Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies:

EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives

Research conducted by

Cornell University

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School of Industrial and Labor Relations
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Background

The Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities (Task Force) was established by Executive Order 13078 to create a coordinated and aggressive national policy to increase the employment rate of persons with disabilities. Seventeen Federal agencies have served as members of the Task Force. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao served as Task Force Chair. The other member agencies are the Department of Education, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, the Social Security Administration, Department of the Treasury, Department of Commerce, Department of Transportation, Office of Personnel Management, Small Business Administration, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Federal Communications Commission, National Council on Disability, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Justice.

The Task Force provided support to Cornell University to conduct research in order to address the Task Force mandate that relates to the Federal government as a model employer of people with disabilities. This research is a part of the efforts of the Task Force to meet the Section 2(a) mandate of the Executive Order. This mandate states that "The Office of Personnel Management, the Department of Labor, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shall submit to the Task Force a review of Federal Government personnel laws, regulations, and policies and, as appropriate, shall recommend or implement changes necessary to improve Federal employment policy for adults with disabilities. This review shall include personnel practices and actions such as: hiring, promotion, benefits, retirement, workers' compensation, retention, accessible facilities, job accommodations, layoffs, and reductions in force."

The first step in this endeavor was to conduct an analysis of the policy and practice efforts of Federal agency Human Resource (HR) Directors and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) personnel in recruiting and retaining persons with disabilities in Federal employment. The survey of U. S. Federal agencies, titled *Survey of the Federal Government on Human Resources/EEO Policies and Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities* was completed in 1999. This research identified how Federal agencies were responding to the employment disability nondiscrimination requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,[1] as amended. In November 1999, the Task Force released the results of this survey in a report, *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U. S. Federal Government Agencies,* which included recommendations based on the findings from the study.[2]

One of the recommendations from this research was to conduct a follow-up study of Federal agency supervisors and managers about their experience in accommodation and employment of persons with disabilities in the Federal sector, and in addition to inquire about their awareness of the series of Executive Orders issued in 2000 supporting employment and accommodation of individuals with disabilities in the Federal workforce. This second survey activity was initiated in Spring of 2001. The report from this study, titled *Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities,* provides information on the results from this current survey of supervisors and managers, which parallels similar information obtained from the initial survey of human resource and EEO professionals across the

[1]Under Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act, Federal employers may not discriminate against people with disabilities in hiring, placement, or advancement practices. Federal agencies are required to establish affirmative action plans to make it clear that the Federal Government is an equal opportunity employer. This applies to each department, agency and instrumentality of the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. See http://www.jan.wvu.edu/media/REHABACT.html for further information.

[2]Visit the Cornell University website at http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped/surveyresults.html for a copy of this report.

Federal government. It describes supervisors' experiences with accommodation of people with disabilities as applicants and employees in the Federal workforce, and their experience and perceptions of the effectiveness of existing and proposed resources to facilitate the hiring, retention, and accommodation of people with disabilities.

This report is a summary of major findings from each of these surveys, and in addition includes a comparison across selected items where appropriate. This final analysis enabled us to look at the differing perspectives of these two informant groups, where possible.

Cornell University, founded in 1868, is one of the Ivy League institutions in the Northeastern United States, and is based upon a unique integration of publicly and privately funded colleges. The Cornell University *School of Industrial and Labor Relations* is the foremost school of its kind in the world, boasting over fifty years of leadership and service. It hosts the largest collection of scholars in human resources and issues related to the workplace, and includes the areas of human resources, organizational behavior, labor relations, collective bargaining, labor economics, and social statistics. The Extension Division of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University has provided continuing education and technical assistance, nationally and regionally, on issues surrounding the workplace and disability for over 30 years. The *Program on Employment and Disability* contributes to development of inclusive workplace systems and communities for people with disabilities through research, the development of training materials, dissemination of this information in training efforts regionally, nationally, and internationally, provision of technical assistance on related topics, and production of scholarly materials. *The Computer-Assisted Survey Team (CAST)* is a full-service survey facility housed in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations offering state-of-the-art technology to researchers at Cornell University and elsewhere; this unit provided data collection and statistical analysis support for these surveys.

Organization of the Report

First, the results of these two surveys are presented as basic descriptive analysis. Following that is a comparative analysis of the results from the two groups, and finally, the implications of the survey results are discussed in the section titled "Summary and Implications."

Methodology: Survey Instruments

The first survey was designed to capture information on the human resources and equal employment opportunity policies and practices of Federal agencies in response to the employment nondiscrimination requirements of Federal civil rights legislation. The survey items drew extensively from a similar survey used by Cornell University to conduct comparable research on private sector employers in 1998.[3] The ten-page survey covers issues dealing with: the reasonable accommodation process; recruitment, pre-employment screening, testing, and new employee orientation; health and other benefits of employment; opportunities for promotion and training; disciplinary process/grievance, dismissal or termination; interaction with labor/industrial/collective bargaining issues and other employment legislation/considerations; Federal agency employee training on the employment disability nondiscrimination and the accommodation process; resources used and found most helpful in handling disability nondiscrimination and accommodation disputes; and the role of disability management (return to work) programs in contributing to the accommodation process and the acceptance of employ-

[3] Further information about this research can be found in Bruyère, S. (2000). *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in Private and Federal Sector Organizations.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations Extension Division, Program on Employment and Disability. Go to http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped/download.html?pub_id=637 for an online copy.

ees with disabilities. A copy of this survey is provided in Appendix A.

The supervisor survey was based on the previous survey of Human Resources and EEO representatives described above. It was designed to capture information on the experiences and perceptions of supervisors and managers in the 17 Task Force member agencies in response to the employment nondiscrimination requirements of Federal civil rights legislation and recent Executive Branch directives and initiatives related to the accommodation process and the employment/supervision of individuals with disabilities.

Several new sections and questions were designed to specifically address supervisors' experience and the unique issues they deal with in the workplace as well as new rules or initiatives that had come into play since the HR/EEO survey had been performed two years prior. An additional section was included focusing on supervisors' awareness and the impact of recent Executive Branch directives and initiatives, including Section 508, and the Federal initiative regarding telecommuting/telework for individuals with significant disabilities. A copy of the survey is provided in Appendix B.

Sampling Methodology

For the HR/EEO survey, a list of 415 names including all upper level HR/EEO personnel across 96 Federal agencies was obtained from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Human Resources Management Group. A letter was sent to each potential interviewee approximately two weeks prior to the initiation of the survey. Interviews began in June 1999 and were completed in August 1999. A breakdown of respondents by agency is provided in Appendix C.

The initial sample of approximately 3,000 supervisors was randomly selected by the OPM from the pool of all supervisors in the 17 Task Force member agencies. This sample includes both supervisors and managers with supervisory duties as defined by OPM's classification system. For simplification in describing the results, in the remainder of this report the term "supervisor" will be used to refer to the participants of the study. The sampling strategy included oversampling for smaller agencies and blue-collar supervisors to provide adequate numbers, allowing for more accurate estimates for these potentially unique groups. Contact information (e-mail addresses and phone numbers) for the supervisors selected was solicited from each participating agency, resulting in 2,448 supervisors with complete information. Except for the National Council on Disability, which has only two supervisors, information from 50 supervisors was the desired minimum from each agency, with larger agencies getting proportionally more above this minimum. The overall target for the survey was 1,000 respondents.

For the supervisor survey, respondents received a notification via e-mail (letters were used in the case of the Department of Veterans' Affairs) from the Task Force explaining the project and requesting their participation. Respondents were then contacted by telephone a few days later to arrange for an interview time. Data collection began July 13, 2001 and was completed January 10, 2002. Participants were required to have been a supervisor of at least one employee and have at least twelve months of actual supervisory experience. See Appendix D for sample breakdown by agency.

Both surveys were conducted by telephone by Cornell University's Computer Assisted Survey Team (CAST) using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system.

The analysis of the supervisor survey also included a comparison of supervisors who reported supervising employees with disabilities to those who had no such experience on selected questions. As supervisors with employees with disabilities were more likely to supervise larger numbers of employees (which could impact their responses), all of these analyses controlled for the number of employees supervised.

Note: All "don't know" and "refused" response categories are excluded from our analysis unless otherwise noted. Such responses are difficult to interpret and were quite rare in the supervisor survey—typically less than two percent on any given question. On average less than eight percent of the HR/EEO responses fell into these categories (range 0-19 percent). The original HR/EEO report included these responses, but excluding them had little impact on the reported percentages, and the conclusions drawn are the same as in the first report

Survey Respondents

For the HR/EEO survey, a total of 403 surveys were completed out of the 415 agency representatives who were contacted (a 97 percent response rate). The majority of the respondents had job titles of directors/chiefs of human resources and EEO (41 percent) or personnel managers (18 percent), whose positions were in the functional areas of human resources (41 percent) or equal opportunity (35 percent). They responded primarily for the entire agency (49 percent) or a regional office (40 percent), of agencies that employ more than 500 employees (71 percent). Further information about respondent demographics is also available in Appendix E.

A total of 1,001 supervisor surveys were completed, comprised of 191 blue-collar and 810 white-collar supervisors, across the 17 Task Force member agencies The response rate was excellent, with 93 percent of supervisors contacted participating. Agency and blue-collar/white-collar completion targets were achieved in all but one agency. The supervisors surveyed had significant supervisory experience in the Federal government. A summary of selected supervisor characteristics is presented in Appendix F. Over half of the participating supervisors (56 percent) were senior management, in General Schedule grades of 13-15 (the overall range is 1-15, with 15 being the highest grade level). Over 95 percent of the supervisors surveyed had been with their agency five or more years. Fully half the respondents reported more than ten years of experience as a Federal supervisor, with 23 percent reporting six to ten years and 27 percent reporting between one and five years. As noted above, all respondents were required to have been a supervisor for at least one year and supervise at least one employee to participate in the survey. Over 85 percent of the supervisors contacted fulfilled these criteria.

In response to the question: "number of Federal employees you are the immediate supervisor of," over a third of respondents (36 percent) supervised between 1-6 employees, a third (33 percent) supervised between 7-12 employees, and the remainder (31 percent) supervised more than 12.

Findings at a Glance

HR/EEO

■ HR/EEO respondents at most agencies report having made accommodations for their employees with disabilities. At least nine out of ten respondents reported that their agency has made existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities, been flexible in the application of HR policies, or modified the work environment. Agencies were less likely to acquire or modify training materials, or provide a job coach.

■ Seven out of ten reported that their agency has a formal process for handling accommodation requests. About a quarter of the respondents reported that the immediate supervisor of the employee making the request is responsible for making the final decision regarding the provision of an accommodation.

■ Slightly more than half of HR/EEO respondents reported that they had received ten or fewer accommodation requests in fiscal year 1999 to date, with one in five reporting that they had received no such requests.

■ A quarter of HR/EEO respondents frequently use Schedule A or B provisions for hiring persons with disabilities; half of the respondents reported occasionally using these provisions. Approximately a quarter reported frequently using the special hiring program for disabled veterans; about half reported occasionally using this program.

■ The pre-employment area where change was reported as difficult was making information accessible for a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, or for a person with a visual or learning disability.

■ HR/EEO respondents indicated that their interview staffs are *least* familiar with interview considerations relating to people with visual disabilities, or people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Such considerations include using a text telephone (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews with deaf or hard of hearing applicants; using a reader to assist a person with a visual impairment or learning disability; or adapting print materials used in interviews to large print, diskette, or Braille.

■ The barriers to employment for persons with disabilities identified were attitudes and stereotypes about people with disabilities, supervisors' lack of knowledge about accommodations, lack of related experience, and lack of requisite skills and training in the person with a disability.

■ Nine out of ten HR/EEO respondents thought that the most effective means of barrier reduction is visible top management commitment.

■ The disability discrimination claims most commonly reported by agencies were: 1) failure to provide a reasonable accommodation; and 2) failure to promote.

■ Nearly three-quarters reported being covered by a collective bargaining agreement, and two thirds of those reported that unions are involved in the accommodation process.

■ Seven out of ten indicated that they would like more information on accommodation for psychiatric disabilities, and two-thirds wanted more information on Rehabilitation Act requirements.

■ Two-thirds of HR/EEO respondents reported that their agency has a formal or informal disability management program; respondents who have such a program indicated that these programs contribute to implementation of civil rights laws.

Supervisors

■ The supervisors surveyed had significant experience in the Federal government, with over half reporting ten or more years as a Federal supervisor.

■ Nearly two-thirds of the supervisors surveyed had at least one employee with a disability and/or had made at least one accommodation over the past five years or in their tenure as a Federal supervisor (whichever is less).

■ When asked about the kinds of accommodations made overall for employees with disabilities, supervisors most often reported having advocated to make existing facilities accessible to an employee with a disability, or modifying a work environment. The accommodations made by the fewest supervisors were reassignment to a vacant position and providing a job coach.

■ When asked who makes the final decision on the provision of an accommodation, half the supervisors indicated that either they make the decision in consultation with their immediate supervisor, or they make the decision themselves, as the immediate supervisor of the requesting employee.

■ Three-quarters of the supervisors indicated that their agency has a formal process in place for handling accommodations requests.

■ The resources for accommodation assistance used by the largest number of supervisors were human resource personnel at the central and servicing/sub-agency levels.

■ Close to half of the supervisors were not aware of the following accommodation resources: the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), the Disability Services Office, disabled employee advisory groups, and selective placement coordinators. Interestingly, supervisors with experience supervising one or more employees with disabilities were no more likely to be aware of these four resources than those without experience. However, they were more aware of Independent Living Centers, State Rehabilitation agencies and external health care providers as resources.

■ One-third of the supervisors reported being very involved in recruitment within their agency, with white-collar supervisors more likely to be involved than blue-collar.

■ Over half of the supervisors involved in recruitment reported being very familiar or somewhat familiar with the special hiring authorities for the Federal government that promote hiring disabled veterans, while approximately one-third were familiar with hiring readers/interpreters and other personal assistants for employees with disabilities, and the special hiring authorities for hiring people with cognitive disabilities (mental retardation), significant physical disabilities, or people who have recovered from mental illness. Supervisors with experience supervising one or more employees with disabilities reported greater familiarity with each of the special hiring authorities than those who had not supervised employees with disabilities.

■ Over half of the supervisors indicated that the agency set reasonable affirmative employment goals and made an effort to achieve these goals.

■ More than a third of supervisors surveyed reported being unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with accommodations for persons with communication disabilities, such as adapting print materials used in the interview (to large print, diskette, or Braille), using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or visual impairment, using a teletypewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews, and accessing sign language interpreters. Surprisingly, supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities were not significantly more familiar with these accommodations than those who had not supervised any employees with disabilities.

■ When asked about continuing barriers to employment or advancement of people with disabilities, supervisors most often identified the lack of related experience or requisite skills and training on behalf of the individuals with disabilities, lack of supervisor knowledge of which accommodation to make, the workplace failing to provide an accommodation when needed, and attitudes and stereotypes towards people with disabilities. Interestingly, the perception of these barriers was not significantly different between supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities and supervisors without employees with disabilities.

■ Supervisors responding to this survey identified visible top management commitment and skills/training for employees with disabilities as the most effective means of reducing these remaining barriers to employment or advancement of people with disabilities.

■ Nine out of ten supervisors reported having had some formal disability civil rights training as a Federal supervisor, with approximately half of those who received training receiving between one and 15 hours of training. This training was most often provided as a part of general employment discrimination or diversity training, or of general supervisory/management training. Supervisors who had employees with disabilities were significantly more likely to have received training.

■ Respondents saw making disability employment a mandatory element of management training as the most effective incentive to encourage disability nondiscrimination related training.

■ Supervisors surveyed were asked which resources they most often used to help resolve issues. About a third reported using HR staff/employee relations, EEO Office, and safety and ergonomic staff, while the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), disabilities services office, and the selective placement coordinator were used by fewer than one in ten.

■ Approximately three of four supervisors reported that the following would be helpful in implementing the Technology Nondiscrimination requirements of Section 508: the technical staff within their agency (i.e. chief information officer/helpdesk), centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues, and training procurement specialists in Section 508 requirements.

■ When asked whether, in their opinion, office-based full time positions that they currently supervised could be relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities, approximately one-third of the white-collar supervisors reported that this was possible.

■ Respondents indicated that off-site technology support, guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers, and formal flexplace agreements between off-site employees and supervisors would be helpful to them as a supervisor in creating or supporting home-based or off-site/flexplace/telecommuting employee positions.

■ Three out of five supervisors (60 percent) were unaware of the Federal initiative (Executive Order 13163) requiring the hiring of 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities over the next five years. White collar supervisors and supervisors who had experience with employees with disabilities were more likely to be aware of this initiative. Of those reporting they were aware of this order, about two in five said that it had influenced their recruitment and hiring practices either "somewhat" or "a great deal."

■ Two out of five supervisors surveyed reported being aware of the EEOC Guidelines for Federal agencies to establish written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation (Executive Order 13164). Nearly half of those aware of this provision indicated that it had influenced their supervisory practice either "a great deal" or "somewhat." The level of awareness and influence was higher for those who had experience supervising employees with disabilities.

HR/EEO/Supervisor comparisons

- HR/EEO respondents are more likely to have made accommodations to make interviews more accessible than are supervisors—not surprising given their position. However of those who made certain changes, supervisors were slightly more likely to rate "making interview locations more accessible" as easy or very easy than the HR/EEO respondents. Accommodations for people with visual or auditory disabilities were found to be more difficult for supervisors.

- HR/EEO respondents were significantly more likely than supervisors to identify "costs of accommodations" and "supervisor knowledge of which accommodation to make" as being a barrier to the employment and advancement of employees with disabilities in their agencies.

- Supervisors were slightly less likely to identify "lack of related experience" as a barrier than the HR/EEO respondents.

- HR/EEO respondents were more than twice as likely than supervisors to identify coworker attitudes as being a barrier to the employment and advancement of employees with disabilities in their agencies.

- Almost three out of four HR/EEO and supervisors said they were aware of their agency's formal accommodation process.

- Virtually all HR/EEO respondents were knowledgeable about their agency's affirmative action goals, as were nine out of ten supervisors. Of those who were knowledgeable, the supervisors were more likely than the HR/EEO respondents to say their agency put a "great deal of effort" in setting and achieving them.

- HR/EEO respondents were more likely to be aware of their agency's return to work policy than the supervisors and were also more positive in their assessment of its benefits regarding: supervisor awareness of the accommodation process, recognition of confidentiality of the medical process, and in raising the acceptance of employees with disabilities.

Summary of the Federal HR/EEO Survey

Agencies Report on Accommodation Policies and Practices for Employees

Agency HR/EEO representatives were asked a series of questions relating to their policies and practices in making accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities. To get an index of annual volume of accommodation requests to surveyed Federal agencies, an initial question asked how many accommodation requests had been received in the Fiscal Year 1999 to date. Fifty-six percent reported that they had received ten or fewer accommodation requests, with slightly less than half of these (20 percent) reporting that they had received no such requests. Eleven percent reported more than ten but less than 100 requests for accommodations while 28 percent were not certain of how many requests had been made. Four percent reported more than 100 requests.

To meet the needs of employees with disabilities, all agencies reported having made some accommodations *(see Table 1)*. Ninety-six percent reported that their agency had been flexible in the application of HR policies, made existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities (94 percent), or modified the work environment (93 percent). Agencies were less likely to acquire or modify training materials (53 percent), or provide a job coach (48 percent). Agencies that had not made these accommodations reported they have not done so because they had never needed to.

Table 1

Accommodations Made for Employees With Disabilities

	Yes	No, not able to	Never needed to make this accommodation
Been flexible in the application of HR policies	96%	**	3%
Made existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities (restrooms, door entrances, hallways, etc.)	94	**	6
Modified work environment (orthopedic chair, lower desk, etc.)	93	**	7
Acquired or modified equipment or devices	92	**	7
Restructured jobs or modified work hours	88	**	11
Made parking or transportation accommodations	87	2	11
Provided qualified readers or interpreters (including personal assistants)	80	0	20
Provided written job instructions	76	0	22
Changed supervisory methods	64	**	36
Made reassignment to vacant positions	62	2	36
Acquired or modified training materials	53	1	46
Provided a job coach	48	1	51

** Less than 1 percent

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=403) less "don't know/refused" responses. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Processing, Tracking, and Reporting Systems for Accommodations

Seventy-three percent of the HR/EEO respondents reported that their agency has a formal process for handling accommodation requests. In most cases, the immediate supervisor of the employee making the request is responsible for making the final decision regarding the provision of an accommodation (28 percent). Twenty-three percent of respondents said that some other party was responsible, and 17 percent named another manager or director as the decision-maker. In 16 percent of responding agencies, there is no single party responsible for making the final decision. The agency's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) staff was identified as the final decision-makers in accommodation requests by eight percent of agency respondents.

Agencies Report on Accommodations for Applicants

Interviewees were asked how often their agency makes use of the provisions contained in Schedule A or B through which people with disabilities can be exempted from the competitive appointment process. One in four respondents (26 percent) reported frequently using such provisions. Approximately half (49 percent) of the respondents reported occasionally using these provisions for hiring persons with disabilities. The remainder of agency representatives responding reported never having used such provisions (12 percent), did not know whether they had been used (10 percent), or were not aware of the provisions (two percent).

Interviewees were asked how often the special hiring program for veterans with disabilities was used by their agency. Approximately one in four respondents (28 percent) reported frequently using this program. Fifty-two percent of respondents reported occasionally using this program. The remainder of agency representatives reported never having used such provisions, and eight percent were unsure.

Most respondents reported that making the needed pre-employment accommodations was easy. Most listed changes were rated as very easy or easy by more than three-quarters of respondents who had made the changes. For example, 89 percent of respondents felt that making new employee orientation accessible was easy, while similar percentages found making interview locations accessible (85 percent), and changing the wording of job applications (84 percent) easy. The area respondents reported as most difficult to change was making information accessible for a person with a visual or learning impairment, which was found to be difficult or very difficult by 15 percent of respondents, and was only rated as easy by 64 percent.

Familiarity with Civil Rights Considerations

HR/EEO respondents were given a list of ADA compliance considerations in the applicant interview process, and asked how familiar their agency's interview staff are with each *(see Table 2)*. More than four out of five

Table 2

Familiarity with ADA Interview Considerations	Familiar or very familiar
Restrictions on eliciting information about medical issues affecting applicant's health and safety on the job	86%
Knowing when to ask an applicant about how s/he would perform specific job tasks	85
Framing questions to applicants about the ability to perform specific job tasks rather than about disability	84
Accessing sign language interpreters	80
Restrictions on obtaining medical examinations and medical history information	78
Knowing when to test for illegal drugs	78
Using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or visual impairment	64
Adapting print materials used in the interview to large print, diskette, or Braille	61
Using a text telephone device (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews	57

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=403) less "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

respondents indicated that staff who perform interviews at their agency are familiar or very familiar with restrictions on eliciting information about medical issues (86 percent), knowing when to ask an applicant about how specific job tasks would be performed (85 percent), framing questions about the ability to perform job tasks (84 percent), and accessing sign language interpreters (80 percent).

Respondents indicated that their interview staff were least familiar with interview considerations relating to people with visual disabilities or people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Twenty-seven percent reported that their staff was unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with using a text telephone device (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews with deaf or hard of hearing applicants. Similarly, respondents reported their agency's staff was less familiar with using a reader to assist a person with a visual impairment or learning disability (23 percent) or with adapting print materials used in interviews to large print, diskette, or Braille (20 percent).

Barriers to Employment for People with Disabilities and Ways to Overcome Them

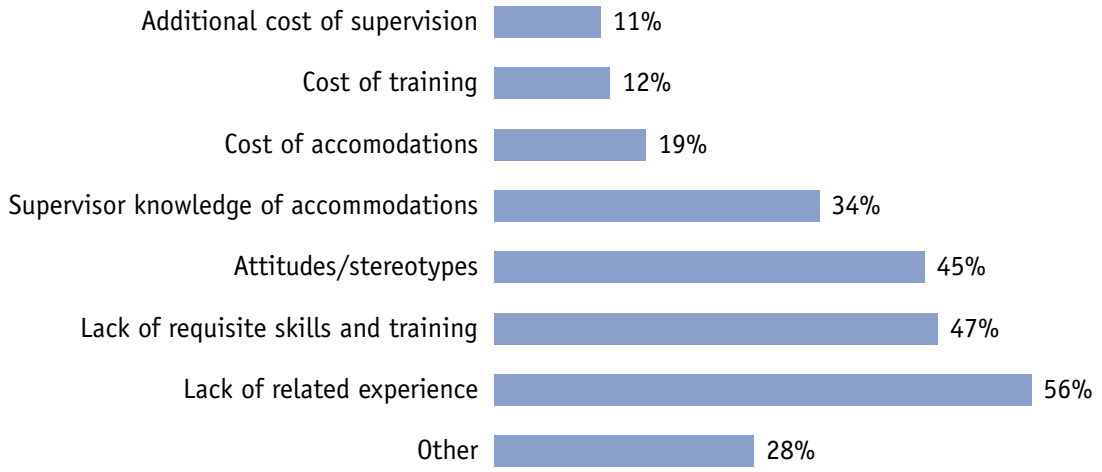
The HR/EEO staff were presented with seven possible barriers to the employment or advancement of people with disabilities. No respondent indicated that there were no barriers for people with disabilities; all felt that one or more of the listed barriers were, in fact, a problem *(see Chart 1)*. The major barriers were felt to be in the work environment or in the training or work experience of the person with a disability.

Respondents felt that there were significant barriers for people with disabilities in the work environment, such as attitudes and stereotypes about people with disabilities (45 percent) and supervisors' lack of knowledge about accommodations (34 percent). Respondents also identified barriers in the individuals with disabilities themselves, including a lack of related experience (56 percent) and lack of requisite skills and training (47 percent). Interestingly, cost of accommodations (19 percent), cost of training (12 percent), and the additional cost of supervision (11 percent) were least often seen as barriers to employment for people with disabilities.

Respondents were then asked to rate the effectiveness of six means of reducing barriers to employment and advancement of people with disabilities. Visible top management commitment was cited by the most respondents as an effective or very effective means of barrier reduction (91 percent). Over two-thirds of

Chart 1

Barriers to Employment or Advancement of People with Disabilities



Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

respondents also felt that technical assistance (73 percent), staff training (72 percent), on-site consultation or special budget allocations (71 percent) could effectively reduce barriers at their agency. Fewer than half of respondents felt that short-term outside assistance would be effective (46 percent).

To help overcome barriers to the employment and advancement of people with disabilities, the majority of agencies made changes to organizational policies and practices *(see Table 3)*. Agencies reported changing co-worker or supervisor attitudes towards employees with disabilities (93 percent), creating flexibility within the performance management system (86 percent), and modifying the return-to-work or transitional employment policies (84 percent). The majority of employers have also ensured equal pay and benefits for employees with disabilities (83 percent),changed leave policies (81 percent), or adjusted policies regarding medical questions and medical examinations (73 percent). Virtually all of those who did not make the change responded that they did not need to make the change, with less than two percent saying they "didn't make this change."

The change reported as most difficult was also the change most often made: changing co-worker or supervisor attitudes towards employees with disabilities. Thirty-three percent of respondents rated this change as difficult or very difficult to make.

Table 3

Changes Made to Reduce Employment and Advancement Barriers

	Have needed to make this change	If made, change was easy or very easy
Changing co-worker or supervisor attitudes towards employees with disabilities	93%	29%
Creating flexibility within the performance management system	86	65
Modifying the return to work or transitional employment policy	84	64
Ensuring equal pay and benefits for employees with disabilities	83	86
Change in leave policy	81	72
Adjusting policies regarding medical questions and medical examinations of employees	73	68

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=403) less "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Agency Experience of Disability Discrimination Claims

HR/EEO respondents were presented with a list of eleven possible disability claims and asked which claims had been filed against their agency. Fifty percent reported that their agency had not had a claim filed in any of the categories. An additional 34 percent said they had experienced one to four of the listed claims, while 16 percent had claims filed against them in five or more of the possible areas.

Fewer than one out of ten of the respondents who were able to answer the claims questions (12-15 percent "didn't know") reported that their agencies had experienced claims of wage dispute (5 percent), denied or reduced benefits (6 percent), layoff (9 percent), or failure to rehire (9 percent). The claim most commonly reported as having been experienced was the failure to provide a reasonable accommodation, reported by 41 percent of the respondents. Thirty percent of respondents said their agency had experienced the claim of failure to promote.

Training Provided on Civil Rights-Related Topics

The survey asked the HR/EEO representatives if their agency's employees had received training in 14 ADA, Rehabilitation Act, and Federal hiring-related areas *(see Table 4 on the next page)*. Fifty percent indicated that their employees had been trained in 10 or more areas. Not surprisingly, more than nine out of ten respondents reported that agency employees had been trained in non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices (93 percent). Similar percentages had also been trained in non-discrimination in the disciplinary or termination process (91 percent), and the accommodation process (90 percent). Respondents also reported high levels of training in Federal Hiring

Schedules (88 percent), the confidentiality of medical information (89 percent), and disability awareness or sensitivity training (88 percent).

If employees had received training in an area, respondents were also asked which employees at the agency had been trained. In all 14 areas, more than eight of ten agencies that had trained any staff had trained their human resources (HR) staff. The survey shows that much more training has been focused on HR and EEO staff, who are the persons responsible for employee hiring, dealing with employee issues and grievance handling. Far less training is offered to managerial and other staff.

Respondents were also asked whether they would like more information in each training area. Approximately two-thirds indicated that they would like more information on accommodation for mental disabilities (69 percent), and Rehabilitation Act requirements (66 percent). A similar percentage reported interest in receiving more information on available print or organizational resources, interaction with other employment legislation, and limitations and exclusions health plans are allowed to impose (64 percent for each).

Resources Used to Resolve Disability Discrimination and Accommodation Issues

Nine out of ten HR/EEO representatives reported that they use their agency's EEO office as a resource to resolve disability discrimination or accommodation issues *(see Table 5)*. Eighty-eight percent consult an internal legal counsel. Two-thirds or more turn to their agency's safety/ergonomics staff (77 percent), state vocational rehabilitation agencies (74 percent), or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) (69 percent) for assistance in resolving disability nondiscrimination or accommodation issues. Forty-nine percent use the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities Job Accommodation Network (JAN). Respondents were least likely to use external legal counsels (14 percent), their regional ADA Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (23 percent), or local independent living centers or other disability organizations (43 percent).

Table 4

Training on ADA and Rehabilitation Act-Related Topics

	Have any employees been trained in this area?	More info desired
Non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices	93%	55%
Non-discrimination in the disciplinary process or termination	91	55
The accommodation process	90	60
Federal Hiring Schedules	89	54
Confidentiality requirements of medical information	89	55
Disability awareness and/or sensitivity training	88	56
Equal access in promotional opportunities and training	83	59
Defining essential job functions	83	58
Conflict resolution in the accommodation process	81	58
Rehabilitation Act requirements	80	66
Accommodation for mental disabilities	65	69
Available print or organizational resources to assist in the accommodation process	65	64
Interaction with other employment legislation	60	64
Limitations and exclusions the ADA and other Federal laws allow health plans to impose	46	64

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=403) less "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Respondents were asked to rate the level of helpfulness each resource provided. The disability management/benefits staff was considered the most helpful resource, with 86 percent rating it "helpful" or "very helpful." The agency's EEO office and internal legal counsel received a similar rating (each 84 percent), as did safety/ergonomics staff (82 percent), and the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) (74 percent). Fewer

respondents reported that union representatives (43 percent) and local independent living centers or other organizations (55 percent) were helpful.

Disability Management Programs and Disability Nondiscrimination and Accommodation

Disability management is a strategy that seeks to prevent disability from occurring in the workplace or, failing that, supports early intervention after the onset of a disability, in a way that promotes an organizational commitment to continued employment for employees with functional work limitation. The goal of disability management is successful job maintenance, or facilitation of prompt return to work, for people with disabilities.[4]

Sixty-six percent of respondents reported that their agency has a formal or informal disability management or return to work program; 42 percent reported having a formal program. Twenty-two percent said there was not a return-to-work program at their agency, and 12 percent were unsure. Respondents whose agencies have either formal or informal disability management programs indicated that these programs contribute to implementation of civil rights laws, by either somewhat or greatly raising awareness of the importance of medical confidentiality (89 percent), raising supervisor awareness of the accommodation process (88 percent), raising acceptance of employees with disabilities (88 percent), and providing an organizational structure for accommodations (79 percent).

[4] Akabas, S., Gates, L., & Galvin, D. (1992). *Disability management: A complete system to reduce costs, increase productivity, meet employee needs, and ensure legal compliance.* New York: AMACOM, p.2.

Table 5

Resources Used to Help Resolve Discrimination & Accommodation Issues

	Do you use?	If used, was helpful or very helpful
Your agency's EEO office	91%	83%
Internal legal counsel	88	84
Your safety/ergonomics staff	77	82
State vocational rehabilitation agencies	74	66
U.S. EEOC	69	60
Disability management/benefits staff	68	86
Other Federal agencies or professional society or business agency (e.g. OPM, MSPB, SHRM, IPMA)	63	81
Dispute resolution center/mediator	55	70
Union representative	52	43
Job Accommodation Network (toll-free number)	49	74
Local independent living centers or other disability organizations	43	55
The Regional ADA Technical Assistance Center	23	71
External legal counsel	14	63

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=403) less "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Summary of the Federal Supervisor Survey

Supervisors Report on Accommodations for Applicants

Several survey questions dealt with inquiries about how involved supervisors were in the recruitment processes. Specifically, those surveyed were asked how many people they had hired in the past five years, how many of these were individuals with disabilities, and the extent to which the agency sets affirmative employment goals. In addition, supervisors were asked about their familiarity with particular hiring authorities for individuals with disabilities in the Federal government, as well as changes made to the applicant process to accommodate people with disabilities, and familiarity with applicant interviewing.

Supervisor Involvement in the Recruitment Process

Half of the supervisors reported being very or fairly involved in the recruitment process, with one-third (33 percent) saying they were "very involved." When asked to what extent the supervisor's Federal agency set reasonable affirmative employment goals and made an effort to achieve them, over half (51 percent) reported that their agency made a "great deal of effort," with an additional 30 percent saying their agency had made "somewhat" of an effort on behalf of such goals.

When asked how many employees they had hired in the past five years (or since they became a Federal Supervisor, whichever was less), four out of five reported having hired at least one employee. Two out of five supervisors (41 percent) reported having hired one to five individuals, 17 percent hired six to ten, and one in ten (11 percent) had hired more than 20 individuals over that time period. Of those hiring, one in three (32 percent) reported having hired an individual with a disability, with one in ten having hired three or more individuals with disabilities during that time period.

Use of Special Hiring Authorities

Supervisors were asked about their familiarity with and the frequency of their use of special hiring authorities to facilitate recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities in the Federal workforce. More than one-half (56 percent) of those surveyed were "very" or "somewhat" familiar with the special provisions for hiring disabled veterans (this provision defines eligible veterans as those who are 30 percent disabled or more). However, fewer respondents were familiar with the provisions for hiring readers/interpreters or other personal assistants for persons with disabilities (36 percent) or the special provision for hiring people with cognitive disabilities or people who have recovered from mental illness (30 percent).

Supervisors with experience supervising one or more employees with disabilities were much more likely to report being very familiar with each of the special hiring authorities and more likely to have used them when familiar, compared to those without experience supervising employees with disabilities. There is an interesting continuum in the degree of familiarity with these authorities, from those not supervising employees with disabilities, supervising one or two employees with a disability, and supervising three or more employees with disabilities. As experience with the supervision of a person with a disability increases, so does familiarity with the Federal hiring authorities *(see Chart 2)*.

Pre-Employment Accommodations Made

Those surveyed were asked about the changes they had made for recruitment and pre-employment screening processes across four different types of accommodations, including changing questions asked in interviews, making information accessible for a person with a visual or learning impairment, making information accessible for a hearing-impaired person, and making interview locations accessible to people with physical disabilities (mobility impairments).

Making information accessible for a person with a visual or learning impairment was most difficult, being reported as difficult or very difficult by approximately one in four respondents (24 percent). Making informa-

tion accessible for a person with a hearing impairment was also seen as difficult, reported as difficult or very difficult by 17 percent of respondents with experience in making such changes.

Familiarity with Interview Considerations and Accommodations

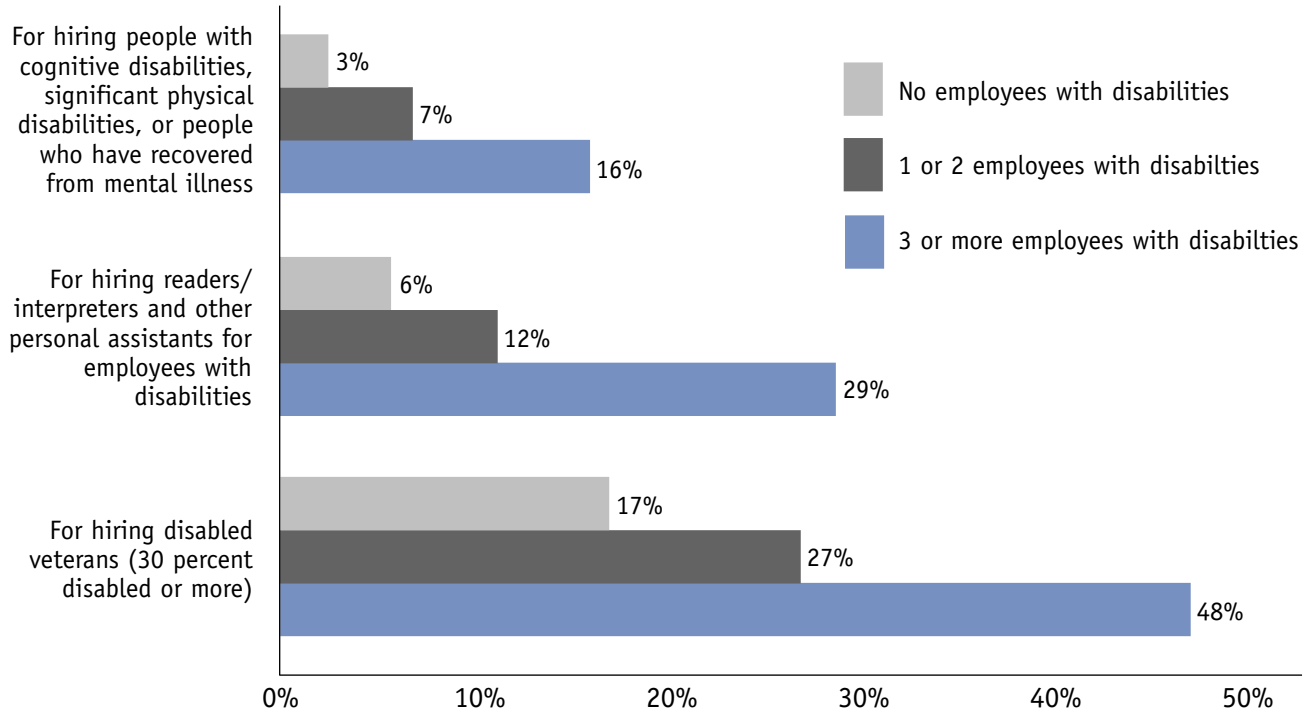
Respondents were given a list of considerations in the applicant interview process, and asked how familiar they were with each *(see Table 6 on next page)*. Almost three-quarters of the respondents reported being familiar or very familiar with framing questions to applicants about the ability to perform specific job tasks rather than about disability (72 percent), and knowing when to ask an applicant about how she or he would perform specific job tasks (71 percent). The areas where respondents indicated the least familiarity were in accommodating individuals with visual or hearing impairments, such as accessing sign language interpreters, using a tele-typewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews, adapting print materials used in the interview (to large print, diskette or Braille), or using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or visual impairment. Another area in which there was a higher degree of unfamiliarity was in knowing when to test for illegal drugs, reported by approximately two out of five supervisors (44 percent). Supervisors who had employees with disabilities were significantly more familiar (by ten percent or more) than those without experience with each of the applicant interviewing issues, except for "knowing when to test for illegal drugs."

Supervisors Report on Accommodation Practices

Federal supervisors surveyed were asked a series of questions relating to their practices in making accom-

Chart 2

Supervisors "Very Familiar"with Federal Hiring Authorities, by Number of Employees with Disabilities Supervised



Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

modations for applicants and employees with disabilities. More than three-quarters (78 percent) reported that their agency had a formal process for handling accommodation requests. When asked who makes the final decision on the provision of an accommodation, the most common response was that the respondent as the supervisor, in consultation with his/her immediate supervisor, made this decision (29 percent). One out of five respondents indicated that they, as the immediate supervisor of the employee, made the decision (21 percent), or another manager or director did so (20 percent). Least often making the final decision on the provision of an accommodation (two percent of respondents or less) was the Disability Service Office, occupational safety/medical clinic staff, safety/ergonomic staff, the agency's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) staff, legal counsel (internal or external), or disability management/benefits staff. Supervisors with experience supervising one or more employees with disabilities were twice as likely to report that they, as the immediate supervisor, made/would make the final accommodation decision, as those without experience (26 percent compared to 13 percent). Those without such experience were more likely to say the final decision would fall to another manager/director (25 percent compared to 17 percent).

Supervisor Experience Making Accommodations

To get a sense of the number of accommodation requests made to the supervisors surveyed, an initial question asked how many accommodation requests had been received by the supervisors responding to the survey over the past five years (or their tenure as a Federal supervisor, whichever was less). In terms of their own experience in dealing directly with accommodation requests, half (50 percent) of the supervisors had received at least one accommodation request over the past five years. Slightly over a third (36 per-

Table 6

Familiarity with Disability Employment Discrimination (ADA) Interview Considerations and Accommodations

	Familiar or very familiar	Neither familiar nor unfamiliar	Unfamiliar or very unfamiliar
Framing questions to applicants about the ability to perform specific job tasks rather than about disability	72%	12%	16%
Knowing when to ask an applicant about how s/he would perform specific job tasks	71	13	16
Restrictions on eliciting information about medical issues affecting applicant's health and safety on the job.	65	13	21
Restrictions on obtaining medical examinations and medical history information	60	12	29
Accessing sign language interpreters	49	13	37
Knowing when to test for illegal drugs	43	13	44
Using a teletypewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews	38	11	50
Adapting print materials used in the interview to large print, diskette, or Braille	36	14	50
Using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or visual impairment	35	14	51

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=1,001) less "don't know/refused" responses. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Table 7

Accommodations Made for Employees With Disabilities

	Yes	No, not able to	Never needed to make this accommodation
Advocated to make existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities *(restrooms, door entrances, hallways, etc.)*	53%	--	47%
Modified work environment *(orthopedic chair, lower desk, etc.)*	48	--	52
Acquired or modified equipment or devices	47	--	52
Restructured jobs or modified work hours	45	--	54
Made parking or transportation accommodations	41	--	58
Provided written job instructions	31	--	69
Changed supervisory methods	29	--	70
Provided qualified readers or interpreters *(including personal assistants)*	27	--	73
Acquired or modified training materials	20	--	79
Made reassignment to vacant positions	17	2	81
Provided a job coach	17	--	82

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=1,001) less "don't know/refused" responses. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

cent) had received one to three requests, one in ten (11 percent) had received four to ten requests, and only four percent received more than ten requests. Six supervisors reported receiving over 40 requests, which were often multiple accommodations for a single individual (e.g. sign language interpreters at each staff meeting for a deaf employee).

Three out of five supervisors (60 percent) reported supervising employees with disabilities during the last five years. Specifically, 40 percent reported supervising one or two employees with disabilities, 11 percent reported three or four, with the remaining nine percent reporting five or more employees with disabilities (40 percent reported no employees with disabilities). Overall, nearly two thirds (64 percent) of the supervisors surveyed had supervised at least one employee with a disability and/or had received at least one accommodation request over the past five years or their tenure as a Federal supervisor (whichever was less).

Supervisors were also asked which types of people with disabilities they supervised, classifying the disabilities according to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) targeted disability categories.[5] Over half (56 percent) had supervised at least one employee with an EEOC targeted disability.

Kinds of Accommodations Made

Respondents were asked if they or their agency had made accommodations for an employee they supervised. Three quarters of the respondents indicated that at least one accommodation had been made for an employee they supervised. It is interesting to note that this is a higher proportion than those reporting receiving accommodation requests (50 percent). This difference may be due to the fact that these accommodation questions were not limited to the past five years and also include accommodations made without

[5]See http://www.opm.gov/feddata/demograp/demograp.asp for more information.

the employee making a request. Nearly half of all supervisors surveyed (49 percent), showed considerable breadth of experience, having made four or more different types of accommodations of the 11 asked about in the survey *(see Table 7 on previous page)*. The only individual accommodation that was made by over half the supervisors (53 percent) was that of advocating to make existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities, such as restrooms, door entrances, hallways, etc. Almost half (48 percent) of the responding supervisors reported modifying a work environment (such as by purchasing an orthopedic chair, lowering a desk, etc.). Fewer than one in five supervisors reported making the accommodations of providing a job coach, or reassignment to vacant positions (each by 17 percent of respondents). The vast majority of those supervisors who had not made a specific accommodation responded they did not do so because they "never needed to." Typically, less than one percent of the supervisors reported they were "not able to" provide an accommodation, with two percent reporting being unable to provide "reassignment to vacant positions."

Table 8

Resources Used for Accommodation Assistance

Resources	Used	Not Used		If used, was it helpful?
		Not aware of	Not needed	Helpful[1]
Central human resource personnel (Department wide)	30%	15%	56%	79%
Employee Assistance Program	30	4	67	74
Servicing human resource personnel (sub-agency or unit level)	28	18	54	83
Safety/ergonomic staff	28	19	53	84
EEO office	23	5	73	75
Occupational health/medical clinic staff	22	16	62	83
Disability management/benefits staff	14	32	54	83
External health care provider	13	16	70	57
State vocational rehabilitation agencies	9	16	74	81
Disabilities Services Office (i.e. CAP, COAST, TARGET Center)	8	48	44	83
Disabled Employee Advisory Group	6	46	48	84
Local independent living centers or other disability organizations	5	18	77	74
Selective Placement Coordinator	5	42	53	81
Job Accommodation Network (toll-free number)	3	47	50	83

[1]Helpfulness rated on a 1-5 scale with 1 being very helpful and 5=not at all helpful (Helpful=1,2 Undecided=3 Not Helpful=4,5.)

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=1,001) less "don't know/refused" responses. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Accommodation Resources Used and Found Helpful

Supervisors were asked about their use of 14 specific accommodation resources. Nearly three out of five had used at least one of these 14 resources. The majority of those who used resources utilized multiple sources, with 36 percent reporting having used one or two, 34 percent used three or four, and 31 percent used five or more of the 14 resources. The most commonly used resources included the Human Resource personnel at the central (30 percent) and servicing/subagency level (28 percent), as well as the employee assistance program (30 percent) and the safety/ergonomics staff (28 percent) *(see Table 8)*.

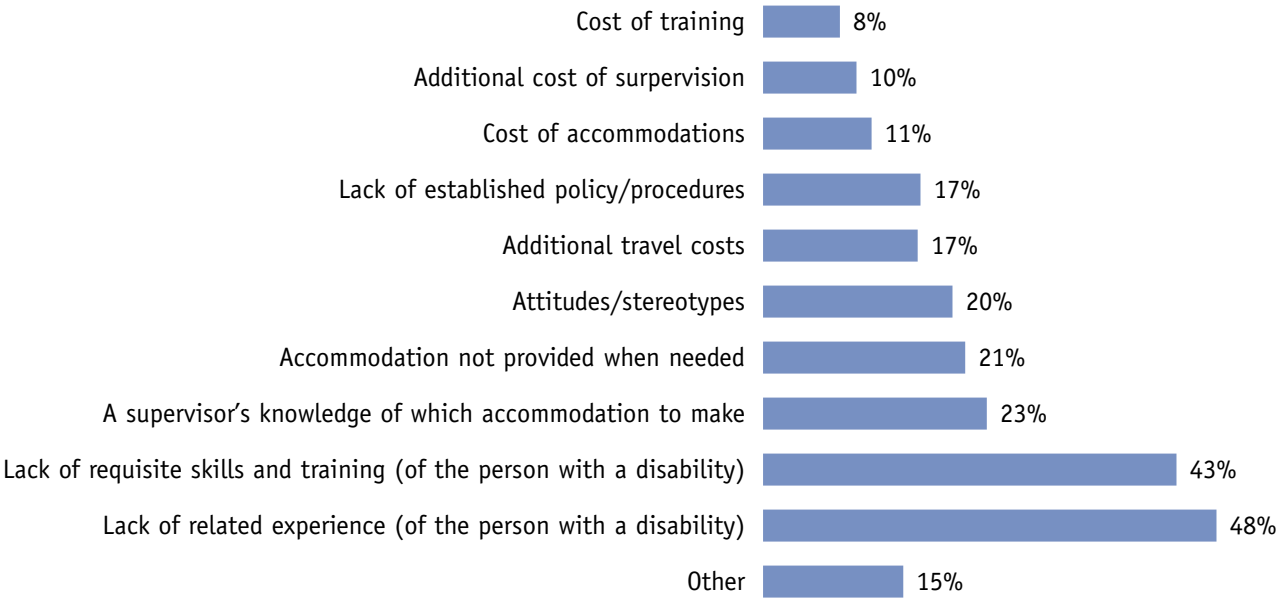
If a resource was not used, three options were available: "not aware of," "aware but not needed" and "aware but not helpful." "Aware but not helpful" was reported by fewer than one percent of respondents. Of special interest is that nearly half (42-48 percent) of the supervisors were not aware of the following resources: the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), disabilities services office (e.g., CAP, COAST, TARGET center), disabled employee advisory groups, and selective placement coordinators. Interestingly, supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities were not significantly more familiar with these accommodations than those who had not supervised any employees with disabilities. However, they were more aware than those without experience of the following resources: Independent Living Centers (87 percent compared to 79 percent), State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies (85 percent compared to 78 percent), and external health care providers (87 percent compared to 81 percent) as resources.

Opportunities for Promotion/Training for People with Disabilities

Supervisors were asked what they saw as the continuing barriers to the hiring and advancement of people with disabilities, and ways to address these barriers. In addition, they were asked about the various means they used to facilitate access to training and other benefits of employment for employees with disabilities.

Chart 3

Barriers to Employment or Advancement of People with Disabilities



Note: Percent of all respondents (n=1,001) less "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Barriers to Hiring and Promotion of People with Disabilities

Respondents were presented with seven possible barriers to the employment and advancement of people with disabilities. No respondent indicated that there were no barriers for people with disabilities; all felt that one or more of the listed barriers were in fact a problem *(See Chart 3 on the previous page)*. The most frequently noted barriers were felt to be in the work environment or in the training or work experience of the person with the disability.

Respondents indicated that there were significant barriers for people with disabilities in the work environment, including a supervisor's knowledge of which accommodations to make (23 percent), accommodations not being provided when needed (21 percent), and attitudes and stereotypes about people with disabilities (20 percent). Respondents also identified barriers that result from inadequacies in the preparation for employment of the individual with a disability. These potential barriers to employment and advancement were a lack of related experience in the person with a disability (48 percent) and a lack of requisite skills and training in the person with a disability (43 percent). Interestingly, cost of accommodations (11 percent), additional cost of supervision (10 percent), and the cost of training (8 percent) were least likely to be seen as remaining barriers to employment for people with disabilities. Surprisingly, the perception of these barriers was not significantly different between supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities and supervisors without employees with disabilities.

Possible Ways to Reduce Barriers in the Workplace

Supervisors were also asked their perceptions of the degree of effectiveness of eleven different items in reducing barriers to employment or advancement for persons with disabilities within their respective agencies *(See Table 9)*. The majority (over 50 percent) reported all eleven items would be effective (rated as 1 or 2 on a five point scale where 1 is "very effective" and 5 is "very ineffective"). More than four out of five supervisors reported that visible top management commitment (85 percent) and skills training for employees with disabilities (83 percent) would be effective means of barrier reduction. Other means considered highly effective include mentoring (78 percent), staff training (76 percent), and on-site consultation or technical assistance (76 percent).

Supervisors were also asked if they had used any of three items (wheelchair access, communication access for those with vision impairments, and communication access for those with hearing impairments) to ensure that people with disabilities they supervised would

Table 9

Means to Reduce Barriers to Employment

Means of barrier reduction	% considering it effective[1]
Visible top management commitment	85%
Skills training for employees with disabilities	83
Mentoring	78
Staff training	76
On-site consultation or technical assistance	76
Changing co-worker/supervisor attitudes towards persons with disabilities	69
Special budget allocation/centralized accommodation fund	67
Development and input from a disability advisory group	62
Include affirmative action and accommodation items for persons with disabilities in supervisor performance appraisals	60
Departmental reward/recognition *(ie. A certificate acknowledging outstanding performance)*	59
Short-term outside assistance with job supervision *(e.g. outside job coach)*	57

[1]Effectiveness rated 1=Very effective to 5=Very ineffective
% Effective=1 & 2.

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=1,001) less "don't know/refused" responses.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

have access to meetings, promotional and social opportunities. The most often used was wheelchair access, with three of five respondents (61 percent) indicating use of this. Less frequently reported was communication access for the deaf or hard of hearing (45 percent), and communication access for persons with visual or learning disabilities (38 percent).

Supervisor Experience in Resolving Disability Discrimination Issues

Approaches and Resources Used to Resolve Accommodation Disputes

Supervisors were presented with five possible resources or approaches to dealing with an accommodation dispute, should one arise, and asked how easy or difficult using this approach would be for them. The five resources or approaches presented were as follows: discussing accommodation needs with the individual; accessing a resource person to help with accommodation issues (HR personnel, EEO personnel, health and safety personnel, ergonomics personnel, Employee Relations personnel, etc.); having access to a person trained in alternative dispute resolution (ADR); effectively using the existing dispute/complaint resolution process; getting sufficient training on dispute resolution approaches; and determining the most appropriate dispute resolution process. Approximately three-quarters or more of the individuals reported that using each accommodation dispute approach or resource would be easy. Discussing accommodation

Table 10

Resources Used to Help Resolve ADA Issues

Resource	Do you utilize?	If used, was it helpful?
	Yes	Helpful or very helpful
HR Staff/Employee Relations	44%	82%
Your agency's EEO office	33	77
Your safety/ergonomics staff	33	85
Union representative	25	60
Agency legal counsel	23	85
Disability management/benefits staff	19	78
State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies, DBTACs, ILCs, other disability organizations	16	88
U.S. EEOC	16	78
Other Federal agencies or professional society or business agency *(eg OPM, MSPB, SHRM, IPMA)*	14	81
Dispute resolution center/mediator	11	71
Disabilities Services Office	8	79
Selective Placement Coordinator	8	77
Job Accommodation Network *(toll-free number)*	4	83

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=1,001) less "don't know/refused" responses. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

needs with the individual with a disability was seen as the least difficult approach to use, with nine out of ten of respondents (92 percent) seeing this as easy to do. Determining the most appropriate dispute resolution process was seen as modestly more difficult, with approximately three out of four (73 percent) respondents seeing this as an easy approach to resolving an accommodation dispute, should one arise.

The supervisors were also presented with 12 possible resources that could be used to help resolve disability employment civil rights issues *(see Table 10 on previous page)*. Less than half of the respondents used any single resource for these purposes. The resources used by the largest number of supervisors included: the HR Staff/Employee Relations (44 percent), the agency's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Office (33 percent), and the agency's safety/ergonomics staff (33 percent).

Training on Civil Rights-Related Topics

Disability Civil Rights Training Received

More than nine out of ten supervisors (92 percent) were trained in at least one of the eleven disability employment civil rights training areas asked about, and more than half had received training in eight of the eleven topics *(see Table 11)*. The topics most often reported as the focus of training (by two-thirds to three-quarters of respondents) were non-discrimination in the disciplinary process or termination (72 percent), non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices (71 percent), and disability awareness and/or sensitivity training (71 percent). The three areas in which supervisors had received comparatively less training were Section 508 training (28 percent), the special appointing/hiring authorities (26 percent), and accommodation for persons with mental or psychiatric disabilities (25 percent).

Table 11

Training on ADA and Rehabilitation Act-Related Topics by Collar

	Received Training?	More Information?
Non-discrimination in the disciplinary process or termination	72%	43%
Non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices	71	48
Disability awareness and/or sensitivity training	71	46
Confidentiality requirements of medical information	67	42
Equal access in promotional opportunities & training	60	51
Conflict resolution in the accommodation process	57	50
The accommodation process	55	56
Defining essential job functions	53	49
Section 508 training	28	56
The special appointing/hiring authorities	26	64
Accommodation for mental disabilities	25	63

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=1,001) less "don't know/refused" responses (5% or less of total response).

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Approximately four in five supervisors reported that the training on ADA and Rehabilitation Act topics they received as a Federal supervisor was provided as a part of a general supervisory/management (87 percent) or employment discrimination or diversity training (83 percent). The next most commonly cited ways training had been provided were as a specialized focus on disability provided by Federal government staff experts (64 percent), or as a specialized focus on disability by an external consultant (41 percent). Supervisors of employees with disabilities were more likely to have received training from Federal Government staff experts (68 percent compared to 58 percent) and from external consultants (44 percent compared to 36 percent), than those who had not had experience with employees with disabilities.

The topics on which the majority of supervisors (50 percent or more) indicated wanting more information were as follows (in descending order of interest): special appointing/hiring authorities, accommodations for persons with mental or psychiatric disabilities, the accommodation process, Section 508 training, and equal access in promotional opportunities and training.

Incentives to Encourage Disability-Related Training

The supervisors were asked how effective certain specific incentives would be in encouraging attendance at disability nondiscrimination related training (including Americans with Disabilities Act topics, disability employment, Rehabilitation Act, EEOC Guidance, and Section 508 compliance). The incentive seen as most effective was making ADA/disability employment a mandatory element of management training, selected by almost four out of five respondents (79 percent). The next most often selected incentives were paying ADA training costs (66 percent), and making ADA training available on the Internet (56 percent). Departmental reward or recognition for receiving training was seen as the least effective of the four alternatives, but still seen as effective by over two out of five respondents (44 percent marked it as effective).

Accommodation Informational and Organizational Resources Used

Those surveyed were also asked about the resources that they used to address disability civil rights-related issues, across seven alternatives, including: print or video materials, on-site consultation/training, web sites/listservs/EEOC homepage, organizational newsletters, telephone consultation/information hotlines, government-sponsored programs (i.e. IDEAS, FOSE), and employee-sponsored disability organizations in the supervisor's department or agency. The resources reported most often used were video materials (reported as used by 42 percent of respondents) and on-site consultation/training (34 percent). Web sites/listservs/EEOC homepage, organizational newsletters, telephone consultation/information hotlines were used by approximately one in five respondents. Least-often used were government-sponsored programs (17 percent) and employee-sponsored disability organizations (13 percent). The lack of use of these particular resources may have been a function of lack of awareness of them, as at least one in three respondents indicated that they were not aware of these resources.

Disability Management and Workplace Accommodation

Fifty-four percent of respondents reported that their agency has a formal disability management or return to work program (with written policies and procedures), with an additional 12 percent having an informal program.

Respondents whose agencies have either formal or informal disability management programs indicated that these programs contribute "a great deal" to implementation of disability nondiscrimination or civil rights laws, by either raising awareness of the importance of medical confidentiality (60 percent), raising acceptance of employees with disabilities (39 percent), raising supervisor awareness of the accommodation process (36 percent), or providing an organizational structure for accommodations (31 percent).

Awareness of and Implementation to Date of Presidential Orders

Supervisors were queried about their perceptions of implementation to date of several Presidential Orders that relate to more effective recruitment and retention for individuals with disabilities in the Federal workforce. Inquiry was also made about other services and supports that would facilitate effective implementation of these equal employment opportunity provisions.

Implementation of Section 508

Section 508 requires that electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal government be accessible to people with disabilities.[6] The Center for Information Technology Accommodation (CITA) in the U.S. General Services Administration's Office of Government-wide Policy has been charged with the task of educating Federal employees and building the infrastructure necessary to support Section 508 implementation.

Those surveyed were asked how helpful each of five possible resources or services might be to them as supervisors in implementing the technology nondiscrimination requirements of Section 508. The five resources were as follows: centralized technology procurement that screens for these criteria, training procurement specialists in Section 508 requirements, centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues, unit specific expertise/technical assistance on technology accessibility issues, and access to the technical staff within the supervisor's agency (i.e. Chief Information Officer (CIO)/Help Desk). All of these items were perceived as helpful by at least seven out of ten respondents. Those items seen as most helpful were access to the technical assistance staff within the given supervisor's agency (79 percent), centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues (77 percent), and training procurement specialists in Section 508 requirements (76 percent).

Off-site/Telework for Federal Employees with Disabilities

Another Executive Order deals with the identification or development of home-based, off-site, or telework opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the Federal workforce. This survey has afforded an opportunity to explore the potential of this initiative and its ease of implementation from the supervisors' perspective. Specifically, supervisors were asked if they currently had any full-time employees who worked primarily from home or from another off-site location, and whether any of the existing office-based positions that they currently supervise could be relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities, either on a full-time basis or split between home and office-based location in a given week. In addition, these supervisors were asked how easy or difficult it would be for them to develop full-time positions that would be performed either exclusively at home or split between home and on-site locations.

Survey respondents were asked about their awareness of the Federal initiative regarding telecommuting/telework for individuals for significant disabilities. Nearly 40 percent were aware of this provision. Supervisors who had experience supervising disabled employees were more likely to report awareness of this initiative (42 percent), compared to those without experience (32 percent). Overall, thirteen percent of the respondents indicated they currently supervise full-time employees who work primarily from home or another off-site location.

These supervisors were also asked whether, in their opinion, any of the office-based positions that they currently supervise could be relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities, either on a full-time basis or split between home and office-based locations in a given week. Approximately three out of five (58 percent) respondents indicated that they would be able, in their opinion, to take positions that they currently supervised and split them between home or off-site and in-office functions during a given week. Supervisors said that split time between off-site and on-site positions was more feasible than full-time off site, with only one in three supervisors (32 percent) responding affirmatively to the full-time option. Supervisors of employees with disabilities were more likely to say they would be able to make current positions

[6] For further information, see http://www.section508.gov.

home-based (37 percent compared to 25 percent) or split home-office positions (64 percent compared to 50 percent) and develop new positions more easily.

Supervisors were also asked how easy or difficult it would be to develop such positions. Again, respondents indicated that developing jobs that were split between home and office would be easier than trying to create full-time off-site positions (32 percent saying very easy/easy for split time, compared to 14 percent for full-time at home). Supervisors with employees with disabilities were also more likely to view developing positions to work at home as easier, than those who were not supervising an employee with a disability.

An effort was also made in this survey to identify which structures and supports might best facilitate the redesign of existing positions or creation of new ones that could be home-based or telework employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Specifically, those who indicated they had potential positions (79 percent of the 1,001 supervisors surveyed) were asked to make a judgment about the degree of helpfulness of seven different possible supports to supervision of telework employees, as follows: off-site technology support; guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers; formal flexiplace agreement between off-site employee and supervisor; training for supervisors of off-site workers; initial and ongoing training for off-site workers; having guidelines for the design of off-site work; guidelines for supervision of off-site workers; and training for coworkers of off-site workers.

In general, the majority of supervisors (57 percent or more) rated all of these possible structures or supports for off-site work as helpful *(see Table 12)*. The three rated as most helpful were off-site technology support (75 percent), guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers (71 percent), and formal flexiplace agreements between off-site employees and supervisors (71 percent).

The survey respondents were also asked about how easy or difficult it would be to accommodate an individual with a chronic illness or disability (for example, someone who has cancer treatment, physical therapy, dialysis, or a mobility impairment) with the ability to work at home for one to two days each week or intermittently. As expected, supervisors who had experience with employees with disabilities viewed making this accommodation as easier than those who were inexperienced (44 percent said it would be very easy/easy compared to 32 percent of those not supervising an employee with a disability).

Awareness and Implementation of Federal Government Hiring Executive Order

Two questions were asked of supervisors to find out more about their awareness and current agency implementation of Executive Order 13163, which requires the Federal government to hire 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities over the next five years. Almost two in five (38 percent) indicated an awareness of the Executive Order.

Table 12

Helpfulness of Resources in Supporting Home-Based or Tele-Work Employment Opportunities	Helpful (of those who reported possible positions)
Off-site technology support	75%
Guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers	71
Formal flexiplace agreement between off-site employee and supervisor	71
Training for supervisors of off-site workers	66
Initial and ongoing training for off-site workers	66
Guidelines for the design of off-site work	66
Guidelines for supervision of off-site workers	65
Training for coworkers of off-site workers	57

Helpfulness rated on a 1-5 scale with 1=very helpful and 5=not at all helpful; Helpful=1,2.

Note: Percent of all respondents (n=1,001) less "don't know/refused" responses (5 percent or less of total response).

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Those surveyed were also asked to what extent their agency's plan to implement this executive order has influenced their recruitment and hiring practices to date. Of those who indicated that they were aware of the order at all (n= 329), again approximately two in five (38 percent) indicated that this had influenced their hiring decisions a great deal or somewhat. Supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities were more aware of this order (43 percent compared to 30 percent) and also more likely to say it had an impact on their hiring decisions (43 percent compared to 25 percent), than those without any employees with disabilities.

Awareness and Implementation of Executive Order to Establish Written Accommodation Procedures

Several survey items dealt with supervisor awareness of and also the influence on supervisory practice of the EEOC Guidelines for Federal agencies to implement Executive Order 13164, establishing written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation. This requires that each Federal agency establish effective written procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation by employees and applicants with disabilities. Similar to their awareness of the Federal government hiring initiative discussed above, two out of five supervisors (41 percent), reported awareness of these EEOC guidelines requiring agencies to develop a written accommodation procedure. Nearly half (47 percent) of respondents aware of this provision indicated that it had influenced their supervisory practices "a great deal or somewhat." Again, supervisors with experience with employees with disabilities were more likely to be aware of these guidelines (46 percent compared to 34 percent) and reported that it had a greater influence on their practices (55 percent compared to 29 percent) than those who did not supervise employees with disabilities.

Comparison of Selected Survey Items

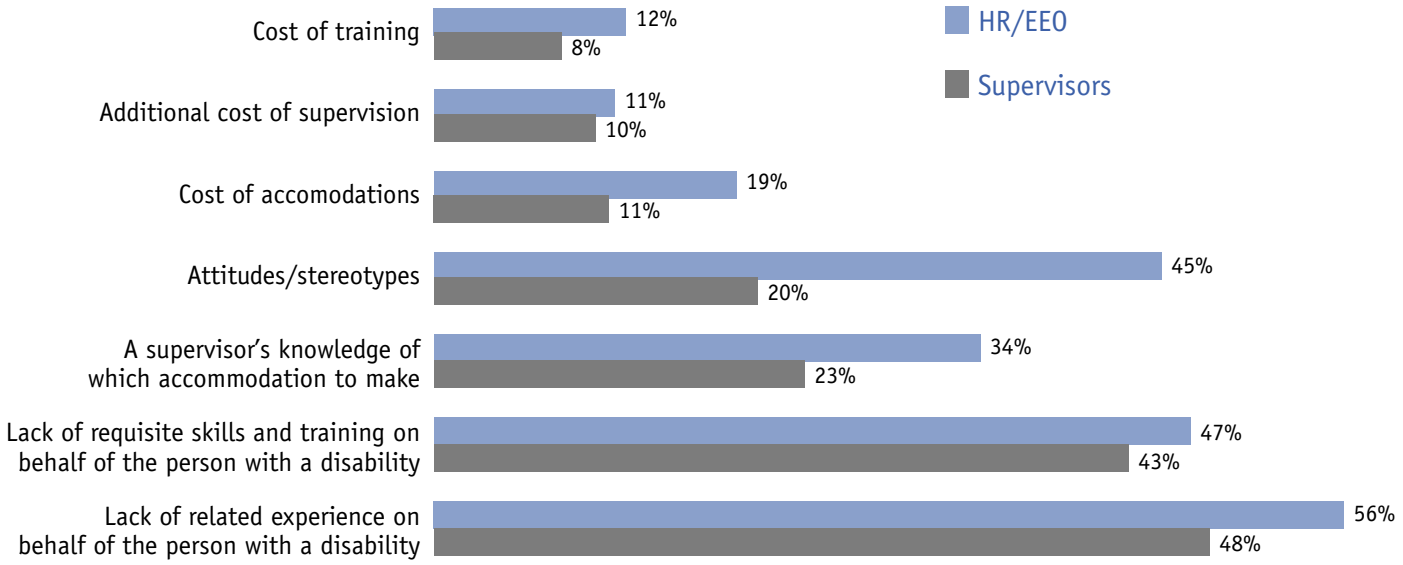
Certain questions asked in both the HR/EEO survey and the supervisor survey were compared. Not all parallel questions were compared, due to differences between the groups in their experience of and exposure to issues related to working with employees and applicants with disabilities. Therefore, the primary focus of the comparisons was the responses to the attitude and knowledge questions.

It should be noted that the HR/EEO sample is comprised of 97 Federal agencies, whereas the supervisor sample is drawn solely from the 17 Task Force Member Agencies. Because of this, the supervisor sample was compared to both the HR/EEO sample in its entirety as well as the subset of only HR/EEO respondents from Task Force member agencies. Although the numbers changed slightly, all statistically significant differences remained significant. Therefore the results here describe a comparison between the full HR/EEO sample from all 97 agencies with the supervisor sample drawn from the 17 PTFEAD agencies.

Nearly three quarters of both groups said their agency had a formal process for handling accommodation requests (73 percent of HR/EEO and 78 percent of supervisors). Given that supervisors would not be dealing with accommodations as frequently as HR/EEO, it is very encouraging that such a large proportion reported awareness of such a process. This awareness may reflect changes due to the EEOC guidelines (published February 12, 2002) for Federal agencies to implement Executive Order 13164, establishing written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation. Supervisors who were aware of the Executive order were more likely to say their agency had a formal process (86 percent) than supervisors who were not aware of the new guidelines (73 percent).

Chart 4

HR/EEO and Supervisor Perspectives on Barriers to Employment or Advancement of People with Disabilities



Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies: EEO/HR and Supervisor Perspectives.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Several questions asked if the respondent had made specific changes to make job interviews more accessible to applicants with disabilities. If they had made a change, they were asked how difficult it had been to make. Not surprisingly, given the nature of their position, HR respondents were significantly more likely to have made the changes (67-88 percent) compared to the supervisors (52-57 percent). A comparison between the two groups regarding the ease of making such changes showed that in both groups, nearly four out of five respondents found making changes in the questions asked in interviews easy or very easy. Interestingly, supervisors were slightly more likely to rate "making interview locations accessible" as easy than were HR respondents (91 compared to 85 percent). This may be related to the fact that such facility alterations more likely fall in the realm of responsibility of HR personnel. Making accommodations for those with visual or auditory disabilities was found to be more difficult by both groups, but especially so for supervisors. Nearly a quarter (24 percent) of supervisors reported that making information accessible to those with visual or learning disabilities was difficult (15 percent of HR/EEO) while 17 percent of supervisors said that making information accessible for those with hearing impairments was difficult (eight percent of HR/EEO).

Another comparable set of questions included the respondents' perceptions of barriers to the employment or advancement for people with disabilities in their agency. Overall, only about one in ten respondents in both groups saw costs related to training and additional supervision as a barrier *(See Chart 4 on previous page)*. Surprisingly HR/EEO respondents were significantly more likely to see costs of accommodations as being a barrier (19 percent) than the supervisors (11 percent). The HR/EEO respondents were more than twice as likely to view attitudes and stereotypes as barriers than the supervisors (45 percent compared to 20 percent). This discrepancy might be due to HR/EEO respondents more likely being involved in or aware of issues relating to problems in this area than the supervisors are, as such issues may more often be brought to their attention. It may be that the supervisor responses better reflect the actual situation in the general Federal workforce overall; that is, attitudes and stereotypes towards people with disabilities may not be as significant a problem in actual workplaces as HR/EEO believes.

Other differences in perception of barriers included over one third of HR/EEO viewing "supervisor knowledge of which accommodation to make" as a barrier, compared to 23 percent of supervisors, and 56 percent of HR/EEO perceiving a "lack of related experience" on the part of the employee with a disability as a barrier, compared to only 48 percent of supervisors. Nearly half of both groups (44 percent) saw "lack of requisite skills and training" on the part of a person with a disability as a barrier.

As would be expected, supervisors were slightly less likely to be knowledgeable about the agency's affirmative action employment goals, with about one in ten responding "don't know," when asked whether their agency sets affirmative action employment goals and makes an effort to achieve them. However, of those who answered the question, a significantly larger proportion of supervisors (57 percent) than HR/EEO respondents (50 percent) felt that their agency put a great deal of effort into setting and achieving their affirmative action goals. A similar situation was found regarding a survey item about an agency having a grievance or dispute resolution process in place; similarly, approximately one in ten supervisors did not know. However of those who were able to answer the question, 95 percent of both sets of respondents said that their agency did have such a process.

Both groups were asked about their use of a number of resources in addressing ADA issues, and the degree of helpfulness of those they had used. Not surprisingly, HR/EEO respondents were far more likely to have a need for such services, and were therefore much more likely to use them than were supervisors. A com-

parison was made of how helpful respondents found the resources they had used. Most of the resources, including the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), disability management/benefits staff, legal counsel, safety/ergonomics, staff professional societies and dispute resolution were found to be helpful by close to three quarters of all respondents. However there were differences in how the two groups rated three of the other resources. Supervisors were more likely to find the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and union representatives helpful than the HR/EEO respondents (78 percent compared to 60 percent EEOC office, and 60 percent compared to 43 percent for the use of union representatives). Although the supervisors rated their agency's EEO office as helpful as the EEOC, more HR/EEO respondents reported the agency's EEO office to be helpful (84 percent compared to 77 percent).

Regarding types of informational mediums used, not surprisingly, two to three times more HR/EEO respondents than supervisors made use of the variety of informational mediums. There was agreement, however, that print or video materials were used by the largest number of respondents (85 percent for HR/EEO, 42 percent for supervisors), with on-site consulting used by three quarters (76 percent) of the HR/EEO and a third (34 percent) of supervisors.

Both groups were asked if their agency had a return to work policy for employees who are injured or become disabled. The majority of both groups responded affirmatively to having some sort of program, either formal or informal. However, while nine out of ten HR/EEO respondents were aware of such programs, only about two thirds of the supervisors were. Those who were aware of such programs were asked to what extent the program contributed to several issues. Although the majority of both sets of respondents felt the programs contributed in the areas asked, the HR/EEO respondents tended to be more positive regarding the results than the supervisors. With regards to supervisor awareness of the accommodation process, 89 percent of the HR/EEO respondents saw the programs contributing "a great deal" or "somewhat," compared with 78 percent of supervisors. Ninety-two percent of HR/EEO felt the programs contributed "a great deal" or "somewhat" towards the "recognition of the importance of confidentiality of medical information" (84 percent of the supervisors), and nine out of ten (90 percent) HR/EEO respondents felt that the program was helpful in raising the acceptance of employees with disabilities, compared to only three quarters (77 percent) of the supervisors.

Summary and Implications

The Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities (PTFEAD) collaborated with Cornell University to conduct research in the Federal sector workforce that responds to Executive Order 13078, which relates to the Federal government as a model employer of people with disabilities. This research was a part of the efforts of the Task Force to meet the Section 2(a) mandate of the Executive Order. This states that "The Office of Personnel Management, the Department of Labor, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shall submit to the Task Force a review of Federal Government personnel laws, regulations, and policies and, as appropriate, shall recommend or implement changes necessary to improve Federal employment policy for adults with disabilities. This review shall include personnel practices and actions such as: hiring, promotion, benefits, retirement, workers' compensation, retention, accessible facilities, job accommodations, layoffs, and reductions in force."

The first step in this endeavor was to conduct an analysis of the policy and practice efforts of Federal agency Human Resource (HR) Directors and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) personnel in recruiting and retaining persons with disabilities in Federal employment; it included a telephone survey on employment disability nondiscrimination policies and practices of 403 HR and EEO professionals across 96 Federal agencies. The second step was a survey of 1,001 Federal supervisors and managers in the 17 PTFEAD agencies, which paralleled similar information obtained from the initial survey. This report summarizes these two studies and describes how Federal departments and agencies are responding to civil rights legislation, specifically the employment disability nondiscrimination requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act. The results from this research indicate that much progress has been made, but many barriers to the recruitment, hiring, retention, and career advancement of adults with disabilities in the Federal workforce remain, which warrant attention and concerted response if continued progress is to be made.

What follows is a summary of specific findings and future actions that those findings suggest.

Increase Visibility of Federal Disability Affirmative Action

Members of both groups were queried regarding their agency's affirmative employment goals for persons with disabilities, and the agency's efforts to achieve these goals. Not surprisingly, supervisors were slightly less likely to be knowledgeable about the agency's affirmative action employment goals, with about one in ten responding "don't know," when asked whether their agency sets affirmative action employment goals and makes an effort to achieve them. However, of those who answered the question, a significantly larger proportion of supervisors (57 percent) than HR/EEO respondents (50 percent) felt that their agency put a great deal of effort into setting and achieving their affirmative action goals. Perhaps supervisors are closer to the actual selection event and subsequent training of the new employee, and are more aware of these efforts at the grass roots level, which might explain the difference in perception. Increased information dissemination across all levels of the Federal government about the affirmative action goals for people with disabilities appears to be indicated.

Accommodations for Applicants with Visual or Auditory Disabilities Need Attention

Eighty percent of the supervisors reported hiring new employees in the past five years (or since they became a Federal supervisor, if less than five years), with one-third of these reporting that they had hired at least one person with a disability in this period. Yet, HR/EEO respondents are more likely to have made accommodations to make interviews more accessible than are supervisors—not surprising given their position. However, of those who made specific changes, supervisors were slightly more likely to rate "making inter-

view locations more accessible" as easy or very easy than the HR/EEO respondents. Accommodations for visual or auditory disabilities were reported as more difficult than other accommodations for both groups, and both groups reported least familiarity with these kinds of accommodations. This finding is significant in light of the recent focus of Section 508 to the Rehabilitation Act. Section 508 mandates that all Federal technology purchases be fully accessible to employees with disabilities which is particularly relevant to individuals with visual and hearing disabilities. Significant technical assistance and training at the agency level will be required if Section 508 is to be successfully implemented.

Supervisor Role and the Agency Accommodation Structure

Both respondent groups report having made accommodations for their employees with disabilities, with little indication from respondents that accommodations cannot be made when asked for. However, perhaps further attention should be given to the fact that both groups reported a lower incidence of accommodation requests than might be expected as approximately seven percent of the Federal workforce is persons with disabilities.[7] In the HR/EEO Federal representative survey, one in five respondents reported their agency as not having received any accommodation requests in the prior fiscal year. In the initial survey report, the question was raised if this was a function of this information not getting to the central reporting system of each agency. There would seem to be a ready mechanism for getting further information on this from most agencies, as the majority reported having a formal process in place for handling accommodation requests. It was hypothesized that, since the immediate supervisor is most often cited as the final decision-maker in accommodation decisions by the HR/EEO respondents, perhaps the reporting mechanism was located at a more central level, thereby being less available to the HR/EEO respondents surveyed.

The second survey, of supervisors themselves, confirmed that supervisors play a critical role in the accommodation process for applicants and employees with disabilities in the Federal workforce. Fully half of the supervisors surveyed saw themselves as taking a central role in the accommodation decision-making process. However, again the number of accommodation requests was lower than might be expected. Half of the supervisors had received at least one accommodation request over the past five years, over a third had received between one to three requests, and one in ten had received between four and ten requests. Perhaps more accommodation occurs than is actually documented, and is not thought of as an "accommodation," but rather as just a part of effective management. There is some support of this hypothesis as more supervisors reported actually making accommodations than reported receiving requests. Another factor that may contribute to the low number of accommodations could be that individuals needing accommodations are for some reason hesitant to request them.

The number of disability claims lends some credence to this hypothesis. "Failure to provide reasonable accommodation" was noted as the most common disability related claim by both the HR/EEO respondents and individual supervisors (36 percent and seven percent respectively). This number of claims strongly suggests that there are indeed issues relating to providing accommodations to employees with disabilities that needs to be examined in greater detail.

Increase Use of Hiring Authorities

Another area for concern is the limited extent to which Federal agencies use special hiring authorities. Only one in four of the HR/EEO agency respondents re-

[7]Source: *Demographic Profile of the Federal Workforce*. September 20, 2000 (unpublished). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

ported frequently using the Schedule A or B provisions for hiring persons with disabilities or using the special hiring program for veterans with disabilities. Only slightly more than half of the supervisors involved in recruitment reported being very familiar or somewhat familiar with the special hiring authorities for the Federal government that promote hiring disabled veterans, while only about one-third were familiar with hiring readers/interpreters and other personal assistants for employees with disabilities, and the special hiring authorities for hiring people with cognitive disabilities (mental retardation), significant physical disabilities, or people who have recovered from mental illness. These provisions appear to be an under-utilized tool by Federal agencies, lessening the effectiveness of Federal agencies in increasing the employment of people with disabilities. This lack of awareness of these provisions suggest that much more promotion of these Federal hiring authorities and supporting initiatives needs to be done among both Federal HR and EEO professionals and supervisors. These are areas for further exploration where changes might be indicated.

Supports Needed for Specific Populations

The majority of agencies report having made changes in their existing recruitment, pre-employment screening, testing, and orientation procedures in order to comply with civil rights laws. However, making information accessible for a person with a visual or learning disability, or a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, was an area reported more difficult than others, in terms of accommodations in the pre-employment area. Respondents indicated that their interview staff are least familiar with interview considerations relating to people with visual or auditory impairments, such as using a text telephone or relay service to set up interviews with deaf or hard of hearing applicants, using a reader to assist a person with a visual impairment or learning disability, or with adapting print materials used in interviews to large print, diskette, or Braille.

Another area for further exploration is the workplace support system needed for persons with psychiatric disabilities. Both Federal HR/EEO respondents and the supervisors indicated a desire for further information on accommodations for persons with psychiatric disabilities. This is also consistent with the supervisors' responses regarding their knowledge and experience with the special hiring authorities. Ways to use the proposed new hiring authorities for this group, as well as how to provide supports, once individuals have been employed, need to be examined.

The use of job coaches was another area in which supervisors indicated less familiarity. Since some of the target populations for hiring in the Federal sector, such as persons with developmental disabilities/mental retardation, neurological disabilities such as traumatic brain injury, and psychiatric disabilities, are groups that have proven to benefit from the supported employment approach, familiarizing supervisors with the advantages of selected use of job coaches would appear most beneficial.

Address Continuing Attitude Issues through Diversity and Inclusion Strategies

Some remaining barriers to employment for persons with disabilities identified by Federal agencies were within the actual workplace culture. Attitudes toward people with disabilities continue as a workplace integration issue, even though this was an area where most agencies reported having made changes. However, the HR/EEO respondents were more than twice as likely to view attitudes and stereotypes as barriers than the supervisors (45 percent compared to 20 percent). This discrepancy might be due to HR/EEO respondents more likely being involved in or aware of issues relating to problems in this area than the supervisors are, as such issues may more often be brought to their attention. It may be that the supervisor responses better reflect the actual situation in the general Federal workforce overall; that is, attitudes

and stereotypes towards people with disabilities may not be as significant a problem in individual Federal workplaces as HR/EEO believes.

However, to make sure that education on attitudes toward persons with disabilities does routinely get addressed in the Federal workplace but not necessarily over-emphasized, perhaps this is an area that can be merged with diversity programming across all agencies. Implementers of these recommendations should closely examine Federal agency training programs and curriculums to determine the extent to which disability issues are included in existing programming. It would be a valuable discussion with Federal agencies as to whether the presence of diversity programs in the past has been of any assistance in addressing diversity issues more broadly, as well as such issues, as disability discrimination and negative attitudes or stereotypes toward persons with disabilities. Since diversity or inclusion programs are increasing in popularity in the private sector, joint exploration with non-Federal employers of their application to disability concerns, and resulting benefits, might be useful.

Engage Unions in Accommodation in Hiring and Retention Efforts

The Federal workplace is heavily unionized. According to the HR/EEO respondents, unions are often involved in a variety of disability related issues including the accommodation process. Three out of five supervisors who used unions to assist in the accommodation process found unions to be helpful. Therefore, unions may be a productive place to continue information gathering in the accommodation process to learn more about barriers to employment for people with disabilities, and an appropriate force to engage in addressing the barriers to employees with disabilities.

Areas for Further Training and Technical Assistance

It appears that extensive training on civil rights policies and practices for people with disabilities has occurred, and yet survey results indicate that further training, as well as technical assistance, is needed. The HR/EEO respondents reported a significant amount of training having occurred at their level. Nine out of ten supervisors reported having had some formal civil rights training as a Federal supervisor, with approximately half of those trained receiving between one and 15 hours of disability related training. This training was most often provided as a part of general employment discrimination or diversity training, or of general supervisory/management training. In terms of promoting further information among supervisors on disability-related topics, respondents saw making ADA/disability employment a mandatory element of management training as the most effective incentive to encourage attendance at disability nondiscrimination related training.

Both groups were asked about their perception of remaining barriers to employment and advancement opportunities for people with disabilities in their respective agencies. There was a difference in perception of the barrier of "supervisor knowledge of which accommodation to make," with over one third of HR/EEO viewing it as a barrier, compared to only 23 percent of supervisors. These reports highlight many areas where the Federal government can and should provide additional promotion, outreach, and technical assistance at all levels of the organization, but particularly to Federal agency supervisors. This includes use of special hiring authorities; accommodations for people with visual, learning, and hearing disabilities, and people with psychiatric disabilities; alternative dispute resolution; and laws governing employment of people with disabilities. Only two in five supervisors surveyed were aware of any one of the following executive orders: the hiring of 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities over the next five years (Executive Order 13163); the EEOC guidelines for Federal agencies to establish written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation (Executive Order 13164); and the July, 2000 Federal Initiative (Presidential Memorandum) regarding telecommuting/

telework for individuals with significant disabilities. Over a third were not aware of any of the three and less than one in five (16 percent) reported awareness of all of them. This low level of awareness is particularly disturbing in light of the fact that a third of the supervisors reported being very involved in the recruitment process.

Full, effective implementation of such unique provisions as Section 508 may well necessitate providing training on disability nondiscrimination and affirmative action requirements to groups of Federal sector employees not previously targeted, such as equipment procurement and technology specialists. Approximately three of four supervisors reported that the following would be helpful in implementing the Technology Nondiscrimination requirements of Section 508: The technical staff within their agency (i.e. chief information officer/ helpdesk), centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues, and training procurement specialists in Section 508 requirements.

Equip and Promote Resources Used to Resolve Civil Rights Issues

In both surveys, HR/EEO staff were most often used to resolve accommodation and disability-related issues, and were seen as very helpful when they were used. Far less often used were the Disabilities Services Office, selective placement coordinator, and the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), despite the fact that these resources were seen as helpful or very helpful in resolving ADA disputes by three-quarters or more of those who used them.

Again, this is an area where it is important that the Federal government ensures that human resource personnel and EEO personnel are well informed about disability-related issues and resources, as they themselves are the most frequently identified resource consulted by many supervisors to resolve ADA issues. In addition, it appears that the services of disability specialty organizations within Federal agencies need to be better promoted among Federal supervisors.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Almost all of the agencies reported having a grievance or dispute resolution process in place for accommodations, yet a U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) report indicates that many employment discrimination disputes, including those relating to disability discrimination, are making their way to the EEOC.[8] The length of time for processing these disputes continues to increase. It would appear that more work must be done to encourage and inform dispute resolution, particularly on accommodation issues, earlier on and closer to the workplace. Alternative dispute resolution is an area that is gaining in popularity in the private sector, and again may be an area that the Federal sector might want to further explore. An example might be setting up model teams within agencies that represent the various interested parties in the accommodation process such as the person with a disability, HR representative, supervisor, health and safety representative, union, and EEO representative.

Use of Disability Management Programs

Two-thirds of the HR/EEO respondents reported that their agency has a formal or informal disability management program. Among the supervisor respondents, blue collar supervisors were more likely to be familiar with such a program, where one existed. Both HR/EEO and supervisor respondents who reported having such a program within their agency indicated that these programs contribute to implementation of civil rights laws by either raising awareness of the importance of medical confidentiality, raising acceptance of employees with disabilities, raising supervisor awareness of the accommodation process, and providing an organi-

[8] United States General Accounting Office (2000). *Equal employment opportunity: Discrimination complaint caseloads and underlying causes require EEOC's sustained attention.* GAO report GAO/T-GGD-00-104. Washington, D.C.: Author.

zational structure for accommodation. This is an area that perhaps could be further explored and actively encouraged as a programmatic structure for support for workplace disability nondiscrimination and accommodation policies and practices.

Disability Employment and Training Policy

Overall, only about one in ten respondents in both groups saw costs related to training and additional supervision of persons with disabilities as a barrier to employment or advancement for people with disabilities in their agency. Surprisingly, HR/EEO respondents were significantly more likely to see costs of accommodations as being a barrier (19 percent) than the supervisors (11 percent). Nearly half of both groups (44 percent) saw "lack of requisite skills and training" on the part of a person with a disability as a barrier, and 56 percent of HR/EEO perceived a "lack of related experience" on the part of the employee with a disability as a barrier, as did 48 percent of supervisors.

The consistently high degree of perception of disparity in requisite skills, training, and related experience of persons with disabilities has implications for employment and disability social policy changes to advance the interests of people with disabilities in the employment and training arena. It is vital that initiatives such as those in existence under the Workforce Investment Act include people with disabilities in their mandate and implementation. This means not only having the direction for such inclusion written into the legislation and resulting regulations, but also making certain that implementation at the local level takes into account the unique service delivery needs of such system users. Success at this level calls for skilled professionals who will understand and be able to identify the service needs of persons with disabilities to assist them in making meaningful choices for training and subsequent employment. This also necessitates physical and communication accessibility of such service systems.

Visible Top Management Commitment Imperative

Both HR/EEO and supervisor respondents were asked about their perceptions of the degree of effectiveness of ways to reduce remaining barriers to employment and advancement for people with disabilities. For both groups, top management commitment was seen as the most effective means to reduce barriers. This affirms the importance of a continuing commitment to such approaches as the "model employer" initiative which has prompted this study, as well as the Executive Orders which have raised visibility in the Federal government of the need for a formal reasonable accommodation process, hiring targets for people with disabilities, and the need to explore flexible employment alternatives such as off-site and telecommuting positions for persons with disabilities or chronic health problems.

Further Research and Next Steps Needed

The results discussed in this report indicate a need for further research. A significant area for further consideration is the impact of technology on the Federal workplace, and ways to promote full implementation of the provisions of Section 508. Such research has been conducted in the private sector and could be replicated in the Federal government. Needed further research also includes research on the impact of Federal training programs on such issues as attitudinal barriers versus the perceived knowledge and skills of people with disabilities as employment barriers. These survey results also indicate many areas where the Federal government can and should provide additional promotion, outreach, and technical assistance to its agencies. This includes education on the use of special hiring authorities; accommodations for people with visual, learning, and hearing disabilities, and people with psychiatric disabilities; disability resources available to facilitate the accommodations process; government-wide initiatives to promote the recruitment, hiring, retention, and career advancement of people with disabilities; and improving technology, telecommuting and telework.

Finally, this report highlights policy areas that warrant consideration by the Federal government. These areas include the possibility of mandatory training in nondiscriminatory practices for supervisors; government-wide consistency in policies and procedures for expanding telecommuting and telework for people with disabilities; more firmly establishing agency-wide goals in the area of employment of people with disabilities through the Government Performance and Results Act; and re-visiting the Federal government's commitment to hiring and reasonable accommodation initiatives begun in 2000.

The information contained in this report will be broadly disseminated to Task Force member agencies as well as Federal departments and agencies for consideration in their efforts to increase opportunities and remove barriers to the employment of people with disabilities in the Federal government.

Appendices

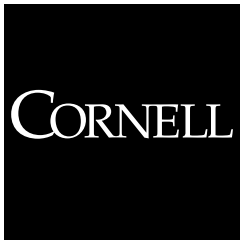
Survey of the Federal Government on Human Resources/EEO Policies and Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities

Sponsored by:

The Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities

Conducted by:

Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations—Extension Division



The research which sponsored the original survey design was funded by the U.S. Department of Education National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research for a Research and Demonstration Project to the Program on Employment and Disability in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations—Extension Division at Cornell University (Grant #HI33A70005), Susanne M. Bruyère, Principal Investigator.

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I. Demographic Information

Definitions

The employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act require reasonable accommodation. A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that enables a qualified individual to enjoy an equal opportunity. Accommodations must be provided unless the employer can show that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the business.

A "person with a disability" is someone who: a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, b) has a record of such an impairment or, c) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Instructions

Please answer each question as it pertains to your agency. When questions refer to your agency, please answer for the unit of your agency for which you are responsible (for example, your branch rather than your entire agency nationwide).

1. Agency size at your location: *(Please circle one response)*

1 0-14 employees
2 15-25 employees
3 26-50 employees
4 51-249 employees
5 250-499 employees
6 500-1499 employees
7 1500-2499 employees
8 2500-3499 employees
9 3500-4999 employees
10 5000+ employees

2. #2 has been deleted for purposes of this survey.

3. Your title: *(Please circle one response)*

1 Director/Chief
2 Deputy Assistant Secretary
3 Deputy Director
4 Personnel Manager
5 Officer
6 Specialist
7 Program Coordinator
8 Other (please specify) _____

4. Your function: *(Please circle one response)*

1 Administrative
2 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)/ Affirmative Action
3 Benefits
4 Compensation
5 Disability
6 Diversity
7 Employee Relations
8 Employment/Recruitment
9 Health/Safety/Security
10 Human Resources (HR)
11 Labor/Industrial Relations
12 Legal
13 Organizational Development
14 Training & Development
15 Other (Please specify) _____

5. Number of years with your agency: _____ *years*

6. Are you reporting for: *(Please circle one response)*

1 Entire agency (including regions)
2 Headquarters
3 Regional office only

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II. Issue Areas

A. The Reasonable Accommodation Process

PTF1. In the fiscal year 1999, how many accommodation requests has your agency received?

_____ Number of Requests

PTF2. Does your agency have a formal process for handling accommodation requests?

1 Yes 2 No 8 Don't know

1. To meet the needs of your employees with disabilities, has your agency: *(Please circle one response for each item)*	Yes	No, not able to	No, never needed to make accommodations	Don't know
a. made existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities (restrooms, door entrances, hallways, etc.)	1	2	3	8
b. restructured jobs or modified work hours	1	2	3	8
c. made reassignment to vacant positions				
d. acquired or modified equipment or devices	1	2	3	8
e. acquired or modified examination or training materials	1	2	3	8
f. provided qualified readers or interpreters (includes personal assistants)	1	2	3	8
g. been flexible in its application of HR policies	1	2	3	8
h. changed supervisory methods	1	2	3	8
i. made parking or transportation accommodations	1	2	3	8
j. provided written job instructions	1	2	3	8
k. modified work environment (orthopedic chair, lower desk, etc.)	1	2	3	8
l. provided a job coach	1	2	3	8
m. Other (Please specify) _____	1	2	3	8

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2. If an accommodation request is made, who makes the final decision regarding the provision of the accommodation? *(Please circle one response)*

1 Immediate supervisor of the employee requesting
2 Occupational health/medical clinic staff
3 Safety/ergonomic staff
4 HR staff
5 Legal counsel (internal or external)
6 Your agency's EEO office
7 Other manager/director
8 Disability management/benefits staff
9 Other *(Please specify)* _____
10 No single final responsible party
11 Don't know

3. Does your agency keep data on the accommodations it makes for employees with disabilities for any of the following purposes? *(Please circle all that apply)*

1 Future accommodations in similar situations
2 Tracking accommodation costs
3 Dispute resolution/settlement
4 Regulatory reporting requirements
5 Disability claim coordination
6 Other *(Please specify)* _____
7 Do not keep data on accommodations

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B. Recruitment, Pre-Employment Screening, Testing, and Orientation

PTF1. In order to recruit people with disabilities, how often does your agency make use of the provisions contained in schedule A and schedule B through which people with disabilities can be exempted from the competitive appointment process?

1 Frequently 2 Occasionally 3 Never 8 Don't know 9 Not aware of these provisions

PTF2. How frequently does your agency make use of special hiring programs for disabled veterans?

1 Frequently 2 Occasionally 3 Never 8 Don't know 9 Not aware of these programs

1. In order to comply with the ADA and/or the Rehabilitation Act, how easy or difficult was it for your agency to make the following changes or adaptations?

	Very easy	Easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	Not able to make this change	Didn't need to make this change	Don't know
a. Making recruiting locations accessible to people with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
b. Changing wording of job applications	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
c. Changing questions asked in interviews	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
d. Making interview locations accessible to people with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
e. Modifying pre-employment testing (e.g. time flexibility)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
f. Arranging for medical tests post-offer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
g. Making new employee orientation accessible to people with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
h. Making information accessible for a hearing impaired person (e.g. sign language interpreter; text telephone; captioning on video)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
i. Making information accessible for a person with a visual or learning impairment (e.g. a reader, Braille, large print, or audio-cassette or telephone version of application)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
j. Making restrooms accessible to people with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
k. Other *(Please specify)*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

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PTF3. How familiar are you with your agency's goals for employment of persons with disabilities that are included in your agency's Affirmative Employment Plan?

1 Very familiar 2 Familiar 3 Neither familiar nor unfamiliar
4 Unfamiliar 5 Very unfamiliar 8 Don't know

PTF4. To what extent does your agency set reasonable affirmative employment goals and make an effort to achieve them?

1 A great deal 2 Somewhat 3 Minimally 4 Not at all 8 Don't know

---

3. Generally, how familiar with the following are your agency's staff who are responsible for applicant interviewing? *(Please circle one response per item)*

	Very familiar	Familiar	Neither familiar nor unfamiliar	Unfamiliar	Very unfamiliar	Don't know
a. Framing questions to applicants about the ability to perform specific job tasks rather than about disability	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Restrictions on obtaining medical examinations and medical history information	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Restrictions on eliciting information about medical issues affecting applicants' health and safety on the job	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Knowing when to ask an applicant about how s/he would perform specific job tasks	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Accessing sign language interpreters	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Using a teletypewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. Using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or vision impairment	1	2	3	4	5	8
h. Adapting print materials used in the interview to large print, diskette, or Braille	1	2	3	4	5	8
i. Knowing when to test for illegal drugs	1	2	3	4	5	8

Section C has been eliminated for the purposes of this survey.

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D. Opportunities for Promotion/Training

1. In your opinion, do any of the following pose a barrier to employment or advancement for persons with disabilities in your agency? *(Please circle all that apply)*

1 Cost of accommodations

2 Cost of training

3 Additional cost of supervision

4 Attitudes/stereotypes

5 Supervisor knowledge of which accommodation to make

6 Lack of requisite skills and training

7 Lack of related experience

8 Other (Please specify) _____

9 No barriers

2. How effective or ineffective would each of the following be in reducing barriers to employment or advancement for persons with disabilities within your agency? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Very effective				Very ineffective	Don't know
a. Special budget allocation	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Short-term outside assistance with job supervision (e.g. outside job coach)	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Staff training	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. On-site consultation or technical assistance	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Mentoring	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Visible top management commitment	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. Other (Please specify) _____	1	2	3	4	5	8

3. In order to meet the needs of employees with disabilities, how easy or difficult was it for your agency to make the following changes? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Very Easy	Easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	Didn't make this change	Didn't need to make this change	Don't know
a. Change in leave policy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
b. Adjusting policies regarding medical questions and medical examinations of employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
c. Changing co-worker or supervisor attitudes towards employees with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
d. Ensuring equal pay and benefits for employees with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
e. Creating flexibility within the performance management system	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
f. Modifying the return to work or transitional employment policy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

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4. Has your agency used the following to ensure that people with disabilities have access to meetings, promotional, social opportunities and/or training? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Yes	No, not able to provide	No, never needed to provide	Don't know
a. Wheelchair access	1	2	3	8
b. Communication access for a hearing-impaired person (e.g. sign language interpreter; text telephone; captioning on video; etc.)	1	2	3	8
c. Communication access for a person with a visual or learning impairment (e.g., Braille, large print, or audiocassette version of application; reader)	1	2	3	8
d. Time flexibility in test taking	1	2	3	8
e. Removing volatile or scented substances from the air	1	2	3	8
f. Other (Please specify) _____	1	2	3	8

E. Disciplinary Process, Grievance, Discharge, or Termination

1. Does your agency have a grievance or dispute resolution process to deal with disability and accommodation issues? *(Please circle one response)*

1 Yes 2 No 8 Don't know

2. Has your agency experienced any of the following filed disability claims under the ADA? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Yes	No	Don't know
a. Wrongful discharge	1	2	8
b. Failure to provide reasonable accommodation	1	2	8
c. Failure to hire	1	2	8
d. Harassment	1	2	8
e. Unfair discipline	1	2	8
f. Failure to rehire	1	2	8
g. Layoff	1	2	8
h. Denied or reduced benefits	1	2	8
i. Failure to promote	1	2	8
j. Wage dispute	1	2	8
k. Suspension	1	2	8

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F. Interaction with Labor Relations/Collective Bargaining Issues

1. Are any of your employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement? *(Please circle one response)*

1 Yes

2 No ➜ ***Please go to Section G, Question 1***

8 Don't know ➜ ***Please go to Section G, Question 1***

2. Is the union involved in the accommodation process? *(Please circle one response)*

1 Yes

2 No ➜ ***Please go to Section G, Question 1***

8 Don't know ➜ ***Please go to Section G, Question 1***

3. In which of the following ways have unions been involved? *(Please circle all that apply)*

1 Provided information on the rights of employees with disabilities

2 Provided advice/information on ways to accommodate employees with disabilities

3 Provided representation in reasonable accommodation discussions

4 Provided representation in grievance discussions when accommodation requests have been denied

5 Consulted with employers on revising employment policies

6 Other (Please specify_____)

G. Interaction with Other Employment Legislation

1. How often has your agency been uncertain about how to handle the following concerning the ADA and Workers' Compensation? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Not Applic.	Don't know
a. When an injured worker is also covered by the ADA	1	2	3	7	8
b. When an injured worker returning to work following a work-related injury is entitled to reasonable accommodation	1	2	3	7	8
c. Whether an injured worker who cannot return to full duties can be terminated	1	2	3	7	8
d. How long the agency and injured worker must search for modified or alternate work before beginning vocational rehabilitation	1	2	3	7	8
e. Whether transitional, light duty work can be considered a permanent reassignment for reasonable accommodation purposes	1	2	3	7	8
f. Safety issues involved in returning an injured worker to the job	1	2	3	7	8

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2. How often has your agency been uncertain about how to handle the following concerning the ADA and the Family and Medical Leave Act? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Not Applic.	Don't know
a. Whether an employee who requests FMLA leave is also covered by the ADA	1	2	3	7	8
b. Coordination of leave under the ADA and the FMLA, Workers' Comp., STD/LTD, sick leave/salary continuation	1	2	3	7	8

3. How often has your agency been uncertain about how to handle the following concerning the ADA and the Occupational Safety and Health Act? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Not Applic.	Don't know
a. Whether it is permissible to discipline an employee who is a risk to self or others	1	2	3	7	8
b. Whether health and safety regulations supersede the confidentiality requirements of the ADA	1	2	3	7	8
c. Whether worksite modifications or ergonomic changes constitute reasonable accommodations	1	2	3	7	8

4. How often has your agency been uncertain about how to handle the following concerning the ADA and the Drug Free Workplace Act or the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Not Applic.	Don't know
a. Whether an employee who is currently using alcohol is covered by the ADA	1	2	3	7	8
b. Whether an employee who is currently using illegal drugs is covered by the ADA	1	2	3	7	8
c. Whether a past drug user is covered by the ADA	1	2	3	7	8
d. Whether it is permissible to suspend or fire an employee whose alcohol or drug use impairs job performance	1	2	3	7	8

PTF5. How often has your agency been uncertain about how to handle the following concerning the Rehabilitation Act requirements? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Not Applic.	Don't know
a. Designing and implementing affirmative action requirements of Section 501	1	2	3	7	8
b. Purchasing accessible technology/equipment in compliance with Section 508	1	2	3	7	8

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H. General

	Please circle one response for each item			*If yes, please check which employees have received this training:*				*Would you like more information in this area?*	
	Yes	No	Don't know	HR staff	Managerial staff	EEO	Other staff	Yes	No
PTF1. Have any of your employees been trained in the Rehabilitation Act requirements?	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
PTF2. Have any of your employees been trained in Federal Hiring Schedules?	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2

1. Have any of your employees been trained in the following ADA topics?	*Please circle one response for each item*			*If yes, please check which employees have received this training:*				*Would you like more information in this area?*	
	Yes	No	Don't know	HR staff	Managerial staff	EEO	Other staff	Yes	No
a. Non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
b. The accommodation process	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
c. Equal access in promotional opportunities and training	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
d. Accommodation for mental disabilities	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
e. Defining essential job functions	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
f. Confidentiality requirements of medical information	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
g. Limitations and exclusions the ADA and other Federal laws allow health plans to impose	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
h. Non-discrimination in the disciplinary process or termination	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
i. Conflict resolution in the accommodation process	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
j. Disability awareness and/or sensitivity training	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
k. Interaction with other employment legislation	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
l. Available print or organizational resources to assist in the accommodation process	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2
m. Other (*Please specify*)	1	2	3	❍	❍	❍	❍	1	2

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2. Please indicate which of the following resources your agency utilizes to help resolve ADA issues and rate their degree of helpfulness. *Please check if utilized and circle one response for each item utilized.*

	Utilize	Very helpful				Not helpful at all	Don't know
a. State vocational rehabilitation agencies	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Local independent living centers or other disability organizations	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Job Accommodation Network (toll-free number)	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. The Regional ADA Technical Assistance Center (toll-free number)	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. U.S. EEOC	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Your agency's EEO office	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. Internal legal counsel	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
g2.External legal counsel	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
h. Your safety/ergonomics staff	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
i. Disability management/benefits staff	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
j. Union representative	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
k. Other Federal agencies or professional society or business agency (e.g., OPM, MSPB, SHRM, IPMA)	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
l. Dispute resolution center/mediator	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8

3. Please indicate which of the following informational mediums you use to address your ADA issues and rate their degree of helpfulness. *Please check if utilized and circle one response for each item utilized.*

	Utilize	Very helpful				Not helpful at all	Don't know
a. Print or video materials	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Telephone consultation/information hotline	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. On-site consultation/training	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Web sites/list serve/U.S. EEOC homepage	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Organizational newsletter	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Other *(Please specify)*_____	❍	1	2	3	4	5	8

4. Does your agency have a return to work or disability management program for employees who are injured or become disabled? *(Please circle one response)*

1 Yes, formal program with written policies/procedures

2 Yes, informal program with no formal written procedures

3 No return to work/disability management system

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5. To what extent has your agency's disability management program contributed to the following?
Please circle one response for each item.

	A great deal	Somewhat	Minimally	Not at all	Don't know
a. Supervisor awareness of the accommodation process	1	2	3	4	8
b. An organizational structure for providing accommodations	1	2	3	4	8
c. Recognition of the importance of confidentiality of medical information	1	2	3	4	8
d. Raising the acceptance of employees with disabilities by other employees	1	2	3	4	8

6. If you would like a copy of the executive summary of the study results, please provide the following information:

Name: _____

Agency: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

7. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up in-person interview for this project?

1 Yes

2 No

Thank you for your assistance!

If you have any questions,

please contact: ***Lisa Horn***

Telephone (toll-free): ***(888) 367-8404***

TDD: ***607-255-2891***

E-mail: ***LLH5@cornell.edu***

Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities

Sponsored by:
The Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities

Conducted by:
Cornell University School of Industrial & Labor Relations

The research which sponsored the original survey design was funded by the U.S. Department of Education National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research for a Research and Demonstration Project to the Program on Employment and Disability in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations Extension Division at Cornell University (grant #H133A70005), Susanne M. Bruyère, Principal Investigator

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Definitions

The employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act require reasonable accommodation. A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that enables a qualified individual with a disability to enjoy an equal opportunity. Reasonable accommodations must be provided unless the employer can show that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the business. (The law requires that only qualified people with disabilities are eligible for reasonable accommodation.)

A "person with a disability" is someone who: a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, b) has a record of such an impairment or, c) is regarded as having such an impairment.

A qualified individual with a disability is a person with a disability who:

Satisfies the requisite skill, education and other job–related requirements of the position.

Can perform the essential functions of the posi tion with or without reasonable accommodation.

Instructions

Please answer each question as it pertains to your agencypersonal experience as a supervisor in the federal government. When questions refer to your agency, please answer for the unit of your agency for which you are responsible

All responses to this survey are completely anonymous and confidential. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary, you may decline to answer or refuse to participate and may withdraw at any time without penalty.

Note: *The numbering of survey items is not sequential in some cases. Numbers were assigned to survey questions to parallel the item numbers from previous surveys. This allowed the responses to specific questions to be directly compared.*

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I. Demographic Information

S1. Number of Federal employees for whom you are the immediate supervisor: *(Please note number)* _____ **Federal employees**

S2. *Total* number of employees you supervise: *(Please note number)* _____ **total emplyees supervised** (If = 0 then ineligible)

S3. Number of years *as a supervisor* in the Federal government: _____ **years** (If < 1 year then ineligible)

5. Number of years with your department or Agency: _____ **years**

II. Issue Areas

A. The Reasonable Accommodation Process

PTF2. Does your agency have a formal process for handling accommodation requests?

1 Yes 2 No 8 Don't know

1. To meet the needs of your employees with disabilities, have you or your agency on the behalf of an employee you supervise: *(Please circle one response for each item)*	Yes	No, not able to	No, never needed to make accommodations	Don't know
a. advocated to make existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities *(restrooms, door entrances, hallways, etc.)*	1	2	3	8
b. restructured jobs or modified work hours	1	2	3	8
c. made reassignment to vacant positions	1	2	3	8
d. acquired or modified equipment or devices	1	2	3	8
e. acquired or modified examination or training materials	1	2	3	8
f. provided qualified readers or interpreters *(includes personal assistants)*	1	2	3	8
h. changed supervisory methods	1	2	3	8
i. made parking or transportation accommodations	1	2	3	8
j. provided written job instructions	1	2	3	8
l. provided a job coach	1	2	3	8
m. Other (Please specify_____)	1	2	3	8

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S1. Over the past five fiscal years, or since you have been a Federal supervisor (whichever is less), how many accommodation requests have you received as a supervisor?

_____ Number of Requests

S2. How many employees with disabilities have you had supervisory responsibilities for in the past five years?

_____ *(if none skip to 2)*

S3. What types of disabilities have your employees had? *(please check all that apply)*

_____ a. Visual impairment

_____ b. Hearing impairment

_____ c. Missing extremities

_____ d. Partial paralysis

_____ e. Total paralysis

_____ f. Convulsive disorders

_____ g. Mental retardation

_____ h. Mental illness

_____ i. Genetic/physical/neurological condition affecting limbs and/or spine

_____ j. Musculo-skeletal disorders (i.e. back, repetitive motion injury, etc.)

_____ k. Other *(please specify)*

_____

2. If an accommodation request is made, who would make the final decision regarding the provision of a accommodation? *(Please circle one response)*

1. You as the immediate supervisor of the employee requesting

12. You in consultation with your immediate supervisor

2. Occupational health/medical clinic staff

3. Safety/ergonomic staff

4. HR staff

5. Legal counsel (internal or external)

6. Your agency's EEO office

7. Other manager/director

8. Disability management/benefits staff

13. Disabilities services office

9. Other *(please specify)*

_____

10. No single final responsible party)

11. Don't know

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S4. Have you used the following resources for accommodation assistance?

- If YES: how helpful was it?
- If NO: why not?

	Used it?								
	Yes	*If No: Why Not?*			*How helpful was it?*				
		Not aware of this resource	Aware, but not needed	Aware, but not helpful	Very helpful	Moderately helpful	Somewhat helpful	Slightly helpful	Not helpful at all
a. Central human resource personnel (Department wide)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
b. Servicing human resource personnel (sub-agency or unit level)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
c. Disabilities Services Office (i.e. CAP, COAST, TARGET Center)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
d. EEO office	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
e. Disability management/benefits staff	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
f. Occupational health/medical clinic staff	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
g. Safety/ergonomic staff	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
h. Employee Assistance Program	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
i. External health care provider	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
j. State vocational rehabilitation agencies	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
k. Local independent living centers or other disability organizations	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
l. Job Accommodation Network (toll-free number)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
n. Disabled Employee Advisory Group	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
o. Selective Placement Coordinator	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
m. Other_____	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5

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B. Recruitment, Pre-Employment Screening, Testing, and Orientation

S1. How many employees have you hired in the past five years or since you were a Federal supervisor (whichever is less)?

S2. How many of these new hires have had a disability?

S3. How involved are you in recruitment?

1 Very involved 2 Fairly involved 3 Slightly involved 4 Not at all involved 8 Don't know

S4. How familiar are you with the **special appointing authorities,** to bring people with disabilities into the Federal workplace and how frequently have you used them? *(Please circle one response per item)*

	Familiarity				Frequency		
	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Slightly familiar	Not aware of provisions	Frequently	Occasionally	Never
a. For hiring people with cognitive disabilities (mental retardation), significant physical disabilities, or people who have recovered from mental illness	1	2	3	8	1	2	3
b. For hiring readers/interpreters and other personal assistants for employees with disabilities	1	2	3	8	1	2	3
c. For hiring disabled veterans (30 percent disabled or more)	1	2	3	8	1	2	3

1. In order to comply with the ADA and/or the Rehabilitation Act, how easy or difficult was it for you to make the following changes or adaptations?

	Very easy	Easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	Not able to make this change	Change not requested	Don't know
a. Changing questions asked in interviews	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
b. Making interview locations accessible to people with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
c. Making information accessible for a deaf or hard of hearing person (e.g. sign language interpreter; text telephone; captioning on video)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
d. Making information accessible for persons with visual or learning disabilities (e.g. a reader, Braille, large print, diskette, or audio-cassette or telephone version of application)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
e. Other (Please specify_____)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

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PTF4. To what extent does your agency set reasonable affirmative employment goals and make an effort to achieve them?

1 A great deal 2 Somewhat 3 Minimally 4 Not at all 8 Don't know

3. Generally, how familiar are you with the following for applicant interviewing?
(Please circle one response per item)

	Very familiar	Familiar	Neither familiar nor unfamiliar	Unfamiliar	Very unfamiliar	Don't know
a. Framing questions to applicants about the ability to perform specific job tasks rather than about disability	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Restrictions on obtaining medical examinations and medical history information	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Restrictions on eliciting information about medical issues affecting applicants' health and safety on the job	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Knowing when to ask an applicant about how s/he would perform specific job tasks	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Accessing sign language interpreters	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Using a teletypewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. Using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or vision impairment	1	2	3	4	5	8
h. Adapting print materials used in the interview to large print, diskette, or Braille	1	2	3	4	5	8
i. Knowing when to test for illegal drugs	1	2	3	4	5	8

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D. Opportunities for Promotion/Training

1. In your opinion, do any of the following pose a barrier to employment or advancement for persons with disabilities in your agency? *(Please circle all that apply)*

a Cost of accommodations

b Cost of training

c Additional cost of supervision

i Additional cost of travel and transportation(such as a blind person having to have a driver to get to a worksite (if they can't drive themselves)

d Attitudes/stereotypes

e A supervisor's knowledge of which accommodation to make

f Lack of requisite skills and training on behalf of the person with a disability

g Lack of related experience on behalf of the person with a disability

j Lack of established policy/procedures

k Accommodation not provided when needed

h Other (Please specify_____)

2. How effective or ineffective would each of the following be in reducing barriers to employment or advancement for persons with disabilities within your agency? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Very effective				Very ineffective	Don't know
a. Special budget allocation/centralized accommodation fund	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Short-term outside assistance with job supervision (e.g. outside job coach)	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Staff training	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. On-site consultation or technical assistance	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Mentoring	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Visible top management commitment	1	2	3	4	5	8
Sg. Include affirmative action and accommodation items for persons with disabilities in supervisor performance appraisals	1	2	3	4	5	8
Sh. Changing co-worker/supervisor attitudes towards persons with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	8
Si. Departmental reward/recognition (eg. a certificate acknowledging outstanding performance)	1	2	3	4	5	8
Sj. Development and input from a disability advisory group	1	2	3	4	5	8
Sk. Skills training for employees with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. Other (Please specify_____)	1	2	3	4	5	8

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4. Have you used the following to ensure that people with disabilities you supervise have access to meetings, promotional, social opportunities, and/or training? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Yes	No, not able to provide	No, never needed to provide	Don't know
a. Wheelchair access	1	2	3	8
b. Communication access for deaf or hard of hearing person *(e.g. sign language interpreter; text telephone; captioning on video; etc.)*	1	2	3	8
c. Communication access for persons with visual or learning disabilities *(e.g., Braille, large print, diskette or audiocassette version of application; reader)*	1	2	3	8
f. Other (Please specify_____)	1	2	3	8

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E. Disciplinary Process, Grievance, Discharge, or Termination

1. Does your agency have a grievance or dispute resolution process to deal with disability and accommodation issues? *(Please circle one response)*

1 Yes 2 No 8 Don't know

2. Have you as a Federal supervisor ever experienced any of the following as a formal disability complaint? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Yes	No	Don't know
a. Wrongful discharge	1	2	8
b. Failure to provide reasonable accommodation	1	2	8
c. Failure to hire	1	2	8
d. Harassment	1	2	8
e. Unfair discipline	1	2	8
f. Failure to promote	1	2	8
g. Suspension	1	2	8
l. Other (specify)	1	2	8

S3. If an accommodation dispute arises, how easy or difficult would the following be for you?

	Very easy				Very difficult	Don't know
a. Discussing accommodation needs with the individual	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Getting sufficient training on dispute resolution approaches	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Accessing a resource person to help with accommodation issues (HR, EEO, health & safety, ergonomics, Employee Relations, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Having access to a person trained in alternative dispute resolution (ADR)	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Determining the most appropriate dispute resolution process (Dispute resolution is conflict resolution, or for example using a mediator to solve a disagreement.	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Effectively using the existing dispute/complaint resolution process	1	2	3	4	5	8

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H. General

S1. Have you been trained in the following ADA/Rehabilitation Act topics?

	Please circle one response for each item			*Would you like more information in this area?*	
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No
PTF2. The special appointing/hiring authorities	1	2	8	1	2
a. Non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices	1	2	8	1	2
b. The accommodation process	1	2	8	1	2
c. Equal access in promotional opportunities and training	1	2	8	1	2
d. Accommodation for mental disabilities	1	2	8	1	2
e. Defining essential job functions	1	2	8	1	2
f. Confidentiality requirements of medical information	1	2	8	1	2
h. Non-discrimination in the disciplinary process or termination	1	2	8	1	2
i. Conflict resolution in the accommodation process	1	2	8	1	2
j. Disability awareness and/or sensitivity training	1	2	8	1	2
Sk. Section 508 training (Section 508 requires that electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal government be accessible to people with disabilities.)	1	2	8	1	2
m. Other (Please specify)	1	2	8	1	2

If all of the above questions are "no" or "don't know" SKIP TO S4

S2. Approximately how many hours of formal ADA/Rehabilitation Act training (class, seminar, conference) have you received as a Federal supervisor?

None	1-5hrs	6-10hrs	11-15hrs	16-20hrs	21-25hrs	More than 25hrs
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

S3. How was the ADA/Rehabilitation Act training provided to you as a Federal supervisor? *(circle all that apply)*

a. Specialized focus on disability by Federal Government staff expert

b. Specialized focus on disability by external consultant

c. As a part of general employment discrimination or diversity training

d. As a part of general supervisory/management training

e. Other

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S4. How effective or ineffective would each of the following incentives be in encouraging disability non-discriminatory related training? (including ADA, disability employment, Rehab Act, EEOC guidance, 508 Compliance) *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Very effective				Very Inefective	Don't know
a. Department reward/recognition for receiving ADA training	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. ADA training available on the internet	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Pay ADA training costs	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Make ADA/disability employment a mandatory element of management training	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Other (Please specify_____)	1	2	3	4	5	8

2. Please indicate which of the following resources you have utilized to help resolve ADA issues and rate their degree of helpfulness.

- If YES: how helpful was it?
- If NO: why not?

UTILIZED → **HELPFULNESS**

Yes *No* → *If no: Why not?*

			Not Aware of this resource	Aware, but not needed	Aware, but not helpful	Very helpful				Not helpful at all
Sa. State vocational rehabilitation agencies, Disability & Business Technical Assistance Centers, Local independent living centers or other disability organizations, or (toll-free number)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
c. Job Accommodation Network (toll-free number)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
e. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
f. Your agency's EEO office	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
g. Agency legal counsel	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
h. Your safety/ergonomics staff	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
i. Disability management/benefits staff	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
j. Union representative	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
k. Other Federal agencies or professional society or business agency (e.g., OPM, MSPB, SHRM, IPMA)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
l. Dispute resolution center/mediator	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
Sm. Disabilities Services Office	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
Sn. Selective Placement Coordinator	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
So. HR Staff/Employee Relations	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5

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3. Please indicate which of the following informational mediums you use to address your ADA/disability employment issues and rate their degree of helpfulness.

- If YES: how helpful was it?
- If NO: why not?

	UTILIZED					HELPFULNESS				
	Yes	*No* →	*If no: Why not?*							
			Not Aware of this resource	Aware, but not needed	Aware, but not helpful	Very helpful				Not helpful at all
a. Print or video materials	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
b. Telephone consultation/information hotline	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
c. On-site consultation/training	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
d. Web sites/list serve/U.S. EEOC homepage	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
e. Organizational newsletter	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
Sf. Government sponsored conferences such as IDEAS (Interagency Disability Educational Awareness Showcase), Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities, FOSE (Federal Sectors Information Technology Fair)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
Sg. Employee sponsored disability organization in your department/agency	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
f. Other (Please specify_____)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5

4. Does your agency have a return to work or disability management program for employees who are injured or become disabled? *(Please circle one response)*

1 Yes, formal program with written policies/procedures
2 Yes, informal program with no formal written procedures
3 No return to work/disability management program
4 Not familiar/don't know if such a program exists → **Skip to S6**

5. To what extent has your agency's disability management program contributed to the following? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	A great deal	Somewhat	Minimally	Not at all	Don't know
a. Your awareness of the accommodation process	1	2	3	4	8
b. An organizational structure for providing accommodations (i.e. centralized agency resource)	1	2	3	4	8
c. Recognition of the importance of confidentiality of medical information	1	2	3	4	8
d. Raising the acceptance of employees with disabilities by other employees	1	2	3	4	8
S6. To what extent does your agency implement affirmative action and accommodation items for persons with disabilities as a measure of agency effectiveness?	1	2	3	4	8
k. Modified work environment (orthopedic chair, lower desk, etc.)	1	2	3	4	8
l. Provided a job coach	1	2	3	8	
m. Other (Please specify_____)	1	2	3	8	

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Section I: Presidential Orders

S1. How helpful will each of the following be in implementing the technology nondiscrimination requirements of Section 508? (508 requires that electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal government be accessible to people with disabilities.)

	Very helpful				Not helpful at all	Don't know
a. Centralized technology procurement which screens for these criteria	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Training procurement specialists in section 508 requirements	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Unit specific expertise/ technical assistance on technology accessibility issues	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. The technical staff within your agency (i.e. Chief Information Officer (CIO)/Help Desk)	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Other (specify_____)	1	2	3	4	5	8

S2. Do you currently supervise any full-time employees who work primarily from home or another off-site location?

1 Yes 2 No

S3. In your opinion, could any of the office based full time positions you currently supervise be:

a. Relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities:

1 Yes 2 No 6 No relevant positions

b. Split between home/off-site location and office in a given week (i.e. 3 days/week at home/off-site, 2 days/week in office):

1 Yes 2 No 6 No relevant positions

S4. How easy or difficult would it be for you to develop full time positions that could be:

a. Performed from home or another off-site location 5 days/week:

1 Very Easy 2 Easy 3 Neither easy nor difficult 4 Difficult 5 Very difficult
6 No relevant positions 8 Don't know

b. Split between home/off-site location and office in a given week (i.e. 3 days/week at home/off-site, 2 days/week in office):

1 Very Easy 2 Easy 3 Neither easy nor difficult 4 Difficult 5 Very difficult
6 No relevant positions 8 Don't know

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S5. How helpful would each of the following be to you as a supervisor in creating and supporting home-based or off-site/flexiplace/telecommuting?

	Very helpful				Not helpful at all	Don't know
a. Guidelines for supervision of off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Training for supervisors of off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Training for coworkers of off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Initial and ongoing training for off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Off-site technology support	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. Guidelines for the design of off-site work	1	2	3	4	5	8
h. Formal flexiplace agreement between off-site employee and supervisor	1	2	3	4	5	8

S6. How easy or difficult would it be for you to accommodate an individual with a chronic illness or disability (for example: someone who has cancer treatment, physical therapy, dialysis, or mobility impaired employees) with the ability to work at home for 1-2 days a week or intermittently?

1 Very Easy 2 Easy 3 Neither easy nor difficult 4 Difficult 5 Very difficult

6 No relevant positions 8 Don't know

S7. Are you aware of the July, 2000 Federal initiative (Executive Order 13163) that requires the Federal Government hiring of 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities over the next 5 years?

1 Yes 2 No (skip to S9)

S8. To what extent has your agency's plan to implement this Executive Order influenced your recruitment and hiring practices?

1 A great deal 2 Somewhat 3 Minimally 4 Not at all 8 Don't know

S9. Are you aware of the EEOC Guidelines (2/13/01) for Federal agencies to implement Executive Order 13164, establishing written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation?

1 Yes 2 No (skip to S11)

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S10. To what extent do these new accommodation procedures influence your supervisory practice?

1 A great deal 2 Somewhat 3 Minimally 4 Not at all 8 Don't know

S11. Are you aware of the July, 2000 Federal initiative (presidential memorandum) regarding telecommuting/telework for individuals with significant disabilities?

1 Yes 2 No

6. Would you like a copy of the executive summary of the results of this study?

1 Yes 2 No

Please provide your information

Name: _____

Agency: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail address _____

Thank you for your assistance!
If you have any questions, please contact

Lisa Horn

Telephone (toll-free): (888) 367-8404

TDD: (607) 255-2891

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Appendix C: List of Agencies Participating in HR/EEO Survey

List of All Agencies Who Participated	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts	1	0.2	1	0.2
Agency for International Development	1	0.2	2	0.5
Agriculture	22	5.5	24	6.0
Air Force	10	2.5	34	8.4
Arms Control and Disarmament Agency	1	0.2	35	8.7
Army	14	3.5	49	12.2
Central Intelligence Agency	1	0.2	50	12.4
Commerce	6	1.5	56	13.9
Commission on Civil Rights	1	0.2	57	14.1
Commodity Futures Trading Commission	2	0.5	59	14.6
Congressional Budget Office	1	0.2	60	14.9
Consumer Product Safety Commission	2	0.5	62	15.4
Corporation for National Service	2	0.5	64	15.9
Defense	8	2.0	72	17.9
Defense Contract Audit Agency	2	0.5	74	18.4
Defense Information Systems Agency	2	0.5	76	18.9
Defense Intelligence Agency	1	0.2	77	19.1
Defense Logistics Agency	12	3.0	89	22.1
Defense Nuclear Facilities Board	2	0.5	91	22.6
Defense Security Service	1	0.2	92	22.8
Defense Threat Reduction Agency	2	0.5	94	23.3
Education	9	2.2	103	25.6
Energy	14	3.5	117	29.0
Environmental Protection Agency	19	4.7	136	33.7
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	2	0.5	138	34.2
Executive Office of the President	2	0.5	140	34.7
Export-Import Bank of the United States	1	0.2	141	35.0
Farm Credit Administration	2	0.5	143	35.5
Federal Communications Commission	2	0.5	145	36.0
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	7	1.7	152	37.7

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List of All Agencies Who Participated	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
Federal Election Commission	1	0.2	153	38.0
Federal Emergency Management Agency	9	2.2	162	40.2
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	1	0.2	163	40.4
Federal Housing Finance Board	1	0.2	164	40.7
Federal Labor Relations Authority	1	0.2	165	40.9
Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service	2	0.5	167	41.4
Federal Reserve System	2	0.5	169	41.9
Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board	1	0.2	170	42.2
Federal Trade Commission	2	0.5	172	42.7
Federal Maritime Commission	2	0.5	174	43.2
General Services Administration	3	0.7	177	43.9
Health & Human Services	16	4.0	193	47.9
Housing & Urban Development	2	0.5	195	48.4
Interior	6	1.5	201	49.9
International Trade Commission	1	0.2	202	50.1
Justice	20	5.0	222	55.1
Labor	11	2.7	233	57.8
Library of Congress	1	0.2	234	58.1
Merit Systems Protection Board	2	0.5	236	58.6
National Aeronautics & Space Administration	17	4.2	253	62.8
National Archives & Records Administration	2	0.5	255	63.3
National Endowment for the Arts	1	0.2	256	63.5
National Endowment for the Humanities	2	0.5	258	64.0
National Gallery of Art	2	0.5	260	64.5
National Guard Bureau	1	0.2	261	64.8
National Imagery & Mapping Agency	1	0.2	262	65.0
National Labor Relations Board	2	0.5	264	65.5
National Mediation Board	1	0.2	265	65.8
National Science Foundation	2	0.5	267	66.3
National Transportation Safety Board	1	0.2	268	66.5
Navy	49	12.2	317	78.7
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	3	0.7	320	79.4
Occupational Safety & Health Review Commission	2	0.5	322	79.9
Office of Government Ethics	2	0.5	324	80.4

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List of All Agencies Who Participated	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
Office of Personnel Management	1	0.2	325	80.6
Office of Special Counsel	1	0.2	326	80.9
Overseas Private Investment Corporation	1	0.2	327	81.1
Peace Corps	2	0.5	329	81.6
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	2	0.5	331	82.1
Postal Rate Commission	2	0.5	333	82.6
Railroad Retirement Board	3	0.7	336	83.4
Securities and Exchange Commission	6	1.5	342	84.9
Selective Service System	1	0.2	343	85.1
Small Business Administration	2	0.5	345	85.6
Smithsonian Institution	1	0.2	346	85.9
Social Security Administration	16	4.0	362	89.8
Soldiers and Airmen's Home	1	0.2	363	90.1
State	2	0.5	365	90.6
Tax Court of the United States	1	0.2	366	90.8
Tennessee Valley Authority	1	0.2	367	91.1
The Architect of the Capitol	2	0.5	369	91.6
Transportation	15	3.7	384	95.3
Treasury	2	0.5	386	95.8
U.S. General Accounting Office	8	2.0	394	97.8
U.S. Information Agency	2	0.5	396	98.3
Veterans Affairs	6	1.5	402	99.8
Voice of America	1	0.2	403	100.0

Source: *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies.*
Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 1999.

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Appendix D:
List of Agencies Participating in Supervisor Survey

	Total N=1001		White Collar Supervisors N=810		Blue Collar Supervisors N=810	
Agency	***Frequency***	***Percent***	***Frequency***	***Percent***	***Frequency***	***Percent***
Department of Agriculture	80	8%	52	6%	28	15%
Department of Commerce	58	6%	38	5%	20	10%
Department of Education	53	55	53	7%		
Department of Interior	65	6%	46	6%	19	10%
Department of Justice	85	8%	73	9%	12	6%
Department of Labor	51	5%	51	6%		
Department of Transportation	28	3%	22	3%	6	3%
Department of Treasury	108	11%	71	9%	37	19%
Department of Veteran's Affairs	101	10%	70	9%	31	16%
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	51	5%	51	6%		
Federal Communications Commission	50	5	50	6%		
Health and Human Services	60	6%	41	5%	19	10%
Housing and Urban Development	53	5%	53	7%		
National Council on Disability	1	0%	1	0%		
Office of Personnel Management	50	5%	50	6%		
Small Business Administration	52	5%	52	6%		
Social Security Administration	55	5%	36	4%	19	10%
Totals	**1001**	**100%**	**810**	**100%**	**191**	**100%**

Source: *Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities.*
Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Appendix E: HR/EEO Respondent Demographics

Organization Size at Location

0-14	2%
15-25	1
26-50	2
51-249	16
250-499	6
500-1499	22
1500-2499	13
2500-3499	6
3500-4999	7
5000+	23
Don't Know	**
Refused	1

*** Less than one percent*

Note: percent of all respondents, n=403

Title of Respondent

Director/Chief	41%
Deputy Assistant Secretary	2
Deputy Director	4
Personnel Manager	18
Officer	9
Specialist	10
Program Co-ordinator	3
Other	13
Don't Know	0
Refused	0

Note: percent of all respondents, n=403

Source: *Survey of the Federal Government on Human Resources/EEO Policies and Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 1999.

Function of Respondent

Administrative	9%
Equal Opportunity	35
Benefits	0
Compensation	0
Disability	3
Diversity	1
Employee Relations	1
Employment/Recruitment	2
Health/Safety/Security	0
Human Resources (HR)	41
Labor/Industrial Relations	**
Legal	**
Organizational Development	0
Training & Development	0
Other	8
Don't Know	0
Refused	0

** Less than one percent*

Note: percent of all respondents, n=403

Level of Organization Where Reporting From

Entire agency (including regions)	49%
Headquarters only	9
Regional only	40
Refused	2

Number of Years with Organization

<2	6
2-5	16
6-10	20
11-20	30
20+	29

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Appendix F: Supervisor Respondent Demographics

Years with Agency

1-5	6%
6-10	11
11-15	19
16-20+	14
21+	51

Note: *percent of all respondents, n=1001.*
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Years as Federal Supervisor

1-5	27%
6-10	22
11-15	21
16-20+	15
21+	14

Note: *percent of all respondents, n=1001.*
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Federal General Schedule Grade (or equivalent)

4 or below	12%
5-8	10
9-12	21
13-15	56

Note: *percent of all respondents, n=1001.*
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Number of Total Supervisees

1-10	43%
11-20	25
21-90	25
90+	7

Note: *percent of all respondents, n=1001.*
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Number of Immediate Supervisees

1-6	36%
7-12	33
12+	31

Note: *percent of all respondents, n=1001.*
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Number of Supervisees with Disabilities in the Past Five Years

None	40%
1-2	40
3-4	11
5-10	6
11+	3

Note: *percent of all respondents, n=1001.*
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Number of Accommodation Requests Received in the Past Five years as a Federal Supervisor

None	50%
1-2	29
3-4	10
5-10	8
11+	3

Note: *percent of all respondents, n=1001.*
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: *Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities.* Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Appendix G: Additional Resources

1) Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Ave. NW
Rm. S-1303
Washington, DC 20210

Phone: (V) 202-693-7880
(TTY) 202-693-7881
(FAX) 202-693-7888

Website: www.dol.gov/odep/

ODEP sponsors:
The New Freedom Initiative: Disability Info
Website: www.disabilityinfo.gov/

2) President's Committee Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

918 Chestnut Ridge Road, Suite 1
West Virginia University–PO Box 6080
Morgantown, WV 26506-6080

Phone: (V) 800-526-7234
(TTY) 800-232-9675

Website: www.dol.gov/odep and click on JAN or go directly to JAN at www.jan.wvu.edu/english/homeus.htm

3) Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

1801 L Street NW (Federal Sector Programs)
Washington, DC 20507

Phone: (V) 800-669-3362
(TTY) 800-800-3302

Website: www.eeoc.gov

For specific Federal employment questions, call the "ATTORNEY OF THE DAY" at 202-663-4599.

4) Department of Labor: Office of Federal Contractor Compliance Programs (OFCCP)

Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20210

Phone: (V) 888-376-3227
(V) 202-219-9475
(TTY) 202-208-0452

Website: www.dol.gov/esa/

5) U.S. Office of Personnel Management (for Federal employment information)

1900 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20415

Phone: (V) 202-606-2700
(TTY) 912-744-2299

Website: www.opm.gov/disability

6) hrtips.org

Web-based tools to help HR professionals build inclusive workplaces.

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