Entry-level Hires (GS-5, GS-6, GS-7, GS-9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th># Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>11,503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and Public Health</td>
<td>7,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>6,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting and Budget</td>
<td>5,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation</td>
<td>4,177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>3,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science and Psychology</td>
<td>2,881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Architecture</td>
<td>2,519</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Myth #2: The Low Pay Myth

Salaries for federal employees are low, low, low. You’re better off going to work for the private sector.
Busting Myth #2: General Schedule

- Federal salaries are set by the General Schedule (GS)
  - Grades 1-15
- Each pay grade has 10 steps
- Varies by geographic location
- Within a few years, you can progress through several grades
### Busting Myth #2: Pay Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Qualifying education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GS-5</td>
<td>4 academic years above high school leading to a bachelor’s degree OR a bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| GS-7   | Bachelor’s degree with one of the following:  
|        | • Class standing (upper third of class)  
|        | • 3.0 or higher GPA; 3.5 or higher GPA in major  
|        | • Honor society membership |
| GS-9   | Master’s degree (or equivalent) |
| GS-11  | Doctorate degree |

PMFs are usually hired at GS-9 or GS-11

Source: opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e5.asp
### Busting Myth #2: Sample 2011 Starting Salaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>GS-5</th>
<th>GS-7</th>
<th>GS-9</th>
<th>GS-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>$32,722</td>
<td>$40,534</td>
<td>$49,581</td>
<td>$59,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>$34,316</td>
<td>$42,508</td>
<td>$51,995</td>
<td>$62,909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>$33,414</td>
<td>$41,390</td>
<td>$50,628</td>
<td>$61,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>$35,309</td>
<td>$43,738</td>
<td>$53,500</td>
<td>$64,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>$37,073</td>
<td>$45,923</td>
<td>$56,172</td>
<td>$67,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>$34,075</td>
<td>$42,209</td>
<td>$51,630</td>
<td>$62,467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://opm.gov/oca/10tables/indexGS.asp](http://opm.gov/oca/10tables/indexGS.asp)

Then, 1-2 years later... possible PMF career progression.
Busting Myth #2: Benefits of Government Service

★ Student loan repayment assistance
  • Some agencies may repay up to $10,000 of your student loans each year
  • In 2009, 36 agencies provided 8,454 employees with $61.8 million in assistance

★ Flexible schedules and generous vacation packages

★ Training and professional development

★ Competitive health and retirement benefits

★ Excellent advancement opportunities
Myth #3: The Washington, D.C. Myth

★ If you work for the federal government, you have to work in Washington, D.C. Say goodbye to your friends and family.
Busting Myth #3: Federal Jobs Are Everywhere!

16% in the Washington, D.C. metro region

Plus 50,000 jobs overseas!
Myth #4: The Bureaucracy Myth

Federal employees are paper pushers who are caught up in bureaucracy. Your work as a federal employee doesn’t make a difference.
Busting Myth #4: My Federal Story

★ Conservatorship Operations Specialist at the Federal Housing Finance Agency
  • Conservatorship of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac
Busting Myth #4: My Career Path

How does someone with a Master’s degree in Contemporary American Literature end up working for the federal government as a Presidential Management Fellow?
Busting Myth #4: My Favorite Federal Moment

★ Presidential Management Fellows Orientation, Gettysburg, PA
Current PMF Program in Place through the end of 2011

★ Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF)

- Federal government’s most prestigious fellowship (www.pmf.gov)
- Students must apply during fall semester of senior year of graduate school (September 15-25, 2011)
- Students must be nominated by their schools
- PMFs can be non-competitively converted to permanent positions
Recent Changes to the Federal Hiring Process

★ Pathways Programs
  • December 2010 Executive Order
  • Proposed rule currently in comment period until October 4, 2011

★ For more information, visit www.opm.gov/hiringreform/pathways or www.ourpublicservice.org
Pathways Programs: PMF

★ Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF)

• Open to current graduate students and ones who have completed a graduate degree within the past two years
• Rigorous assessment process
• Paid, two-year program
• PMFs can be non-competitively converted to permanent positions
PMF Requirements

★ Individual Development Plan (IDP)
★ Performance plan
★ 80 hours of training per year
★ Developmental assignment
Benefits of the PMF Program

- Rotational assignments
- Mentoring
- Executive interviews/shadowing
- Additional training opportunities
PMF Application Process

★★ USAjobs.gov

- Upload resume
- Fill out questionnaire
- Submit Veteran’s Preference documents
- Print Nomination form
- Submit application
Keys to Creating a Federal Resume

★ USAjobs.gov Resume Builder
★ Use keywords/action words
★ Be specific
★ Check status
PMF Nomination Process

- Check with your department head or dean
- Submit nomination form to your nominating official
- Application is not complete until nomination form is submitted!
Common Mistakes When Applying

★ Eligibility: Must graduate between September 1, 2011 and August 31, 2012

★ Application Timeframe: September 15-25, 2011

★ Be prepared before you start
PMF Assessment Process

Online assessment
- Email invitation
- Timed assessment

In-person assessment
- November-December 2011
- 1 hour
- Locations: Atlanta, Washington, Boston, Chicago, Denver, San Francisco
PMF Appointment Process

★ Finalist status lasts 1 year
★ Online job search
★ 3-day job fair
  • Washington, DC
  • February or March 2012
Resources for Students and Jobseekers

- Bestplacetowork.org
- USA.gov
Bestplacetowork.org

The Best Places to Work

What Are You Interested In?
You can assign a rating to the categories below to indicate their importance. Select the item you want to include in the report, and then click the dots in the row to add or remove stars.

- Employee Skills/Mission Match
- Strategic Management
- Teamwork
- Effective Leadership
- Performance Based Rewards and Advancement
- Training and Development
- Support for Diversity
- Family Friendly Culture and Benefits
- Pay
- Work/Life Balance

Generate Custom Report
A-Z Index of U.S. Government Departments and Agencies

A
- Administration for Children and Families (ACF)
- Administration for Native Americans
- Administration on Aging (AoA)
- Administration on Developmental Disabilities
- Administrative Committee of the Federal Register
- Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- African Development Foundation
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)
- Agency for International Development
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
- Agricultural Marketing Service
- Agricultural Research Service
- Agriculture Department (USDA)
Q&A?

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