

CHAPTER 6. DEVELOPING FINANCIAL HUMAN RESOURCES

GOAL: *Build and maintain a highly qualified financial management workforce in the Department to support program managers' financial management needs.*

The decade of the 1990s brought significant legislation and organizational rightsizing to the federal community. Both rightsizing and the legislative requirements of the CFO Act, GPRA, and GMRA increased the demands on financial management personnel. It is imperative that personnel responsible for the administration of the Department's financial resources continuously develop and upgrade skills to meet the challenges imposed by internal and external forces.

To assist the Department financial management personnel in achieving the skills needed to operate in a changing environment, the Department is committed to developing and maintaining a cadre of highly skilled financial management personnel. To that end, and to ensure a strong and effective financial management program, the Interior CFO Council provides guidance to the Office of Financial Management in developing an overall training and development plan for the Department.

To facilitate the development and implementation of a training and development plan, the Department has designated a Training Coordinator within the Department of the Interior University (DOIU) to work with the Office of Financial Management to implement the plan. The DOIU delivers services through:

- DOIU Learning Centers located in Washington, D.C.; Anchorage, Alaska; Denver, Colorado; and Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- DOIU On-line Learning Center, provides new delivery methods (e.g., distance learning, Internet training) to enable the Department to reach more employees - any time, any place and at any pace.
- DOIU Leadership Institute manages the Department's formal career development programs, the Team Leadership Program (TLP), the Senior Executive Service Career Development Program (SESCDP), and the Acquisition Intern Programs (AIP). The Institute manages the AIP on a governmentwide and departmentwide basis.

The Training Coordinator directs the Department's Financial Management Training and Development Program (FMTDP), schedules financial management training, locates and reserves training sites, identifies instructors and on-the-job training experiences, tracks and records participants' training, reviews and maintains participant's Individual Development Plans (IDPs), prepares and distributes training certificates, and monitors and responds to program evaluation and feedback. The Training Coordinator also serves as the Department's liaison to the governmentwide CFO Council for Human Resources, the Joint Financial

Management Improvement Program (JFMIP), the Association of Government Accountants, the Training Officers Conference, the American Association for Training and Development, and professional organizations related to financial management.

The focus of the FMTDP Training Coordinator is to improve the skill levels and increase the availability of personnel throughout the Department to support financial management functions and to better serve the financial management needs of program managers and others responsible for carrying out the mission of the Department. Improvement will be made in two areas:

- Sponsoring comprehensive training programs in financial management that deliver effective training to financial managers and their staff throughout the Department to improve the skills and knowledge and to enable financial management personnel to perform their jobs in an excellent manner.
- Increasing the availability and diversity of qualified accounting, financial systems, and other financial personnel to ensure adequate human resources are available to carry out financial management responsibilities.

Sponsoring Comprehensive Training Programs in Financial Management

The primary objective of the Financial Management Training and Development Program is to provide proper training and professional development opportunities to financial management personnel so that they are properly prepared to carry out their growing responsibilities. The Department's training program provides information on external training courses, provides cost effective training to Interior bureau personnel through the use of internal instructors or external instructors, and develops special training programs to address individual bureau needs.

The Department will expand the training and development program over the next five years by developing a comprehensive training program built on the JFMIP core competencies, aggressively publicizing financial management and related training opportunities and encouraging employees to avail themselves of personal and professional development opportunities. The Department, through the program, will prepare new financial management employees for current and future challenges in financial management and enhance the financial management skills of senior financial managers. To assist in that effort, the Department will offer an array of training in accounting, governmental accounting, budgeting, financial analysis, project management, team building, and problem solving techniques. The program continually analyzes training results and makes appropriate curriculum revisions and reports periodically on the results of the financial management training and development program to Bureau CFOs, DCFOs, and Finance Officers.

FY 2001 Accomplishments

- *Budget/Finance Seminar:* The Finance Officers' Partnership, in conjunction with the newly established Budget Execution Working Group, sponsored the Department's first joint Budget/Finance Seminar. Approximately 170 Department personnel participated in the June 2001 seminar which was designed to provide a training forum for budget and

finance to share the key components and common problems of budget reporting and financial reporting, and to increase the understanding of their critical interrelationships. Additionally, there was a follow-on finance specific session which focused on critical issues/problems related to financial reporting. The Office of Management and Budget and Treasury's Financial Management Service also participated in this effort. Seminar participants overwhelmingly rated the seminar as very good or excellent.

- *Web Site for Course Offerings:* The Office of Financial Management Web site (<http://www.doi.gov/pfm/training.html>) was used to disseminate course offerings throughout the Department and to other agencies. The Web site was also used to advertise and register participants for the June 2001 seminar.
- Under the leadership of the Finance Officers' Partnership, identified formal accounting staff developmental training based on the JFMIP core competencies.
- Developed a long-range training plan for Interior financial management personnel based on the published core competencies for accountants. The training plan includes recommended training for entry level, mid-level, and senior level accountants, with initial resources being used for entry level and mid-level training.
- Conducted training courses in the following subject areas:
 - Appropriations Law
 - Standard General Ledger
 - Dollars and Sense
- Trained 176 staff members at DOIU's Washington, Denver, and Albuquerque Learning Centers.
- Worked with the Department of Treasury's Center for Applied Financial Management to develop a one day overview of federal financial management for Interior employees. This course was conducted three times in FY 2001 with requests for additional offerings for FY 2002.
- Conducted a two-day seminar to introduce the audit contractor to the Department and bureaus. The seminar provided an overview of organizational structures as well as program missions and goals. It also introduced the Department's common use systems and presented a framework for financial management reporting.
- Promoted the use of more seminars and workshops sessions lead by the Department's financial management personnel to facilitate working group training, new idea development, and sharing of best practices.
- Researched linking the Department's financial management community to other sites providing information on training and career development in federal financial management through the Department's Office of Financial Management Web site.

Planned Actions

FY 2002 Planned Activities

- Develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP) based on the long-term training plan and design a formal process for using the IDPs to ensure that financial management personnel receive cross training. Use the certification component of the Financial Management Training and Development Program to ensure that Interior bureau finance and budget officers cross-train and cross-utilize financial management managers and staff.
- Conduct a Web-based needs assessment for the financial management community.
- Schedule and conduct courses to include:
 - Standard General Ledger
 - Dollars and Sense
 - Appropriations Law
 - Vendor Audit Training
 - Cost Accounting
 - Travel
- Begin development of an introductory course in Interior Financial Management to include individual modules on such topics as accounting, reporting, budget formulation, budget execution, etc.

FY 2003 and Beyond Planned Activities

- Continue to encourage the use of nontraditional approaches to provide additional training and career development opportunities for the Department's financial management community. Opportunities should be available for entry level, mid level, and senior level personnel.
- Continue to work with Office of Personnel Management and the Department's Office of Personnel Policy to establish the CFO Council's core competencies for financial management as the criteria for job selection, promotion, and training.
- Encourage and support participation in the Department's Team Leadership Program (TLP) and Senior Executive Leadership Program (SESCDP).

Increase the Availability and Diversity of Qualified Accounting, Financial Systems, and Other Financial Personnel

The second focus of the Human Resource Program is to support the need for additional qualified accounting, financial systems, and other financial personnel to fill critical vacancies anticipated over the next few years. Currently, the Department has or expects to have over 50 vacant positions as a result of projected retirements by financial management personnel over the next several years. The plan will be to build and increase the quality, availability, and diversity of entry level personnel and to improve the recruitment of mid and senior level staff. This support will include establishing a Financial Management Intern Program to

recruit and train entry level individuals for professional careers in accounting and financial management in the Department and bureaus. This is a new program for the Department and will take advantage of the knowledge of the DOIU in developing and managing such programs and programs established on a governmentwide basis such as those being established by the CFO Human Resources Committee.

FY 2001 Accomplishments

- Continued to partner with the CFO Human Resources Committee in the CFO Recruitment Consortium, designed to recruit top quality entry level personnel for the federal financial management community. Recruitment efforts will continue through the fall and early winter of 2001/2002. This will be an annual event.
- Increased efforts to effectively coordinate a departmental financial management recruitment effort to fill current vacancies in the Washington, D.C. and Denver, Colorado areas.
- Designed the entry level intern program to include: objectives, duration of the program, target population for selection, rotational assignments, number of hours of technical and nontechnical training, mentors, full performance level of graduates, and the budget requirements.
- Established a Memorandum of Understanding with DOI University to implement the Financial Management Intern Program. The program will be designed as a two-year program of professional development through academic and on-the-job training. Emphasis will be on practical work experience and rotational assignments with supplemental academic training, and cross-training for a broad perspective of Interior's financial management process.
- Developed and used Interior recruitment materials for careers in financial management for accountants and financial analysts.

Planned Actions

FY 2002 Planned Activities

- Update brochures for marketing the Internship program.
- Recruit for the first class of Interior Financial Management Interns. Currently, there are plans for 11 interns with nine bureaus participating in the new program.
- Conduct the first class of financial management interns.
- Hold orientation, develop IDPs, assign mentors, and begin training and rotational assignments.
- Design and implement a financial management mentoring program at all levels.
- Improve the management of the vacancy announcement and selection process through a more coordinated recruiting program within the Department.

- Explore with the Department's financial management community ways to increase the knowledge and skills of the current workforce or retrain the current workforce where trends show specific jobs will disappear or be transformed.
- Establish an ongoing relationship with local colleges and universities in the Washington, D.C. and Denver, Colorado areas to provide a continuous vehicle for qualified financial management personnel to join the Department and/or the federal workforce.
- Continue to work with local universities, nonprofit student placement agencies, the Department's Human Resource Division, and budget offices to recruit junior persons to student internship positions in financial management.
- Continue to partner with the CFO Human Resources Committee to recruit top quality entry level personnel for the Department's financial management community.

FY 2003 and Beyond Planned Activities

- Improve/expand the on-going relationship with colleges and universities in the Denver, Colorado and Washington, D.C. communities
- Continue efforts to develop and implement Interior-specific training modules in financial management education using subject matter expertise.
- Design mid and senior level recruitment/retention programs with phased-in approach to provide sources for filling mid and senior level positions as they open up due to retirements or departures.
- Implement the first phase of the mid and senior level recruitment/retention programs.
- Graduate the first class of Financial Management Interns.
- Begin the second class of Financial Management Interns.
- Implement additional phases of the mid and senior level recruitment program.