

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
MERIT SYSTEMS OVERSIGHT AND EFFECTIVENESS
DALLAS OVERSIGHT DIVISION
CLASSIFICATION APPEAL DECISION
Under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [the appellant]

Position: Supervisory Audiovisual Production Specialist, GS-1071-12
Position Number: 13640

Organization: Multimedia Production Flight
[the installation] Training Squadron
Air Combat Command, U.S. Air Force
[a large Air Force base]

Decision: Supervisory Audiovisual Production Specialist, GS-1071-12

OPM Decision Number: C-1071-12-01

Approved by:

/s/ Jodi Guss

Bonnie J. Brandon
Classification Appeals Officer

10/16/97

Date

Copy of decision sent to:

[the appellant]

[director, Civilian Personnel Operations]

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Introduction

The appellant serves as Supervisory Audiovisual Production Specialist, GS-1071-12, in the Multimedia Production Flight, [training squadron at a large Air Force installation]. The appellant believes that the position should be classified as Visual Information Administrator, GS-1001-13 or GS-1071-13. He appealed to the Department of Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS). The CPMS decision, issued on March 25, 1997, denied the appeal and confirmed the original classification of the position as Supervisory Audiovisual Production Specialist, GS-1071-12. Subsequently, the appellant filed an appeal with this office under the provisions of chapter 51 of title 5, United States Code.

This is the final administrative decision of the Government, subject to discretionary review only under the conditions and time limits specified in sections 511.605 and 511.613 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Position Information

The [installation] operates a television production facility supporting major television production and interactive videodisc requirements for the entire Air Combat Command and other Department of Defense agencies. The Multimedia Production Flight is tasked with operating this facility, providing support that includes formal Air Force training courses and other interactive training programs, an electronic maintenance function which provides direct engineering support to Air Combat Command and the television and digital imaging units.

As Director of Multimedia, the appellant is personally responsible for managing, supervising, planning, coordinating, directing and controlling the television production, digital imaging, and television maintenance functions. As such, he obligates and dispenses the annual operations budget and is responsible for the management and operation of all assigned technical assets. He ensures the performance of the full range of supervisory duties for a workforce of approximately 20 employees, including a GS-1071 employee and military personnel of various General Schedule and Wage Grade equivalencies.

Series and Title Determination

The appellant requested that his position be classified as Visual Information Administrator in either the GS-1001 General Arts and Information Series or the GS-1071 Audiovisual Production Series.

The GS-1001 series includes all positions the duties of which are to administer, supervise, or perform (1) any combination of work characteristic of two or more series in this group where (a) no one type of work is series controlling, (b) the paramount qualification requirements are not characteristic of another series in the group, and (c)

the combination of work is not specifically provided for in another series, or (2) other work typical of this group for which no other series has been established. As previously mentioned, the principal duties of this position are managing, supervising, planning, coordinating, directing, and controlling the television production, digital imaging, and electronic maintenance functions. The appellant's position does not fit within the GS-1001 series since the duties and responsibilities match the work covered by one particular series within the GS-1000 group.

The agency has assigned the appellant's position to the Audiovisual Production Series, GS-1071, and we concur with this determination. As described on page 1 of the classification standard for the GS-1071 series (dated October 1992), that series includes work requiring the ability to plan, organize, and direct the work of writers, editors, actors, narrators, musicians, set designers, audio and lighting technicians, camera operators, and other associated technical personnel to produce, select, and arrange the actions, sounds, and visual effects required for the finished production. As the Director of Multimedia for the [the installation], the appellant is required to have knowledge of a wide range of television production techniques, principles, practices, creative conceptualization, methods, oral and written rendering of abstract ideas, integration of media formats, and methodology for producing a complete and instructionally sound original television and audiovisual productions which are technically on par with commercially produced products, and skill of applying this knowledge to productions lacking conventional approaches and established formats. Duties involving the administration and management of television and video multimedia production and its operating budget properly belong in the Audiovisual Production series, GS-1071.

The titling instructions in the standard for the GS-1071 series establish "Audiovisual Production Specialist" as the proper title for positions that meet the requirements for positions involved in a variety of functions during different phases of a production to include directing, editing, script writing, camera operating, set lighting, and video electronic graphics. The prefix "Supervisory" is to be used when the position meets the criteria for the appropriate supervisory grade evaluation guide. Thus, the appellant's position is properly titled Supervisory Audiovisual Production Specialist.

Grade Level Determination

Both the GS-1071 standard and the General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG), which provides criteria for grading supervisory work in general (i.e., regardless of the type of work overseen), are used to evaluate the appellant's position. The overall grade of the position is the higher level of either the appellant's supervisory or nonsupervisory work.

Evaluation Using the GS-1071 Standard

The standard for the Audiovisual Production Series uses the Factor Evaluation System (FES) which employs nine factors. Under the FES, each factor level description in a standard describes the minimum characteristics needed to receive credit for the described level. Therefore, if a position fails to meet the criteria in a factor level description in any significant aspect, it must be credited at a lower level. Conversely, the position may exceed those criteria in some aspects and still not be credited at a higher level. Our evaluation of the appellant's position as compared to the nine factors in the standard follows.

Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts which the employee must understand to do acceptable work (e.g., steps, procedures, practices, rules, policies, theories, principles, and concepts) and the nature and extent of the skills needed to apply those knowledges. To be used as a basis for selecting a level under this factor, a knowledge must be required and applied.

The appellant uses a variety of television production techniques to produce audiovisual products which are on a par with those that are commercially produced. He must have knowledge of the most recent advancements in television production techniques, including principles and practices. His methods, oral and written rendering of abstract ideas, integration of media formats, and methodology for producing a complete and instructionally sound original product are required for productions lacking conventional approaches and established formats. He must have knowledge of the most recent advancements in multimedia, television, graphic and technical illustration, computer graphics, three-dimensional animation, digital and conventional photography, and sound recording and editing. Additionally, he must have knowledge of the agency's visual information policy, plans, regulations, objectives, operational goals, procedures and routines at all levels of management in order to carry out his supervisory duties and participate as a member of the management team.

At Level 1-7, work requires a knowledge of a wide range of principles, practices, methods, and techniques for communicating information through audiovisual means. This typically includes knowledge of all phases of audiovisual production, programming, and editing from inception to completion, and skill in modifying or adapting standard practices and procedures. These knowledges and skills are used to develop contract specifications, coordinate logistics, control expenses, and arrange procurement for complex programs with significant planning and scheduling problems. Employees apply knowledge of audiovisual production to a wide range of television and radio broadcast and production techniques, in rehearsing and directing the actions

of production crews and casts, and in composing complex live or prerecorded programs with multiple visual or audio elements and other complicating features. Knowledge of contracting procedures and legal requirements is used to develop contract specifications for specific kinds of audiovisual services through competitive contract and acquisition channels. As an example, at this level, employees produce a wide range of videotaped programs related to the mission of the agency, conferring with clients to determine objectives, extent of subject-matter coverage needed and budgetary restrictions.

The appellant's position meets Level 1-7 in that he uses an expanded range of principles, practices, methods, and techniques for communicating information through audiovisual means. While the Air Force recognizes the uniqueness of the complexity of the Multimedia Flight's productions, the training and educational productions are moderately complex, utilizing traditional and established approaches. Viewing audiences are primarily personnel in the Air Combat Command, as well as the Air Force and other governmental agencies. The fact that the Air Force provides productions upon request to civilian networks and/or channels, does not alter the initial target audience. The appellant must meet with clients on projects and explain what is required. He must have knowledge of contracts and be able to adapt different production practices into a project to meet the clients' needs. His knowledge requirements include the ability to recognize problems within the work setting, fully meeting Level 1-7.

Employees meeting Level 1-8 apply knowledges derived from a mastery of the methods, techniques, and practices associated with the development of original television or motion picture productions, and skill in applying this knowledge to the design of highly complex, large-scale projects. They use this knowledge to conceptualize and design productions where there is no established format or where obstacles exist to traditional approaches and the program content and treatment of the subject are left largely to the discretion of the employee.

Additionally, employees at Level 1-8 have knowledge of the most recent advancements in the fields of video or motion picture technology and of the range and level of sophistication of national or international viewing habits. This knowledge is used to develop programming technically and aesthetically comparable to that produced by the commercial television and film industries, adapted to audience characteristics and desired reactions to the product.

The appellant's work falls short of Level 1-8. While there is no question that the appellant's position is complex and somewhat unique within the Air Force, the level of complexity, the scale of the productions, and the establishment of format envisioned at Level 1-8, is not met. The target audience of the appellant's finished products, clearly, is the U.S. Air Force's Air Combat Command. Although the Air Force may make these

training productions available to other audiences, they fail to meet the level of production sophistication required where national or international viewing audiences are the primary target. Furthermore, the programs produced by the Multimedia Flight are not intended for nationwide viewing and do not involve the wide variety of drama and emotion required to reach a broad and diverse nationwide audience. The Multimedia Flight produces training aids that, while sophisticated and produced with state-of-the-art equipment, are tailored with a very specific format for a specific audience within the Air Combat Command and, occasionally, other agencies and private enterprises.

Level 1-7 and 1250 points are credited.

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee's responsibilities, and the review of completed work.

The [Squadron] Commander provides general supervision to the appellant who has delegated authority for exercising wide latitude and independence in the management and operation of the Multimedia Flight. Assignments are derived through the general goals and objectives set by the Squadron Commander. The appellant plans all phases of production, coordinates and establishes schedules, develops ideas, recommends treatment of topics, resolves differences between the clients and production personnel, and interprets policy when an impasse is reached. The appellant uses his own initiative to determine what methods or approaches should be used to achieve desired ends. He acts independently in all facets of multimedia operation management, subject to agency directives. The appellant approves individual production requests, communicates broad objectives to producers/directors, assigns functional responsibility, and delegates continuing responsibility for their completion, according to established regulations and standards.

At Level 2-4, the supervisor provides overall objectives and resource limitations of the production to the employee, who participates with the supervisor in developing deadlines. The employee works with the supervisor or client to establish the extent of coverage required and to develop specific ideas on how best to present the subject. The employee independently plans and carries out all phases of the production, resolving most differences that arise with clients and other production personnel on technical and artistic considerations; coordinates the work with clients, contractors, camera operators, actors, editors, and other personnel involved in the production process; and interprets policy regarding the treatment of given topics.

The agency evaluated the appellant's position at Level 2-4, and the appellant does not disagree. We find that the appellant's position meets and does not exceed Level 2-4.

Level 2-4 and 450 points are credited.

Factor 3, Guidelines

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them.

The agency evaluated this factor at Level 3-4, and the appellant does not disagree. At this level, the subject to be depicted is presented only in conceptual terms and guidelines are limited to general agency policies governing program content. The format, style, and treatment of the topic are largely left to the discretion of the employee. The appellant has several areas left to his discretion since the subject matter presented may not always be defined. This may include such things as presentation, design development, and the production process. The appellant's position meets Level 3-4 in that the appellant determines format, treatment, and style of the production, and uses judgment to solve problems, manage workflow, and utilize resources to meet the client's needs.

Level 3-4 and 450 points are credited.

Factor 4, Complexity

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods in the work performed.

At Level 4-4, the work involves varied projects requiring the application of a wide range of planning and production processes. At this level, the projects are generally typical of those produced within the organization, but no specific format or treatment is specified in advance and the employee must conceptualize and work out most of the details of the finished production. The productions are designed to not only impart information but also to attract and maintain audience attention and to emphasize certain points through the creative use of special production techniques. The employee makes decisions or provides advice on matters that influence the basic content and aesthetic character of the final product.

The projects at Level 4-4 typically require a significant amount of coordination during all stages of the production process, such as contracting for a number of professional services, scheduling the appearance of prominent guests, arranging for the use of several on-location production sites, and developing specially designed sets. The employee must often resolve significant technical or interpersonal difficulties that arise during the course of the production. These may include such problems as improvising to ensure success when retakes are impossible, compensating for the absence of a guest on a live program, settling creative differences between production staff and

cast, and resolving labor issues related to contract or union requirements, work hours or conditions, and other matters.

The appellant's position meets Level 4-4. He develops and maintains professional relationships within the agency, Department of Defense, and private industry involved with audiovisual, television, and instructional applications. The productions of the Multimedia Flight are highly creative in nature and deal with a unique subject matter, requiring a high degree of imagination and abstract thought to conceptualize and work out details of the finished production. The appellant is responsible for meshing the different personalities of the production staff with the customers to assure a productive working environment.

At Level 4-5, the work involves producing a wide range of audiovisual products using many different production methods and techniques. At this level, employees serve as project managers with responsibility for actively participating with clients in exploring new means of presenting information in audiovisual format. Productions are usually intended for mass viewing and are required to be of the same level of technical and aesthetic quality as those produced by the large commercial production companies. In addition, the productions are typically large-scale, require many months of preplanning, and are complicated by the controversial, sensitive, or emotional nature of the subject matter. These elements impose very difficult coordination requirements in, for example, assuring that the views of all groups interested in the project have been considered or that major ideas are presented in a manner that will engender understanding, empathy, or support. The employee makes decisions that determine the way the subject will be treated. This involves gauging such intangible elements as audience attitudes and probable reactions, and designing productions that will achieve multiple objectives, such as to inform, inspire, influence, and entertain.

The appellant's position does not fully meet Level 4-5. The productions are intended for a segment of the population confined to the Air Combat Command and, to a lesser degree, the Air Force and the Department of Defense. There is no question that the appellant uses the latest equipment currently in use throughout the industry and that he provides very important work for the Air Force and handles problems relative to equipment availability and compatibility, personnel skills and availability, production contingencies stemming from revised schedules and changed commitments by customers and/or active participants such as actors, subject-matter experts, etc. However, the products of this work are intended for viewing by a limited audience rather than mass viewing on a national or international scale as indicated in the standard. The appellant's products are intended for a specific audience, usually confined to the Air Combat Command, which is less than a national or universal audience.

Level 4-4 and 225 points are credited.

Factor 5, Scope and Effect

Scope and effect covers the relationship between the nature of the work (i.e., the purpose, breadth, and depth of the assignment), and the effect of the work products or services both within and outside the organization.

At Level 5-4, the purpose of the work is to plan or execute audiovisual productions characterized by breadth or depth of subject-matter coverage and involving many individual audio and/or visual components. The work typically involves a number of unusual production problems in planning ways to convey abstract themes or moods or to depict complex activities, or in directing live broadcasts. The work affects a wide range of agency activities, such as training and education efforts aimed at employees throughout a major organization and its subordinate field units, comparable activities in other agencies, or major activities of commercial audiovisual production companies.

At Level 5-5, the purpose of the work is to plan the audiovisual coverage of critical news stories or important public information or educational features. The work is complicated by such factors as rapidly changing events, controversial subject-matter, or shifting or ambivalent public attitudes towards the topic. The work affects the well-being of substantial numbers of people either on a national or international scale by informing them of world events or providing information vital to public health or safety.

The appellant's position provides primary mission support for formal Air Combat Command training courses and television programs supporting Department of Defense agencies. Assignments are confined to Department of Defense training and educational requirements as deemed by the Air Force. The content of the programs produced include public service announcements, historical dramas, safety awareness, critical reviews, accident investigations, etc., resulting in a number of unusual production problems. The appellant is responsible for initiating, administering, and interpreting Air Force policies and directives down to the flight level concerning personnel management and television and multimedia operation. He considers various technical and management approaches to problems involving manpower and equipment levels and manpower utilization. These position requirements meet the criteria in Level 5-4. Level 5-5 is not met in that the coverage of critical news stories that inform or explain on changing events is not required by the appellant's position. Types of assignments as described in Level 5-5 would normally be found in a private national broadcasting company. Further, the appellant's position does not provide on a regular and recurring basis information essential to the public health and/or safety, and does not advise the audience on work events.

Level 5-4 and 225 points are credited.

Factor 6, Personal Contacts and Factor 7, Purpose of Contacts

These factors include face-to-face contacts and telephone dialogue with persons not in the supervisory chain and the purpose for which these contacts are made. The highest level of the purpose of contacts, which is a regular and recurring part of the position, is matched with the highest level of personal contacts, which is associated with the purpose of the contacts identified.

Level 3 of the Persons Contacted criteria consists of contacts with individuals or groups from outside the agency on matters for which there is no routine working relationship already established. The appellant's position meets this level since it is responsible for the planning, advising, and coordinating work for the purpose of resolving operating problems by motivating or influencing contacts to work toward mutual goals.

Level b of the Purpose of Contacts criteria includes planning, coordinating, or advising on work efforts or resolving technical problems by influencing individuals or groups who are working toward mutual goals and are basically cooperative. The appellant's position meets this level as it is routinely required to resolve technical problems and is involved in guiding clients or scriptwriters to achieve program objectives.

Level 3b is assigned to the appellant's position and 110 points are credited.

Factor 8, Physical Demands

This factor covers the requirements and physical demands placed on the employee by the work assignment.

The appellant's position meets Level 8-1, i.e., the work is primarily sedentary, although there is some walking, travel, and carrying of lightweight equipment and materials. The appellant's occasional physical exertion does not meet Level 8-2, where the work requires some physical exertion such as long periods of standing, recurring bending or stretching, or recurring lifting of moderately heavy equipment.

The appellant's position meets Level 8-1 and 5 points are credited.

Factor 9, Work Environment

This factor considers the risk and discomforts in the employee's physical surroundings or the nature of the work assigned and the safety regulations required.

At Level 9-1, the work is performed in adequately lighted and controlled offices and studios and requires no special safety precautions. At Level 9-2, the work requires

moderate risks or discomforts, such as working near moving machinery, and may require special safety precautions and the use of protective clothing or gear.

The appellant’s position meets Level 9-1. His work is performed in a typical office environment or studio requiring no special safety precautions.

Level 9-1 and 5 points are credited.

Summary

☒	Factor	Level	Points
1	Knowledge Required of Position	1-7	1250
2	Supervisory Controls	2-4	450
3	Guidelines	3-4	450
4	Complexity	4-4	225
5	Scope and Effect	5-4	225
6	Personal Contacts &	6-3	110
7	Purpose of Contacts	7-b	
8	Physical Demands	8-1	5
9	Work Environment	9-1	5
TOTAL POINTS			2720

A total of 2720 points equates to the GS-11 grade level, in accordance with the grade conversion table in the GS-1071 standard.

Evaluation Using the General Schedule Supervisory Guide

The GSSG is used to evaluate the appellant’s supervisory duties since they meet the guide’s coverage criteria (i.e., the supervisory duties require the accomplishment of work through the combined technical and administrative direction of others, demand a substantial amount of time, and involve at least the minimum level of supervisory authority specified in Factor 3 of the guide).

The GSSG uses a point-factor evaluation approach. This requires a factor-by-factor analysis of the position in light of the guide. A position factor must be fully equivalent to the factor-level described in the guide to warrant credit at that level and the associated point value. If a position factor is not fully equivalent to the overall intent of a particular level described in the guide, a lower level and point value must be assigned.

Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect

This factor measures the general complexity, breadth, and impact of the program areas and work directed, including its organizational and geographic coverage. It also assesses the effect of the work both within and outside the immediate organization. All work for which the supervisor is both technically and administratively responsible, including work accomplished through subordinates or contractors, is considered. To receive credit for a given level, the separate criteria specified for both scope and effect must be met at that factor level.

Scope

Scope assesses the complexity and breadth of the program or the work directed, including the geographic and organizational coverage within the agency structure. It has two elements: (a) the program (or program segment) directed and (b) the work directed, the products produced, or the services delivered. Scope includes the geographic and organizational coverage of the program or program segment.

At Level 1-2, the program segment or work directed is administrative, technical, complex clerical, or comparable in nature. The functions, activities, or services provided have limited geographic coverage and support most of the activities comprising a typical agency field office, an area office, a small to medium military installation, or comparable activities within agency program segments.

Level 1-3 covers a program segment performing administrative, technical, or professional work where the program segment and work directed encompass a major metropolitan area, a state, or a small region of several states; or when most of an area's taxpayers or businesses are covered, coverage comparable to a small city. Providing complex administrative or professional services directly affecting a *large* or *complex multimission military installation*, or of an organization of similar magnitude, is also characteristic of this level.

The [installation] Training Squadron Multimedia Production Flight provides television training productions for the Air Combat Command and, upon request, for other major commands or installations. These productions provide the medium for supporting the combat readiness of the Air Combat Command and, to a lesser degree, the Air Force,

by being an integral part of pilot and air crew development and training. These “customers” for whom the productions are made equate to Level 1-2. Although the viewing audience may, on occasion, be a larger number, it does not equate to a major metropolitan area, state or small region of several states. These activities fully meet the criteria of Level 1-2 but fall short of Level 1-3, where the employee would be required to provide complex professional services directly affecting a *large* or *multimission military installation*. The appellant’s position does not exceed Level 1-2.

Effect

Effect addresses impact of programs, products, or correctly performed work both within and outside the agency.

At Level 1-2, services support and significantly affect installation level, area office level, or field office operations and objectives, or are delivered to a moderate, local or limited population of clients or users comparable to a major portion of a small city or rural count. Directing budget, supply, protective, or similar services for a small base without extensive research, testing, or similar missions meets this level.

At Level 1-3, activities, functions, or services directly and significantly affect a wide range of agency activities, the work of other agencies, the operations of outside interests, or the general public. At the field activity level (involving large, complex, multimission organizations and/or very large serviced populations) the work directly involves or substantially impacts the provision of essential support services or products to numerous, varied, and complex technical, professional, or administrative functions.

The appellant’s position is responsible for providing a variety of essential products for the use of the Air Combat Command. While these products can eventually and occasionally reach other audiences and markets, such as the Air Force, Defense Department and commercial networks, the purpose and main effect of the service provided is limited to the Air Combat Command. Thus, the position does not significantly affect a wide range of Air Force activities or substantially impact the provision of essential support operations to numerous, varied, and complex technical, professional and administrative functions. Although the appellant participates in and supervises the production of multimedia projects that affect an audience that is potentially large, the effect is primarily limited to a portion of the agency and does not meet the scope intent in Level 1-3.

Work must meet both the scope and effect of the factor level to receive credit. The appellant’s work meets Level 1-2 in both respects and 350 points are credited.

Factor 2, Organizational Setting

The factor covers the organizational situation of the supervisory position in relation to higher levels of management and credits the accountability of the position to higher levels of management.

Under this factor, if the position being classified is accountable to a position that is one reporting level below the first Senior Executive Service or flag officer, or the equivalent, it receives Level 2-2 credit. The appellant's performance is appraised by his immediate supervisor, the [installation] Training Squadron Commander, a Lieutenant Colonel. The performance rating is reviewed by the Operations Group Commander, a Colonel and not a flag officer position. Consequently, only the minimum credit level for this factor applies.

Level 2-1 is met and 100 points are credited.

Factor 3, Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised

This factor covers the delegated supervisory and managerial authorities exercised on a recurring basis.

Level 3-2 provides three alternative sets of criteria. The third of these options (cited in paragraph 3-2c of the guide) specifies ten authorities and responsibilities characteristic of supervisors functioning at this Level. The appellant exercises nearly all these authorities.

Level 3-3 specifies two alternative sets of criteria. The first of these, Level 3-3a, essentially concerns managerial positions closely involved with high level program officials in the development of overall goals and objectives. Managers at this level typically direct the development of data to track program goals, secure legal opinions, prepare papers or legislative proposals, and execute comparable activities. Though the appellant has input to, and participates in, some of these activities, he lacks significant responsibility in these areas. Such responsibilities belong to higher level positions than his own.

Level 3-3b consists of criteria which describe 15 supervisory authorities that exceed in complexity and responsibility the ten depicted at level 3-2c. Under this alternate provision, a position can be credited at Level 3-3b if, in addition to exercising all or nearly all of the Level 3-2c authorities, it also exercises at least 8 of the 15 supervisory authorities specified at Level 3-3b. The appellant meets Level 3-2c and is delegated a majority of the supervisory authority and responsibility of Level 3-3b, by virtue of his title and position as director of the Multimedia Production Flight. The authorities the appellant does not exercise are described below.

- Under authority 3, a supervisor ensures equity of both performance standards and rating techniques developed by subordinates. The appellant's subordinates, however, do not develop standards. Consequently, authority 3 does not apply.
- Authority 4 requires the direction of a program or major program segment with significant resources, such as one at a multimillion dollar level of annual resources. The appellant's branch does not command resources at this level.
- Authority 10 involves approval of serious disciplinary actions against subordinates, such as suspension. The appellant recommends such actions but the authority to approve them is reserved to higher levels in the organization.
- Authority 11 requires making decisions involving nonroutine, costly, or controversial training needs and requests involving subordinates. The appellant recommends normal training for the staff but cannot authorize training that would be regarded as controversial for his staff members to attend, nonroutine for their line of work, or unduly costly for the subject matter.
- Authority 12 involves determining whether contractor-performed work meets standards of adequacy needed to authorize payment. Whether the appellant could do the review is not in question. Since none of the substantive, mission-related work is contracted out, the appellant's technical review of work is limited to that performed by his own staff.
- Authority 13 concerns approving expenses comparable to within-grade increases, extensive overtime, and employee travel. The appellant recommends actions such as these, with approval resting with his supervisor, the Squadron Commander.

Level 3-4 is the highest level of managerial authority recognized under the standard and two criteria (paragraphs a and b) must be met. The appellant's own authorities are considerably more restricted than top level managers. Paragraph a consists of delegated authority to oversee the overall planning, direction, and timely execution of a program, several segments (each of which is managed through separate subordinate organizational units), or comparable staff functions, including development, assignment, and higher level clearance of goals and objectives for supervisors or managers of subordinate organizational units or lower organizational levels; approve multi year and longer range work plans developed by the supervisors or managers of subordinate organizational units and subsequently manage the overall work to enhance achievement of the goals and objectives; oversee the revision of long range plans, goals and objectives for the work directed; manage the development of policy

changes in response to changes in levels of appropriations or other legislative changes; manage organizational changes throughout the organization directed, or major changes to the structure and content of the program or program segments directed; and, exercise discretionary authority to approve the allocation and distribution of funds in the organization's budget. Paragraph b consists of final authority for the full range of personnel actions and organization design proposals recommended by subordinate supervisors.

The appellant's position does not exercise full personnel authority and does not meet either criteria in paragraphs a and b, as described at Level 3-4. The appellant meets the criteria for Level 3-3b and 775 points are credited.

Factor 4, Personal Contacts

This is a two-part factor that measures the nature and purpose of personal contacts related to supervisory and management responsibilities. The nature of contacts credited under Subfactor 4A and the purpose of contacts under Subfactor 4B must be based on the same contacts.

Subfactor 4A, Nature of Contacts

This subfactor covers the organizational relationships, authority or influence level, setting, and difficulty of preparation associated with making personal contacts involved in supervisory and managerial work. To be credited, the level of contacts must contribute to the successful performance of the work, be a recurring requirement, have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the position, and require direct contact.

At Level 4A-2, contacts include members of the business community or the general public, or higher ranking managers, supervisors, or staff of program, administrative, or other work units and activities throughout the installation. These contacts sometimes require special preparation.

Level 4A-3 describes *frequent* contacts at a level higher than those required by the appellant. These include:

- high ranking military or civilian managers, supervisors, and technical staff at bureau and major organization levels of the agency; with agency headquarters administrative support staff; or with comparable personnel in other Federal agencies;
- key staff of public interest groups (usually in formal briefings) with significant political influence or media coverage;

- journalists representing influential city or county newspapers or comparable radio or television coverage;
- congressional committee and subcommittee staff assistants below staff director or chief counsel levels;
- contracting officials and high level technical staff of large industrial firms; and
- local officers of regional or national trade associations, public action groups, or professional organizations; and/or State and local government managers doing business with the agency.

The appellant's outside contacts are typically with Air Force personnel at different organizational levels, primarily in meetings, telephone conversations, and conferences requiring occasional special preparation, as at Level 4A-2. Unlike Level 4A-3, his contacts do not require extensive preparation of briefing materials or up-to-date technical familiarity with complex subject matter. Additionally, the contacts the appellant has and maintains do not meet Level 4A-3 at the organizational level described above or in the frequency required.

Level 4A-2 is credited and 50 points are allowed.

Subfactor 4B, Purpose of Contacts

This subfactor covers the purpose of the personal contacts credited in Subfactor 4A, including the advisory, representational, negotiating, and commitment making responsibilities related to supervision and management.

At Level 4B-2, the purpose of contacts is to ensure that information provided to outside parties is accurate and consistent; to plan and coordinate the work directed with that of others outside the subordinate organization; and/or to resolve differences of opinion among managers, supervisors, employees, contractors, or others.

At Level 4B-3, the purpose of contacts is to justify, defend, or negotiate in representing the project, program segment(s), or organizational unit(s) directed, in obtaining or committing resources, and in gaining compliance with established policies, regulations, or contracts. Contacts at this level typically involve active participation in conferences, meetings, hearings, or presentations involving problems or issues of considerable consequence or importance to the program or program segment(s) managed.

The appellant's contacts, like those described at Level 4B-2, are to ensure work efforts of others in providing services, exchange factual information about work operations

and personnel management matters, and provide training and guidance to subordinates. These contacts do not involve skilled negotiation or defense of matters of considerable consequence requiring a high level of persuasive ability or negotiation skills, as required for Level 4B-3 credit.

Level 4B-2 and 75 points are credited.

Factor 5, Difficulty of Typical Work Directed

This factor covers the difficulty of the complexity of the basic work most typical of the organizational unit directed, as well as other line, staff, or contracted work for which supervisors have technical or oversight responsibility, either directly or through subordinate supervisors, team leaders, or others. For first line supervisors, the highest grade of the work directed is determined by two factors: 1) that which best characterizes the nature or the basic mission oriented nonsupervisory work performed or overseen by the organization directed; and 2) that which constitutes 25 percent or more of the workload (not positions or employees) of the organization.

Excluded from consideration are:

- work of lower level positions that primarily support the basic work of the unit,
- work that is graded based upon the supervisory or leader guides,
- work that is graded higher than normal because of extraordinary independence from supervision, and
- work not fully under the supervisor's authority and responsibility as defined under Factor 3.

The agency workload analysis indicates that at least 25 percent of the mission-related work is at the GS-9 level. This analysis includes the conversion of military personnel to civilian equivalent pay grades, in addition to the civilian employee supervised. We accept the agency's analysis that GS-9 is the highest grade level work characteristic of the Multimedia Production Flight. A GS-9 base level of work equates to Factor Level 5-5 according to the conversion table of the guide.

Level 5-5 and 650 points are credited.

Factor 6, Other Conditions

This factor measures the extent to which various conditions add to the difficulty of carrying out supervisory duties, authorities, and responsibilities.

Per instructions in applying Factor 6, Level 6-4 contains the definition and occupational situation that most closely meets the appellant's position. Level 6-4b addresses supervision over subordinate supervisors and/or contractors who direct substantial workloads comparable to the GS-9 or 10 level and coordinate administrative, technical, or complex technician work comparable to the GS-9 or 10 level.

As noted under Factor 5, the appellant directs GS-9 work. As the Director of Multimedia, the appellant supervises subordinate supervisors, including a GS-11 civilian supervisory position and other military noncommissioned officers. The captain position appearing in the organizational chart no longer reports to the appellant since being reassigned. That position now reports directly to a supervisor outside the Multimedia Production Flight. This position, therefore, is not considered in determining the base level of work directed or as a subordinate supervisory position under the appellant's jurisdiction. The appellant's subordinate supervisors direct and coordinate the work of GS-9 workloads. This meets level 6-4b.

The appellant's position does not meet Level 6-5. The Flight's base level of work and the supervision, oversight, and coordination required of the appellant do not meet that described at this level.

Factor 6 is credited at Level 6-4 and 1120 points are credited.

Summary

Factor	Level	Points
1. Program scope and effect	1-2	350
2. Organizational setting	2-1	100
3. Supervisory and managerial authority exercised	3-3	775
4. Personal contacts		
4A. Nature of contacts	4A-2	50
4B. Purpose of contacts	4B-2	75
5. Difficulty of typical work directed	5-5	650
6. Other conditions	6-4	<u>1120</u>
Total points:		3120

The 3120 total points fall within the GS-12 range of the point-to-grade conversion chart of the GSSG.

Decision

The final grade for the appellant's position is evaluated properly to the GS-12 grade level by application of the GSSG. The appellant's position is properly classified as Supervisory Audiovisual Production Specialist, GS-1071-12.