Description of document:	Office of Personnel Management (OPM) style manual: "Good Writer's Guide" 1993
Request date:	20-June-2014
Released date:	27-August-2014
Posted date:	13-July-2015
Source of document:	U.S. Office of Personnel Management FOIA Requester Service Center 1900 E Street, NW Room 5415 Washington, D.C. 20415-7900 Fax: 202-606-1719 Email: foia@opm.gov

Office of the
Executive Secretariat

August 27, 2014

Re: FOIA 2014-03931

This letter is in response to your June 20, 2014 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request addressed to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

You requested a copy of the OPM Style Manual.

"A style guide or style manual is a set of standards for the writing and design of documents, either for general use or for a specific publication, organization or field. The implementation of a style guide provides uniformity in style and formatting within a document and across multiple documents."

The Office of the Executive Secretariat at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management utilizes the "Good Writer's Guide" published in 1993. This document is attached but does not include the training section module. Any transfer of the training material infringes on copyrights and is prohibited. While it was published in 1993, the reference is a valuable resource to OPM writers. Much of this Writer's Guide is based on Just Plain English, written for OPM by Dr. Tom Murawski, in 1982. Other references are The Elements of Style, by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White and The Art of Plain Talking, by Rudolf Flesch.

In addition to the Good Writer's Guide, OPM also utilizes the Government Printing Office (GPO) Style Manual. This manual has been used by writers for over 100 years. A PDF version of the GPO Style Manual can be viewed by accessing the website at http://www.gpo.gov/. In addition, you may purchase a copy from the U.S. Government Printing Office Bookstore. The address for the bookstore is listed below.

U.S. Government Printing Office Bookstore
710 North Capitol Street, NW
Washington, DC 20401
202.512.0132
http://www.gpo.gov/about/bookstore.htm

The undersigned is responsible for this determination. You have the right to appeal this decision. Should you wish to do so, you must send your appeal and a copy of this letter, within 60 days of the date of this letter, to:

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of the General Counsel
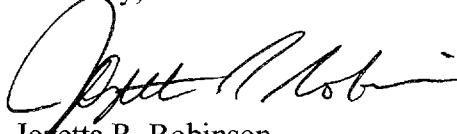1900 E Streets, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20415

Both the front of the envelope and the first page of your letter should be marked "FOIA Appeal." Copies of the FOIA regulations are available at www.opm.gov/efoia.

As part of the 2007 FOIA amendments, the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) was created to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. Using OGIS services does not affect your right to pursue litigation. If you are requesting access to your own records (which is considered a Privacy Act request), you should know that OGIS does not have the authority to handle requests made under the Privacy Act of 1974. You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
{OGIS} 8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, MD 20740-6001
E-mail: ogis@nara.gov
Web: https://ogis.archives.gov
Telephone: 202-741-5770
Facsimile: 202-741-5769
Toll-free: 1-877-684-6448

If you need to contact the FOIA Requester Service Center concerning this request, please call 202-606-3642 or e-mail foia@opm.gov.

Sincerely,

Jozetta R. Robinson
Director
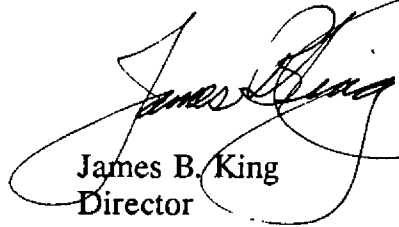
GOOD WRITER'S GUIDE

Introduction

Good writing is important because we want our readers to understand our letters, publications and policies -- including what is in the Federal Personnel Manual.

Good writing is clear, concise and businesslike. It is not bureaucratic or full of jargon only specialists can understand.

To improve our writing, we are launching a campaign including training and this handy reference guide for all OPM writers.

James B. King
Director
U.S. Office of Personnel Management
July 26, 1993

OPM ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL

Good Writer's Guide

AM Supplement 16-1

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PART I
Answer Our
Customers

As Director Jim King says, "Serve the customer." This first part suggests ways to keep the customer in mind as you write. Later parts of this guide remind you how to write well, and tell you how to format your writing correctly.

Part 1
Answer Our Customers

1-1. Answer Their Questions

A well-written, logical letter is no good if it doesn't answer our customer's questions. Before writing, make sure you know what those questions are. Mark them on the incoming letter or make a list of them in your own words.

Deal with all the questions, even if you cannot answer them all directly. If you need to, get help from another part of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

If someone asks five questions and one can only be answered by another agency, answer the four and tell the person where to find information for the fifth answer. Unless it would put the customer in a bad position, forward a copy of the letter to that other agency and tell the customer exactly where you sent the copy.

For complicated issues, we can save time and money by calling to find out exactly what the customer wants to know. Sometimes the call answers all the questions and we can skip writing. If you are writing a Member of Congress to answer a constituent question, you should check with that congressional office before calling the constituent directly. Then you still need to write a letter that answers the questions or confirms what you already answered.

Newsletters, other periodicals, training manuals and reports should answer questions you think your audience would want answered. One way to find out what those are is to ask your readers. When writing about something new, remember the guide for journalists-- tell the reader who, what, when, where, why and how.

Write policy the same way. Whether it is a regulation, a part of the Federal Personnel Manual, or a letter to the Interagency Advisory Group, it should answer the questions readers are likely to have.

1-2. Get to the Point

In almost anything you write, get right to the point. Lead with the one sentence you would keep, if you could keep only one. Put requests before justifications; put answers before explanations; put conclusions before details. Readers need to know your main point early so they can see the relevance of whatever else you say.

In a letter, the only thing that should come before your main point is a paragraph briefly connecting with the customer. Use some sort of greeting such as "thank you for writing" and identify the letter to which you are responding.

It is not necessary to restate all the points the person made. Your response is not the summary of a court case. Nor should it be an explanation of the situation for others who may have to review your work. They should either see the incoming letter or have a decision summary to review. Your customer is the person who will get your letter.

The exception might be for "bad news." Before turning down a request, you can let the reader down gently by first making clear that you understood the customer's point of view.

1-3. Be Courteous

The key to being courteous is to put yourself in the reader's position. If you had been through what that person has been through, could your writing be interpreted as cold or argumentative? Even if the person is asking something totally unreasonable, how would you answer someone you really liked? Courtesy--at times mixed with compassion--is important in all our writing.

1-4. Respond Quickly

When people write to us for information, they normally consider their questions important and urgent. Give them answers when they need them. Don't hold things up to write a "perfect letter."

OPM's Director wants staff to sign their own work. This gives pride of authorship and makes clear who is accountable for the answer. It also speeds getting the answer out and makes it easier for the customer to ask a followup question. This does not mean you are alone as a writer. You can always ask colleagues or supervisors for help.

The clearance process should not slow our work. Sometimes protocol requires a senior person to sign a letter or report. What you write might also require a policy decision by someone higher up. Even in those cases, your work should not go through several levels of review. Your organization should have policies that allow you to skip review levels in your chain of command.

Reviewers also should use common sense. Rewrites cost money, both for materials and for your time.

Except for formal, printed material, a reviewer should not send something back for rewriting if it meets the recipient's needs, uses good English, and does not look bad.

For example, a reviewer of a letter who thinks it important that names go either on the same line as "cc:" or below it should tell the writer about that for future work. That is not a reason to change the current document and delay getting it to our customer. And the reviewer should make sure that the guidance for future writing is really to correct an error, not just a statement of personal preference.

PART II

Write for Them; It's Right for Us

Part II
Write for Them; It's Right for Us

1-1. Shorter is Better

To write concisely, keep two key rules in mind:

- Shorter words are easier to read and understand than long words.

- Shorter sentences are easier on your reader.

Count the number of words in a typed line. If most of your lines have 10 or 11 words, you are usually all right. If most lines have eight or nine words, your words are too long.

Write sentences that average 20 words or fewer.

Engage your readers with your lead paragraphs. Avoid long paragraphs at the start of your document.

Use Shorter Words

OPM writers must use some long, technical terms such as *negotiated grievance procedure, competitive selection,* and *performance-based actions.* This makes it even more important to shorten where we can.

Watch out for words ending in *-tion* or *-sion.* Most words ending in *-tion* or *-sion* are verbs that have been made into nouns. Change most of them back to verbs.

Bad Example: We will give consideration to the proposal before making a decision.

Good Example: We will consider the proposal before deciding.

Of course, some perfectly good words end with an -*ion:* action...question.

Here are some frequently used long words plus the commonly used short words to put in their place. This list begins with the very best short word, *you.* It's a great word. But some of our authors spend a lot of time devising ways to write correspondence without using the word. Please use *you* more often.

addressees -- *you*

additional -- *more*

assistance -- *help*

attempt -- *try*

commence -- *start or begin*

communicate -- *tell*

concerning -- *about*

consequently -- *so*

demonstrate -- *show*

expedite -- *hurry*

facilitate -- *help or ease*

forward -- *send*

herewith -- *here is*

heretofore -- *until now*

implement -- *carry out or start*

in accordance with -- *by, following, per, according to, or under*

in addition -- *also*

initiate -- *begin*

in order to -- *to*

in the amount of -- *for*

in the event that -- *if*

in the near future -- *soon*

it is -- *we think, we want, and you must*

it is apparent -- *clearly*

it is recommended -- *we recommend*

it is requested -- *please*

on the basis of -- *by, from*

numerous -- *many*

proceed -- *do, go ahead, try*

promulgate -- *issue, publish*

provided that -- *if*

represents -- *is*

subsequent to -- *after*

sufficient -- *enough*

this office -- *we, us*

until such time as -- *until*

utilize -- *use*

with reference to -- *reference*

to - *about*

And how about trendy new words? If the new phrase or word conveys a businesslike meaning, then update your writing with these lively phrases and word uses.

Shall?

Today, *shall* is rarely the right word. You may be forced to use *shall* when writing regulations that always have been written that way. But don't spread the practice. Depending on what you mean, substitute *will* or *must*, leave it out, or use the "understood *you.*"

Do not write: OPM shall issue the report before April 1.
Do write: OPM will issue the report before April 1.

Do not write: The driver shall have a license in his possession.
Do write: The driver must have a license in his possession.

Do not write: This policy shall apply in the Washington, DC, area.
Do write: This policy applies in the Washington, DC, area.

Do not write: All OPM writers shall avoid use of the word shall.
Do write: Avoid using shall.

Use Shorter Sentences

Fear of pronouns causes long, awkward sentences. Don't go out of your way to avoid personal pronouns. In letters and memos, address your reader as *you.*

> **Bad Example:** All applicants must submit these forms by 4:30 p.m. on the closing date to receive consideration for this vacancy. (Actually, this means unless all have filed their forms, none may be considered.)

> **Good Example:** You must submit these forms by 4:30 p.m. on the closing date to be considered for this vacancy.

General Audiences

Memos written to many people as a group are often vague and awkward. If you want your readers to take your message seriously, write as though you are addressing a single person. Only one person reads your writing at any one time, so the best writing speaks directly to one reader.

> **Bad Example:** All addressees are requested to provide comments on the course content.

> **Good Example:** Please send us your comments on the course content.

You also may use *we* to refer to OPM.

> **Bad Example:** Comments on the draft FPM chapter are solicited from agencies receiving this communication.

> **Good Example:** We welcome your agency's comments on the draft FPM chapter.

Whenever *we* appears in your writing, *you* should appear even more. Use *I, me,* and *my* much less often. Use the word *I* mainly to show special concern or warmth.

1-2. Avoid the Passive Voice

Passive sentences are hard to understand and leave out important information. They do not show *who* or *what* did the action.

Bad Example: The ball was dropped on this one.

Good Example: I dropped the ball.

Put a "doer" before the verb. You automatically avoid a passive verb when you lead with the doer.

Bad Example: The part must have been broken by the company.

Good Example: The company must have broken the part.

Now and then you should use the passive voice for emphasis--when *what* is done is more important than *who* does it.

Good Example: The word processor was stolen. (The doer is unknown.)

Good Example: Christmas has been scheduled as a workday. (The doer is better left unsaid.)

Extra adverbs. Adverbs, usually words ending in -*ly*, often are unnecessary.

Bad Example: We certainly agree.

Good Example: We agree.

Buried questions. Many long, awkward sentences can be rewritten as simple questions, ending in a question mark. The question mark is a powerful tool of good writing.

Bad Example: This is to request this office be notified as to whether the conference has been rescheduled.

Good Example: Has the conference been rescheduled?

Good Example: Have you rescheduled the
conference?

When you are posing a question or asking for help, check to see if
you've used any question marks. If not, you have probably written
some lengthy sentences. Rework the letter or item and include a
few question marks. Making a request does not make you or our
agency more vulnerable. Try to write clearly about your request.
Do not be afraid to put our agency on the line.

1-3. Jargon? Not!

Jargon is used properly as technical shorthand when writing to an
audience that understands the term and its special meanings. But
some writers use pseudo-technical words simply to impress the
reader or to create a verbal smokescreen.

Piled-Up Nouns

Watch out for piled-up nouns like these: *systems modification effort,
employee productivity improvement possibilities, highway litter reduction
program,* and *damage situation.*

Acronyms

Acronyms create the same kinds of problems. Spell out *HRDG,
RIG, NGP,* and *RIF* whenever possible. If you are going to use an
acronym, spell out the name the first time it is used, followed by the
acronym in parentheses. Then use the acronym later in the docu-
ment.

Legalese

Sometimes we use legalese--hard-to-read sentences--because the
sentences have passed court tests. This style of writing was popular
in the business community, but most business writers now use plain
English when writing customers. We can too.

Pretend your reader is a friend who knows little about the subject
and write for that person.

1-4. Follow Standard Grammar

The rules of grammar you learned in school still apply. Good grammar makes you look professional; your writing, clearer.

1-5. Use Words Correctly

Effect/Affect

The verb *effect* means to bring about. Usually, *cause* or *bring about* works better. *Effect* as a verb is correct but clumsy to write.

Bad Example: He effected a policy change.

Good Example: He brought about a policy change.

Good Example: He changed policy.

If you mean modify or influence, the verb you want is *affect.*

Bad Example: This suspension does not effect the
Outstanding Scholar Direct-Hire Authority.

Good Example: This suspension does not affect the
Outstanding Scholar Direct-Hire Authority.

Assure/Ensure/Insure

To *assure* people is to inform them with confidence, or convince them. You assure people, not things. To *ensure* that something will happen, you make certain of it. To *insure* something normally means to protect yourself against financial loss--with insurance coverage, but it also can mean to make it secure.

Irregardless/Regardless

Regardless of how often you may hear it, *irregardless* is just plain wrong. *Regardless* is a fine word, but if it causes you problems, try *even though.*

Good Example: Even though you hear it often, *irregardless* is not a correct word.

That/Which

Use *which* to introduce a side comment in a sentence.

Bad Example: Every word which I say is true.

Good Example: Every word that I say is true.

Better Example: Every word I say is true.

Here is an example where *which* is right: My opinion, which is worth what you pay for it, is that sushi is better than raw oysters.

Whenever *which* is correctly used to introduce a side comment, set off the comment with commas.

Go *which*-hunting, changing *which* to *that* or leaving it out wherever possible.

Use *which* when asking a question or making a choice.

Do Write: I must decide which is better.

1-6. Consistency

At OPM, we want to avoid unnecessary delays during the approval process. Don't get tangled up in personal preferences and dueling dictionaries deciding questions such as whether to capitalize *Federal Government*, use periods in *DC*, and put an apostrophe in *RIF's*.

The important thing is to be consistent within a document. If you are a reviewer, do not send a document back merely because it is not written in your personal style.

1-7. References

The Elements of Style, by William Strunk, Jr., and E.B. White, is a good reference on simple words and simple sentences. So is *The Art of Plain Talking,* by Rudolf Flesch.

Much of this Writer's Guide is based on *Just Plain English,* written for OPM by Dr. Tom Murawski, in 1982.

The *Government Printing Office Style Manual* has been used by writers for 100 years.

PART III
Format and Preparation

Part III of the *Good Writer's Guide* is designed to provide guidance on format and preparation. While the instructions are specifically intended for use by OPM staff who are preparing letters and memorandums for the Director's review or signature, they may also be helpful in preparing material for others' review.

Throughout these parts, the term "Director" refers also to OPM's Deputy Director.

You do not have to follow these guidelines when preparing other material. However, Associate Directors, Regional Directors, and Heads of Offices may adopt portions of these guidelines for use within their organizations.

Chapter 1
Formatting and Preparing Letters for the Director's Signature

1-1. Paper, Type, and Format (General)

First, look at the figures on pages III-1-7 through III-1-14. They illustrate how a letter for the Director's signature should look. Then read the following to get answers to specific questions.

What Stationery to Use

Type the first page on Office of the Director letterhead stationery. Type succeeding pages on plain bond.

Typeface and Type Size

Most OPM correspondence is produced on computers that have access to both fixed and proportional fonts. Proportional fonts are easier to read (on paper) and save paper. Typefaces with serifs are considered more legible. Larger type is easier on the eyes.

Proportional serif fonts in 12 point type size are preferred. (Fonts with *Roman*, *Times*, or *Dutch* in their names are nearly always proportional serif. If your font doesn't specify number of points, select 10 cpi.)

Short Letters

When typing a short letter (10 lines or fewer, or only 1 paragraph), center it on the page rather than bunching it at the top.

Double space letters of fewer than 10 lines.

Margins

For letters with 10 or fewer lines, use side margins of 1½ to 2 inches. For 11-20 lines, use 1½ inches. For more than 20 lines, use 1 inch side margins. Do not right justify.

Leave a 1 inch margin at the bottom of the page.

See pages III-1-7 through III-1-14 for illustrations of short, medium, and long letters.

1-2. How to Type the Letter

Affixing the Date

Do not date the letter at the time it is prepared. After the letter has been signed, place the date at the top center of the first page.

Reference Line

Do not use an "In Reply Refer To" line. If such information is needed, incorporate it into the body of the letter.

Avoid using a "Your Reference" line. The Director's stationery does not contain a preprinted "Your Reference" line. If an incoming letter specifically requests that the reply contain such a reference, type the reference exactly as it was given, with the date of the incoming letter. Place it on the right-hand side of the page, starting on line 10. Use the following example as a guide.

> Your Reference:
> cos
> 1503
> 9-18-93

Name, Title, and Address

Begin at the left margin on line 15, or 2 lines below the last reference line. Single space in block style.

Do not use periods in Washington, DC. Type "compass directions" with a period at the end. Use only one space before ZIP codes. For example:

> California Street, NW.
> Washington, DC 20432

Avoid using an "attention" line. If you must use one, see the following guide:

> XYZ Corporation
> ATTN: J. Smith
> 4816 California Street, NW.
> Washington, DC 20432

Never use an attention line on congressional correspondence. Address all letters to the Congressman. If the letter needs the attention of a particular staff member, place the attention line on the envelope.

The Salutation

Begin at the left margin, two lines below the address. Type the salutation, followed by a colon. Use the addressee's title and surname. For example:

Dear Dr. Watson:

Dear Mr. Smith:

When using an "attention" line, address the salutation to the person identified in that line.

How to Type the Body of the Letter

Begin at the left margin, two lines below the salutation.

Do not indent paragraphs. Block indent subparagraphs five spaces. If subparagraphs are numbered or lettered, indent two more spaces and align the first word of each line in the subparagraphs.

Double space letters of 1 paragraph or 10 or fewer lines. In short letters, triple space between paragraphs.

Single space all other letters. Double space between paragraphs.

Second and Succeeding Pages

Use plain bond paper. The top and bottom margin should be 1 inch. Type the name of the addressee at the top left margin.

Type the page number on the same line, flush with the right margin.

Skip a line and continue the text.

Complimentary Closing

After the last paragraph, double space and type "Sincerely," one space to the right of center.

Director's Name and Title

Type the Director's name four lines below the complimentary closing and flush with it. Type "Director" on the line below the name and flush with it.

Enclosures

Type "Enclosure" flush with the left margin, two lines below "Director." For more than one enclosure, use the plural and specify the number, e.g., "3 Enclosures."

Copies

1. Courtesy copy - Use Office of the Director letterhead.

2. Official file copy.

3. Copy of response to accompany the "Office of the Director Correspondence Tracking (DCT) System Profile Sheet" (if needed).

4. Copies for distribution outside OPM (if needed).

5. Copies for distribution within your organization or to other OPM components (if needed).

How to Show Distribution of Copies

Begin at the left margin, two lines below the title or the enclosures line. Type "cc:" followed by the distribution. For example:

cc: Chairman, Federal Prevailing Rate
Advisory Committee
Chairman, Merit Systems Protection Board

If you wish to send a copy but do not want to show the information on the original, type "bcc:" followed by the distribution, on all carbon copies except the courtesy copy. For example:

bcc: Chairman, Federal Prevailing Rate
Advisory Committee
Chairman, Merit Systems Protection Board

How to Prepare an Envelope

Do not use window envelopes. Type the name, title, and address as shown in the address box of the letter.

Do not type or write special mailing instructions (e.g., Special Delivery, Registered, Certified, etc.) on the envelope.

Questions???

Call the Executive Secretariat, 606-1100.

Honorable John L. Smith
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Smith:

Center a short letter rather than bunching it at the top of the

page. If it is only 1 paragraph long or has 10 or fewer lines, use

side margins of 1½ to 2 inches.

Sincerely,

James B. King
Director

Figure 1

Short Letters With One Paragraph

III-1-7

Honorable John L. Smith
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Smith:

Center a short letter rather than bunching it at the top of the page. If it is only one 1 paragraph long or has 10 or fewer lines, use side margins of 1½ to 2 inches.

Double space short letters and triple space between paragraphs. Single space medium and long letters. Double space between paragraphs.

Sincerely,

James B. King
Director

Figure 2

Short Letters With Two Paragraphs

III-1-8

Mr. John L. Smith
Vice President
ABC Corporation
2301 Orr Street, NW.
Washington, DC 20432

Dear Mr. Smith:

This sample shows you how to type letters for the Director's signature.

Margins are set at 1½ inches because this letter is 11-20 lines long. The letter is single spaced and is typed on Office of the Director stationery. There are double spaces between paragraphs. Several copies are made, including a courtesy copy and official file copy.

Since three samples accompany this letter, the words, "3 Enclosures," are typed at the left margin, two lines below the title.

This letter is being mailed to you at the address shown above.

Sincerely,

James B. King
Director

3 Enclosures

Figure 3

Medium Letters With Enclosures

UNITED STATES

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20415

Honorable John L. Smith
Director, Office of Management
  and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Smith:

Use Office of the Director stationery. Make a courtesy copy and an official file copy. If necessary, also make a copy to accompany the "Office of the Director Correspondence Tracking System Profile Sheet" and additional copies for distribution within and outside OPM.

Double space letters with 1 paragraph or 10 or fewer lines. For letters of more than 20 lines, use 1 inch side margins. Leave a 1 inch margin at the bottom of the page. Do not indent major paragraphs.

To show that the letter contains an enclosure, type "Enclosure" at the left margin, two lines below "Director." For more than one enclosure, use the plural and specify the number.

Sincerely,

James B. King
Director

3 Enclosures

cc: Comptroller General of
    the United States

Figure 4

Medium Letters With Courtesy Copy

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Honorable John L. Smith
Director, Office of Management
and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Smith:

The enclosed sample shows you how a letter prepared for the Director's signature should look. Use Office of the Director stationery. Make a courtesy copy and an official file copy. If necessary, also make a copy to accompany the "Office of the Director Correspondence Tracking System Profile Sheet" and additional copies for distribution within and outside OPM.

The following is very important, so keep it in mind when you are typing:

   a. This is what lettered subparagraphs should look like.

   b. Do not date the letter at the time it is typed. Wait until it has been signed.

   c. Indent five spaces to the right of the left margin when listing items. Use letters to identify each item.

Begin the salutation at the left margin, two lines below the address. Type the salutation, followed by a colon. Use the addressee's title and surname. Skip two lines and begin the body of the letter. Do not indent paragraphs. Double space letters with 1 paragraph or 10 or fewer lines. Single space all other letters.

Sincerely,

James B. King
Director

Enclosure

Figure 5 - Medium Letters With Lettered Subparagraphs

**UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON. D.C. 20415**

Honorable John L. Smith
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Smith:

AM Supplement 16-1, Good Writer's Guide, of the Office of Personnel Management requires that typists follow the guidelines listed below:

> Use Office of the Director stationery. Make a courtesy copy and an official file copy.

> Single space all letters except those that have only 1 paragraph or 10 or fewer lines. For letters of more than 20 lines, use 1 inch side margins. Leave a 1 inch margin at the bottom of the page.

> Block indent subparagraphs five spaces. If you use letters or numbers to identify subparagraphs, indent two more spaces after the number or letter.

The enclosed samples show you how a letter prepared for the Director's signature should look.

Sincerely,

James B. King
Director

5 Enclosures

cc: President, ABC Corporation
    Executive Director, XYZ Corporation

Figure 6 - Medium Letters With Indented Subparagraphs

III-1-12

Mr. John L. Smith
President
ABC Corporation
119 Y Street, NW.
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Smith:

The enclosed samples show you how a letter prepared for the Director's signature should look.

Use Office of the Director stationery. Make a courtesy copy and an official file copy. Also make a copy to accompany the "Office of the Director Correspondence Tracking System Profile Sheet" and additional copies for distribution within and outside OPM.

Single space all letters except those that have only 1 paragraph or 10 or fewer lines. For letters of more than 20 lines, use 1 inch side margins. Leave a 1 inch margin at the bottom of the page. Do not indent major paragraphs.

Begin the salutation at the left margin, two lines below the address. Type the salutation, followed by a colon. Use the addressee's title and surname. Skip two lines and begin the body of the letter.

To show that the letter contains an enclosure, type "Enclosure" at the left margin, two lines below "Director." For more than one enclosure, use the plural and specify the number.

This information is very important, so I will repeat it. Use Office of the Director stationery. Make a courtesy copy and an official file copy. Also make a copy to accompany the "Office of the Director Correspondence Tracking System Profile Sheet" and additional copies for distribution within and outside OPM.

Figure 7 - Long Letters

Use plain bond paper to type second and succeeding pages. Type the name of the addressee at the left margin, 1 inch from the top of the page. Skip a line and continue the text.

Type the Director's name four lines below the complimentary close and flush with it. Type "Director" on the line below the name and flush with it.

Sincerely,

James B. King
Director

5 Enclosures

cc: Honorable William P. Brown
    United States Senate

Figure 8

Second Page of Long Letters

Chapter 2
Preparing Memorandums
for the Director's Signature

2-1. General Paper and Formatting Specifications

First, look at the figures on pages III-2-7 through III-2-13. They illustrate how a memorandum for the Director's signature should look. Then read the following to get answers to specific questions.

What Stationery to Use

Type the first page on Office of the Director letterhead stationery. Type succeeding pages on plain bond paper.

Typeface and Type Size

Most OPM correspondence is produced on computers that have access to both fixed and proportional fonts. Proportional fonts are easier to read (on paper) and save paper. Typefaces with serifs are considered more legible. Larger type is easier on the eyes.

Proportional serif fonts in 12 point type size are preferred. (Fonts with *Roman*, *Times*, or *Dutch* in their names are nearly always proportional serif. If your font doesn't specify number of points, select 10 cpi.)

Short Memorandums

When typing a short memorandum (10 lines or less, or only 1 paragraph), center it on the page rather than bunching it at the top. Double space and use side margins of 1-1/2 to 2 inches. See Figures 9 and 10 on pages III-2-7 and III-2-8 for further information on margins and how to type the body of a short memorandum.

Margins

For memorandums with a single paragraph or 10 or fewer lines, use side margins of 1-1/2 to 2 inches. For 11-20 lines, use 1-1/2 inches. For more than 20 lines, use 1 inch margins. Do not right justify.

Leave a 1 inch margin at the bottom of the page.

2-2. How to Type the Memorandum

Affixing the Date

Do not date the memorandum at the time it is typed. After the memorandum has been signed, place the date one space to the right of center.

Avoid using a "Your Reference" line. The Director's stationery does not contain a preprinted "Your Reference" line. If an incoming memorandum specifically requests that the reply contain such a reference, type the reference exactly as it was given, with the date of the incoming memorandum. Place it on the right-hand side of the page, starting on line 10. Use the following example as a guide.

Your Reference:
cos
1503
9-18-93

How to Type the "MEMORANDUM FOR" Lines

Begin at the left margin on line 15, or 2 lines below the last reference line. Use all capital letters. Use the following examples as guides:

MEMORANDUM FOR PATRICIA W. LATTIMORE
                ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
                FOR ADMINISTRATION

MEMORANDUM FOR EDWARD VELA, JR.
                REGIONAL DIRECTOR
                DALLAS REGION

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS, REGIONAL
                DIRECTORS, AND HEADS OF
                OTHER OFFICES

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN F. SIEGRIST, JR.
                ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
                FOR PROCUREMENT AND
                ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

How to Type the "FROM" Line

Begin at the left margin, two lines below the last "FOR" line. Type the following in all capital letters:

FROM: JAMES B. KING
                   DIRECTOR

How to Type the "SUBJECT" Line

Begin at the left margin, two lines below the last "FROM" line. Capitalize the first letter of each word (except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions unless these have four or more letters). Use the following samples as guides:

Subject: How to Type a Memorandum

Subject: How to Type a Letter From Director King

How To Type the "THROUGH" Lines

If a "THROUGH" line is needed, begin at the left margin two lines below the "FOR" line. After you complete them, skip two lines and continue with the "FROM" line. Use the following example as a guide:

MEMORANDUM FOR CURTIS J. SMITH
                           ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
                           FOR RETIREMENT AND
                           INSURANCE

THROUGH: PATRICIA W. LATTIMORE
                           ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
                           FOR ADMINISTRATION

FROM: JAMES B. KING
                           DIRECTOR

How to Type the Body of the Memorandum

Begin two lines below the last "SUBJECT" line.

Double space memorandums of 1 paragraph or 10 or fewer lines, and triple space between any paragraphs. Single space all other memorandums. Double space between paragraphs.

Do not indent paragraphs. Indent all lines of subparagraphs five spaces. If subparagraphs are numbered or lettered, indent two more spaces and align the first words of each line in the subparagraphs. See Figures 12 and 13.

How to Type Succeeding Pages

Use plain bond paper. Type the name of the addressee at the left margin, 1 inch from the top edge of the paper. Type the page number on the same line at the right margin. Skip a line and continue the text.

How to Show that a Memorandum has Attachments

Type "Attachment" at the left margin, two lines below the last line of the memorandum. For more than one attachment use the plural and specify the number, e.g., "3 Attachments."

What Copies To Make

1. Courtesy copy - Use Office of the Director letterhead;

2. Official file copy;

3. Copy to accompany the "Office of the Director Correspondence Tracking (DCT) System Profile Sheet" (if needed);

4. Copies for distribution outside OPM (if needed);

5. Copies for distribution within your organization or to other OPM components (if needed).

How to Show Distribution of Copies

Begin at the left margin, two lines below the last line of the memorandum or the attachment line. Type "cc:" followed by the distribution. For example:

cc: Director, Office of Congressional Relations

If you wish to send a copy but do not want to show distribution on the original, type "bcc:" followed by the distribution on all copies. For example:

bcc: General Counsel

How to Prepare an Envelope

Do not type or write special mailing instructions (e.g., Special Delivery, Registered, Certified, etc.) on the envelope for outside addressees.

Do not prepare an envelope for an OPM addressee. Use a buck slip and/or a messenger envelope.

Questions???

Call the Executive Secretariat, 606-1100.

MEMORANDUM FOR PATRICIA W. LATTIMORE
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
FOR ADMINISTRATION

FROM: JAMES B. KING
                          DIRECTOR

Subject: How to Type a Short
                          Memorandum

Center a short memorandum rather than bunching it at the

top of the page. Double space a memorandum, if it is only 1

paragraph long or has 10 or fewer lines. Use side margins of

1-1/2 to 2 inches.

Figure 9

Short Memorandums With One Paragraph

III-2-7

UNITED STATES

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

WASHINGTON. D.C. 20415

June 10, 1993

Your Reference:
cos
1503
5-18-93

MEMORANDUM FOR E. JOHN PREBIS
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

FROM: JAMES B. KING
                         DIRECTOR

Subject: Use of "Your Reference" Line

If an incoming memorandum requests that the reply contain a reference,

try to incorporate it into the subject line or the body of the letter.

If you cannot avoid using a "Your Reference" line, type the reference

exactly as it was given, with the date of the incoming letter. Place it on the

right-hand side of the page, two spaces below the date.

Figure 10

Short Memorandums With Two Paragraphs

To type second and succeeding pages, use plain bond. Type the name of the addressee at the left margin, 1 inch from the top edge of the paper. Skip a line and continue the text.

Type a complimentary close to a letter, but do not type a complimentary close to a memorandum.

5 Attachments

cc: Jean Barber, Associate Director
       for Personnel Systems and Oversight

Figure 15

Second Page of Long Memorandums

Chapter 3
Preparing Information
Memorandums for the Director

3-1. General Paper and Formatting Specifications

First, look at the figures on pages III-3-6 through III-3-8. They illustrate how an information memorandum for the Director should look. Then read the following to get answers to specific questions.

What Stationery to Use

Type the first page on OPM letterhead stationery. Type succeeding pages on plain bond paper.

Type Faces and Type Size

Most OPM correspondence is produced on computers that have access to both fixed and proportional fonts. Proportional fonts are easier to read (on paper) and save paper. Typefaces with serifs are considered more legible. Larger type is easier on the eyes.

Proportional serif fonts in 12 point type size are preferred. (Fonts with *Roman, Times,* or *Dutch* in their names are nearly always proportional serif. If your font doesn't specify number of points, select 10 cpi.)

Margins

For memorandums with a single paragraph or 10 or fewer lines, use side margins of 1-1/2 to 2 inches. For 11-20 lines, use 1-1/2 inches. For more than 20 lines, use a 1 inch side margin. Do not right justify.

Leave a 1 inch margin at the bottom of the page.

3-2. How to Type the Information Memorandum

Typing the Date

After the memorandum has been signed, carefully date stamp at the top center of the memorandum.

How to Type the "MEMORANDUM FOR" Lines

Begin at the left margin on line 15. Use all capital letters. Use the following as a guide:

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES B. KING
                           DIRECTOR

How to Type the "FROM" Line

Begin at the left margin, two lines below the last "FOR" line. Use all capital letters. Use the following as a guide:

FROM: CURTIS J. SMITH
                           ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
                               FOR RETIREMENT AND
                               INSURANCE

FROM: PATRICIA W. LATTIMORE
                           ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
                               FOR ADMINISTRATION

How to Type the "Subject" Line

Begin at the left margin, two lines below the last "FROM" line. Capitalize the first letter of each word (except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions unless these have four or more letters). Use the following samples as guides:

Subject: How to Type a Memorandum

Subject: How to Type a Letter From
                    Director King

Use the subject line to give the Director a brief summary of the
major "Who, What, Why, Where, and When" issues.

Subject: Talking Points for the Director's April 23, 1993,
                    Meeting with the Disabled American Veterans
                    to Discuss Extension of the Veterans Readjust-
                    ment Act

Subject: Talking points on FERS for Director's Appear-
                    ance at the XYZ Association Annual Meeting,
                    Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 18, 1993

Subject: Briefing Material for Director's Use in Prepar-
                    ing for March 15, 1993, House Appropriations
                    Committee Hearings

How to Type the Body of the Memorandum

Begin two lines below the last "SUBJECT" line.

Type headings flush with the left margin in "all caps."

Block indent subparagraphs five spaces. If subparagraphs are
numbered (or lettered, or otherwise highlighted), indent two more
spaces after the number and begin the text. Align the first word of
each line in the subparagraphs. Double space memorandums of 1
paragraph or 10 or fewer lines, and triple space between any para-
graphs. Single space all other memorandums. Double space be-
tween paragraphs.

How to Write the Body of the Memorandum

Keep it short -- no more than 1 1/2 pages.

Use "all caps" topic headings liberally. Headings (such as PUR-POSE, KEY PLAYERS/ATTENDEES, WHERE/HOW LONG, MAJOR POINTS, OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS AND RATION-ALE) make the material more easily digestible.

Favor the "bullet" or "telegraphic" style.

Use one brief sentence or phrase to state each major point, fact, position, rationale, or issue. Put supporting statements or secondary points in subparagraphs below the related major point.

If supporting data or further elaboration is necessary, attach it to the memorandum, behind appropriately labeled tabs.

How to Type the Second Page

Use plain bond paper. Start at the left margin, 1 inch from the top edge of the paper. Type the page number on this line at the right margin. Skip a line and continue the text.

How to Show that an Information Memorandum has Attachments

Type "Attachment" at the left margin, two lines below the last line of the memorandum. For more than one attachment use the plural and specify the number, e.g., "3 Attachments."

What Copies to Make

1. Official file copy.

2. Copies for distribution within your organization or to other OPM components (if needed).

How to Show Distribution of Copies

Begin at the left margin, two lines below the last line of the memorandum or the attachment line. Type "cc:" followed by the distribution. For example:

    cc: Director, Office of General Counsel

Questions???

Call the Executive Secretariat, 606-1100.

UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20415

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES B. KING
                           DIRECTOR

FROM: PATRICIA W. LATTIMORE
                           ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
                              FOR ADMINISTRATION

Subject: How to Write an Information
                           Memorandum for the Director

MAJOR POINTS:

A. Keep it short.

   - Maximum length 1-1/2 pages.

B. Use "bullet" or "telegraphic" style.

C. Make liberal use of subject headings.

   - Purpose is a good subject heading.

   - So is Key Players/Attendees.

D. State each point in one brief sentence or phrase.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

A. Immediate.

B. Material in process which does not meet requirements will be returned.

Figure 16 - Short Information Memorandums (One Page)

UNITED STATES

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20415

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES B. KING
DIRECTOR

FROM: CURTIS J. SMITH
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
FOR RETIREMENT AND INSURANCE

Subject: Talking Points for April 27 Meeting with John Smith,
Director, U. S. Office of Security, to Discuss Need for More
Widget Controllers

WHERE/HOW LONG: Director's Conference Room, 10-11 a.m.

BACKGROUND:

A. Governmentwide widget controller ceiling is set by law.

   - No possibility that legislation to increase ceiling will be enacted.

B. OPM allocates widget controller positions annually.

   Allocation period is September 30/October 1.

C. What we know about the Security Office situation.

   - Office has severe widget processing backlog.

   - Current allocation for Security office is 200; 10 percent of all Government widget controllers. Handles 7 percent of all widget processing.

Figure 17 - Long Information Memorandums (Two Pages)

OPM POSITION:

A. OPM will increase next year's widget controller allocation if Smith can make a good case.

B. Suggest 3-month detail of controllers from U.S. Department of Treaties (which is temporarily overstaffed).

C. Suggest Smith restructure jobs to allow more use of widget technicians (no ceiling on these positions).

D. Suggest automation of widget processing. (U.S. Office of International Affairs increased productivity 25 percent by automating.)

LIKELY SMITH ARGUMENTS:

A. Will have some data to support contention that he needs widget controllers now.

   - Response: OPM will review data, let him know if more justification necessary, will make decision quickly.

B. May not be receptive to suggestions for automation and job restructuring.

   - Nevertheless OPM should push this. Reports indicate Office has problems in both these areas.

C. Will probably go for details from Department of Treaties as stop gap measure.

3 Attachments

cc: General Counsel

Figure 18

Second Page of Long Information Memorandums

PART IV
Organizing and Submitting Materials to the Director

Part IV of the *Good Writer's Guide* is designed to provide guidance on organizing and submitting materials for the Director's information, signature or review. While the instructions are specifically intended for OPM staff to use when preparing material for the Director, they may also be helpful in preparing similar material for others' review.

Throughout these parts the term "Director" refers also to OPM's Deputy Director.

You do not have to follow these guidelines when preparing other material. However, Associate Directors, Regional Directors, and Heads of Offices may adopt portions of these guidelines for use within their organizations.

Chapter 1
General Information

1-1. Meeting Deadlines

If you are preparing a response to incoming correspondence, check the Office of the Director Correspondence Tracking System Profile Sheet. The Profile Sheet, which is attached to the Director's incoming correspondence by the Executive Secretariat, specifies the due date. You must deliver the completed correspondence package to the Executive Secretariat by the due date.

If you cannot meet the due date, prepare an interim response that acknowledges receipt of the incoming letter. (Interim responses do not necessarily have to be signed by the Director. Check with the Executive Secretariat (606-1000) to determine who should sign the interim response, if it is not clear.)

Requests for the Director to speak at or attend a conference should be submitted at least 30 days prior to the event. Talking points for the Director's use at the event should be sent at least 2 weeks in advance. Talking points for other meetings are due by 10 a.m. on the day prior to the meeting.

If your material does not have a due date, deliver it to the Executive Secretariat at least 5 working days before action by the Director is required.

1-2. Getting Clearances

Clearance procedures vary according to type of package. See Part IV, Chapters 2, 3, and 4 for additional information.

How to Expedite Clearances

Give each reviewing office a copy of the package. Ask it to complete the "clearances" sections of the "Director's Decision Summary" (OPM Form 1480-A) and OPM Internal Review Form (OPM Form 1480) and return them directly to you. (See Part IV, Chapter 5, for more information on these forms.)

When the clearance copies are returned, remove clearance sheets and attach them to the "original" Director's Decision Summary. Note on the original which offices have cleared the package.

What to Do When Another Office
Will Not Clear the Package

Try to obtain a consensus. If you cannot make the differing viewpoints a part of the package, refer to them in the "Director's Decision Summary" and include them in the background material.

1-3. When to Use a Red and White Folder

Red and white folders labeled "Immediate Attention" are available. Use them if:

1. You need to draw attention to material which requires immediate action, **or**

2. The incoming correspondence you received from the Executive Secretariat came in a red and white folder. Give these "red folder" items priority attention. Correspondence assigned by the Executive Secretariat for preparation of a response by the Director, Deputy Director, or Office Heads is due in the Executive Secretariat no later than 14 calendar days from the date assigned.

Do not overuse these folders. Use them **only if** fast action is needed to comply with internal or external requirements or to avoid severe repercussions to OPM.

Chapter 2
Correspondence

2-1. Checklist of Pieces You Will Need

Pieces You Must Prepare

- [ ] Letter or memorandum (with copies) to be signed by Director

- [ ] Envelope(s)

- [ ] "Director's Decision Summary" (OPM Form 1480-A)

- [ ] "OPM Internal Review Form" (OPM Form 1480)

- [ ] "Routing and Transmittal Slip" (Optional Form 41)

Other Pieces You Will Need

- [ ] Blue and white folder, labeled "Material for Executive Review," or red and white folder, labeled "Immediate Attention,"

- [ ] Protective plastic covers, labeled "Executive Correspondence"

- [ ] Red arrows, labeled "Sign Here", or signature tabs

- [ ] Incoming letter

- [ ] Office of the Director Correspondence Tracking (DCT) System Profile Sheet (if you received this with the incoming letter)

- [ ] Background material (if needed)

2-2. How to Assemble the Package

Place the material in the blue and white folder labeled "Material for Executive Review." If the matter is urgent, use a red and white "Immediate Attention" folder.

What Goes on the Right Side of the Folder

Put the following items in the right side pocket in the following order, from top to bottom:

1. Outgoing letter, covered by plastic executive correspondence cover (use red arrows, labeled "Sign Here" or signature tabs)

2. Courtesy copy (use Office of the Director letterhead)

3. Enclosures (if any) (do not staple enclosures to the letter)

4. Other copies that must be signed by the Director (if any)

5. Incoming letter (the original, not a copy).

Use **BINDER CLIPS** to hold all the items together.

What Goes on the Left Side of the Folder

Put the following items in the left side pocket in the following order, from top to bottom:

1. "Director's Decision Summary" (OPM Form 1480-A)

2. "OPM Internal Review Form" (OPM Form 1480)

3. Official file copy (include copy of enclosures)

4. Background material (if any)

5. DCT Profile Sheet, **stapled** to a letterhead copy of the proposed response and a copy of the incoming correspondence

6. Properly completed envelope(s).

Use **BINDER CLIPS** to hold all the items together.

What Goes on the Top of the Folder

Place the routing slip(s) on top of the folder.

What Does Not Go in the Folder

Do not include OPM file copies of outgoing material, except those specified above, in the folder. Hold on to them until the package is signed.

How to Handle Bulky Enclosures

You may hold on to a bulky enclosure until the correspondence is signed if:

1. The Director does not need to see the enclosure, and

2. The correspondence is **not** urgent. (Urgent correspondence may not be returned to you for mailing.) (For a definition of "urgent", see page IV-1-3, paragraph 1-3, "When To Use A Red and White Folder.")

2-3. How to Clear the Package

Route the package through your Associate Director, Regional Director, or Office Head to the Executive Secretariat prior to obtaining other clearances. If you include a completed buck slip, the Executive Secretariat will forward the package to the next office that needs to clear it. After all clearances have been obtained, the package goes back to the Executive Secretariat.

2-4. What to Do After the Correspondence is Signed

How to Date and Mail Correspondence

After the package is returned to you by the Executive Secretariat, enter the date on the original and copies of outgoing material. Then, put the outgoing correspondence in its envelope and send it, along with any special mailing instructions, to the mailroom.

Do not type or write special mailing instructions (e.g., Special Delivery, Registered, Certified) on the envelope. If the letter requires a return receipt, complete a return receipt form. (You may get these from the mailroom.)

What to Do With the Rest of the Package

Attach the incoming letter, the Director's Decision Summary, the Internal Review Form, and the background materials to the copy of the correspondence. Keep as the official file for any future reference.
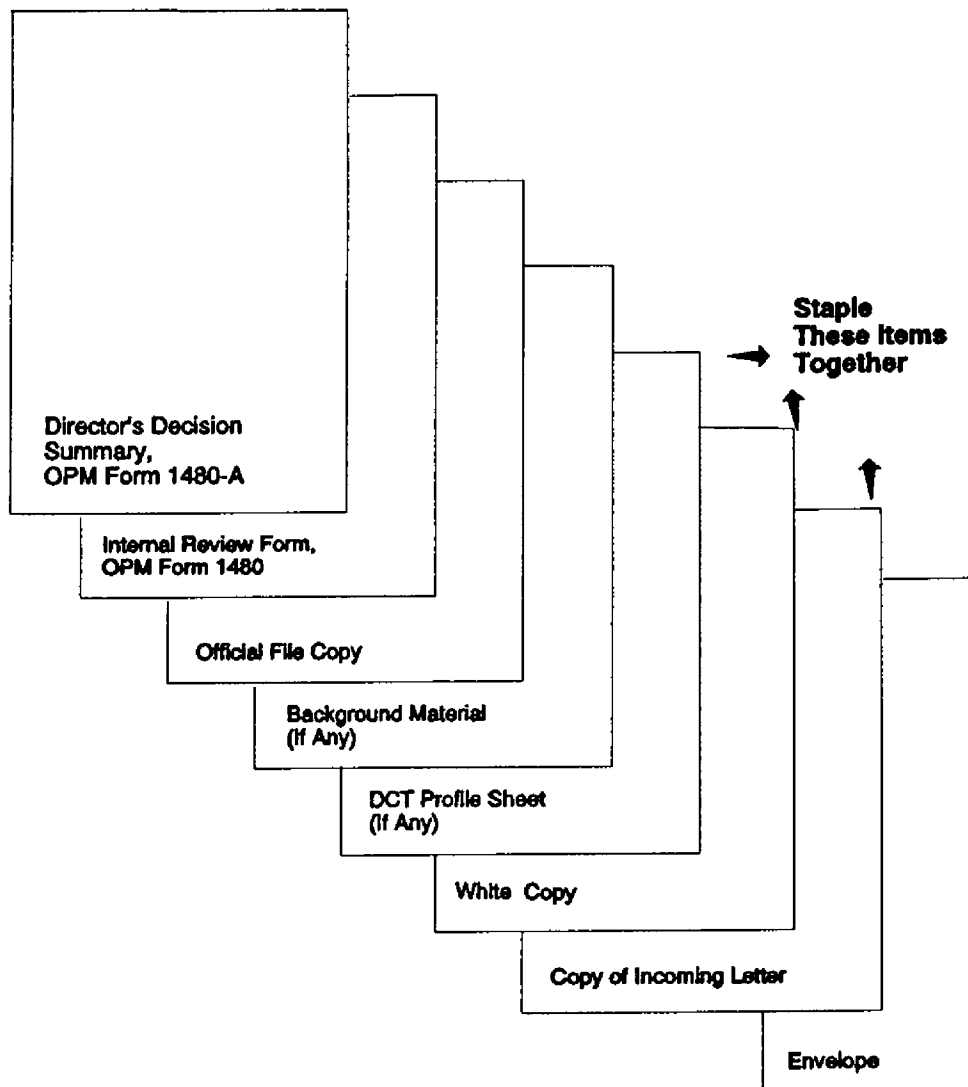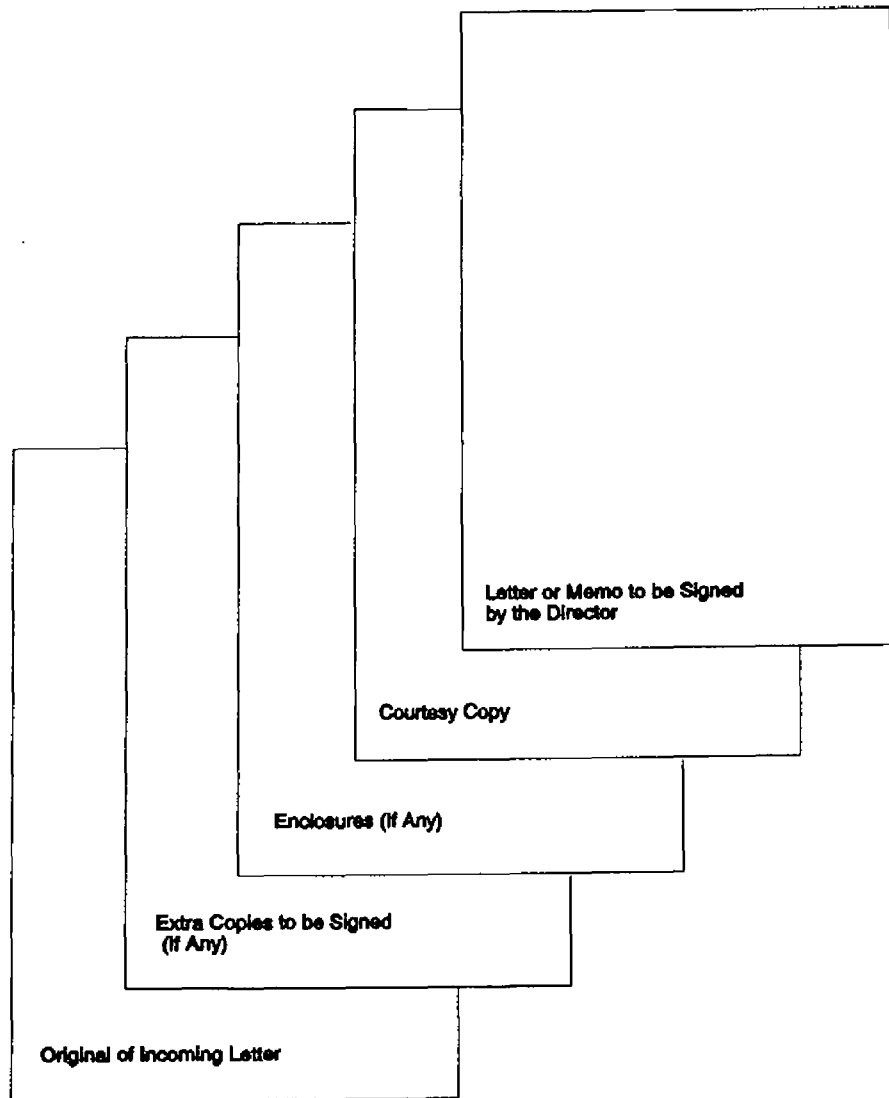
Blue and White Folder

MATERIAL FOR EXECUTIVE REVIEW

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION
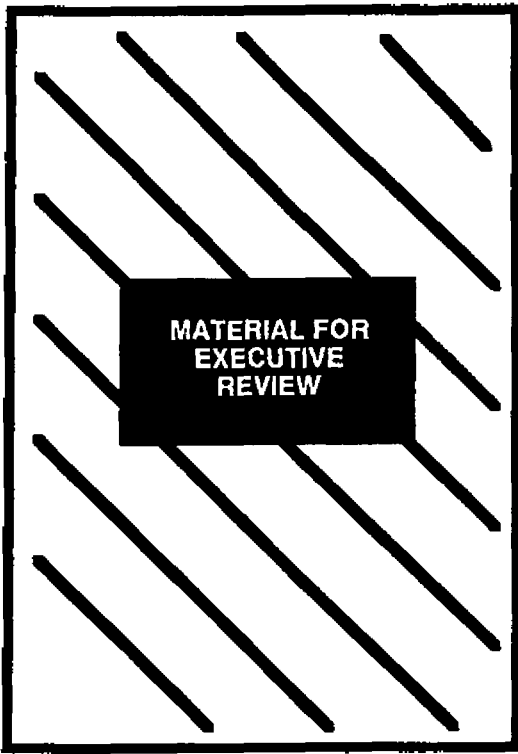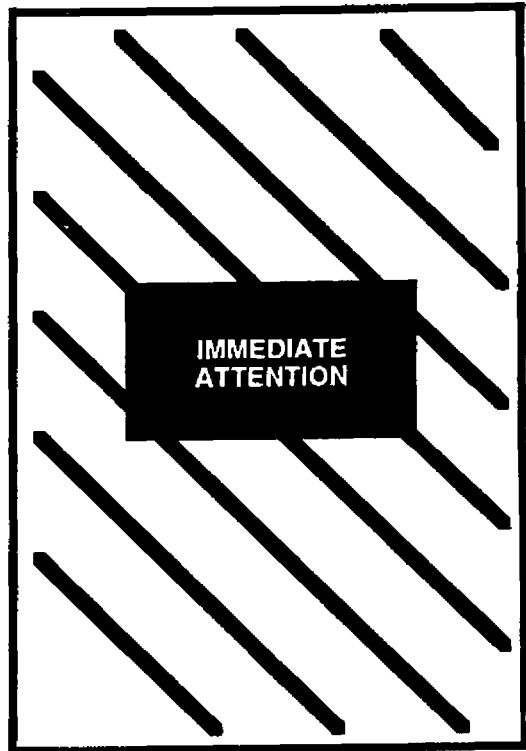
Red and White Folder

Figure 19

Folder

Director's Decision
Summary,
OPM Form 1480-A

Internal Review Form,
OPM Form 1480

Official File Copy

Background Material
(If Any)

DCT Profile Sheet
(If Any)

White Copy

Copy of Incoming Letter

Envelope

Staple
These Items
Together

Figure 20

Left Side of Folder

Letter or Memo to be Signed
by the Director

Courtesy Copy

Enclosures (If Any)

Extra Copies to be Signed
(If Any)

Original of Incoming Letter

Figure 21

Right Side of Folder

Chapter 3
Decision Memorandums

3-1. Checklist of Pieces You Will Need

Pieces You Must Prepare

☐ Material to be signed by the Director (e.g., letters, memorandums, FPM bulletins, AM supplements, employee letters, etc., with appropriate copies)

or

Material which requires the Director's approval prior to publication

☐ Envelope(s) (if needed)

☐ "Director's Decision Summary" (OPM Form 1480-A)

☐ "Internal Review Form" (OPM Form 1480)

☐ "Routing and Transmittal Slip" (Optional Form 41)

Other Pieces You Will Need

☐ Blue and white folder, labeled "Material for Executive Review", or red and white folder, labeled "Immediate Attention"

☐ Protective plastic cover, labeled "Executive Correspondence"

☐ Red arrows, labeled "Sign Here" or signature tabs

☐ Background material (if needed)

3-2. How to Assemble the Package

-- See Figures 22-24 on pages IV-3-5 through IV-3-7 --

Place the material in the blue and white folder, labeled "Material for Executive Review." If the matter is urgent, use a red and white "Immediate Attention" folder.

What Goes on the Right Side of the Folder

Put the following items in the right side pocket in the following order, from top to bottom:

1. Material for the Director's signature or approval, covered by a plastic executive correspondence cover (Use red "Sign Here" arrows.);

2. Attachments (if any) (do not staple attachments to other material); and

3. Other copies that must be signed by the Director (if any).

Use **BINDER CLIPS** to hold all the items together.

What Goes on the Left Side of the Folder

Put the following items in the left side pocket in the following order, from top to bottom:

1. "Director's Decision Summary" (OPM Form 1480-A);

2. "Internal Review Form" (OPM Form 1480);

3. Official file copy;

4. Background material (if any); and

5. Envelopes (if any).

Use **BINDER CLIPS** to hold all the items together.

What Goes on the Top of the Folder

Place the routing slip (Optional Form 41) on top of the folder.

3-3. How to Clear the Package

Deliver decision packages to the Executive Secretariat **prior to** obtaining other clearances. The Executive Secretariat will forward the package to the next office that needs to clear it as shown on Optional Form 41, Routing and Transmittal Slip. After all clearances have been obtained, the package goes back to the Executive Secretariat. The package must be back to the Executive Secretariat 5 days before action by the Director is required.

3-4. What to Do After the Package is Signed or Approved

For **correspondence,** follow the procedures on page IV-2-4.

For the central office: Send **regional material** to the Internal Distribution Unit. Identical material intended for distribution to all regions may be sent to the Internal Distribution Unit in bulk, accompanied by information as to how many copies go to each region.

3-5. What to Do When Material Is Approved By the Director, But Signed By Someone Else

Assemble the package as described in this Chapter. Follow the rules for preparing letters and memorandums as explained in Part III. In the "Director's Decision Summary" explain the issues that make it necessary for the Director to approve the package.
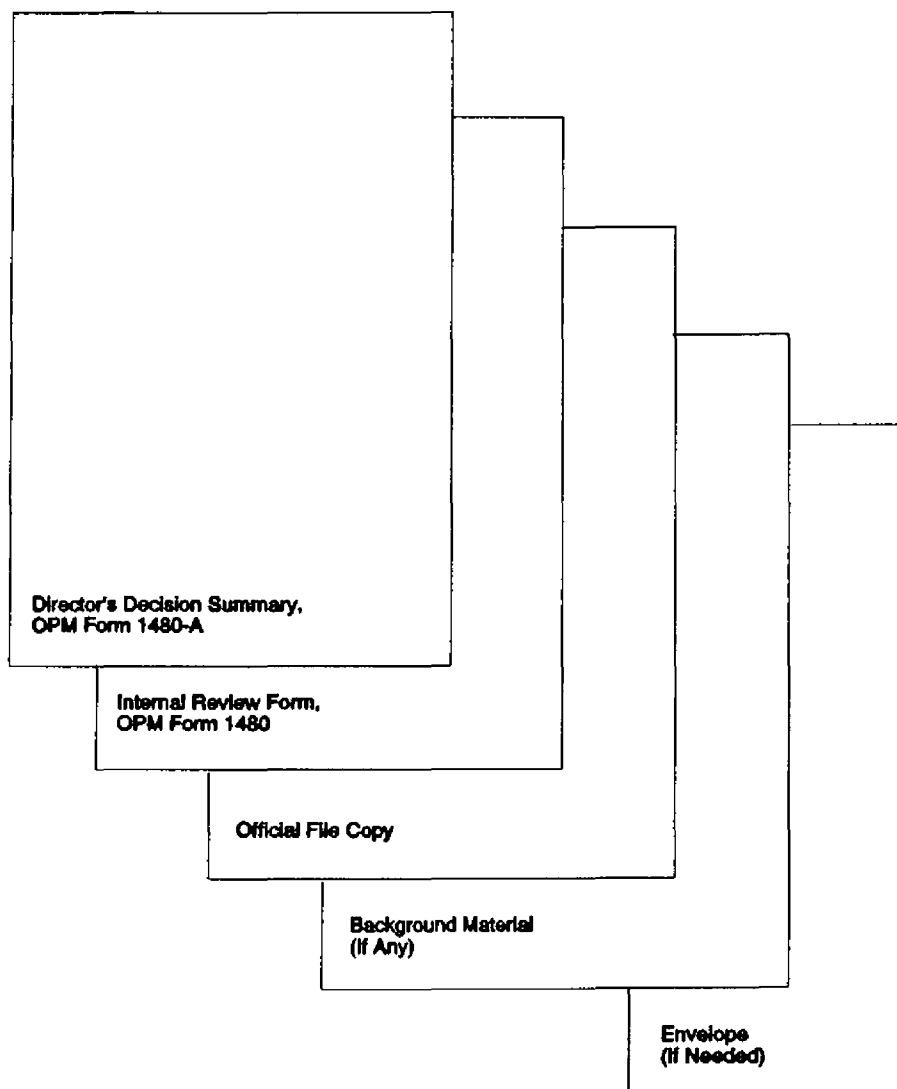
Blue and White Folder

MATERIAL FOR
EXECUTIVE
REVIEW
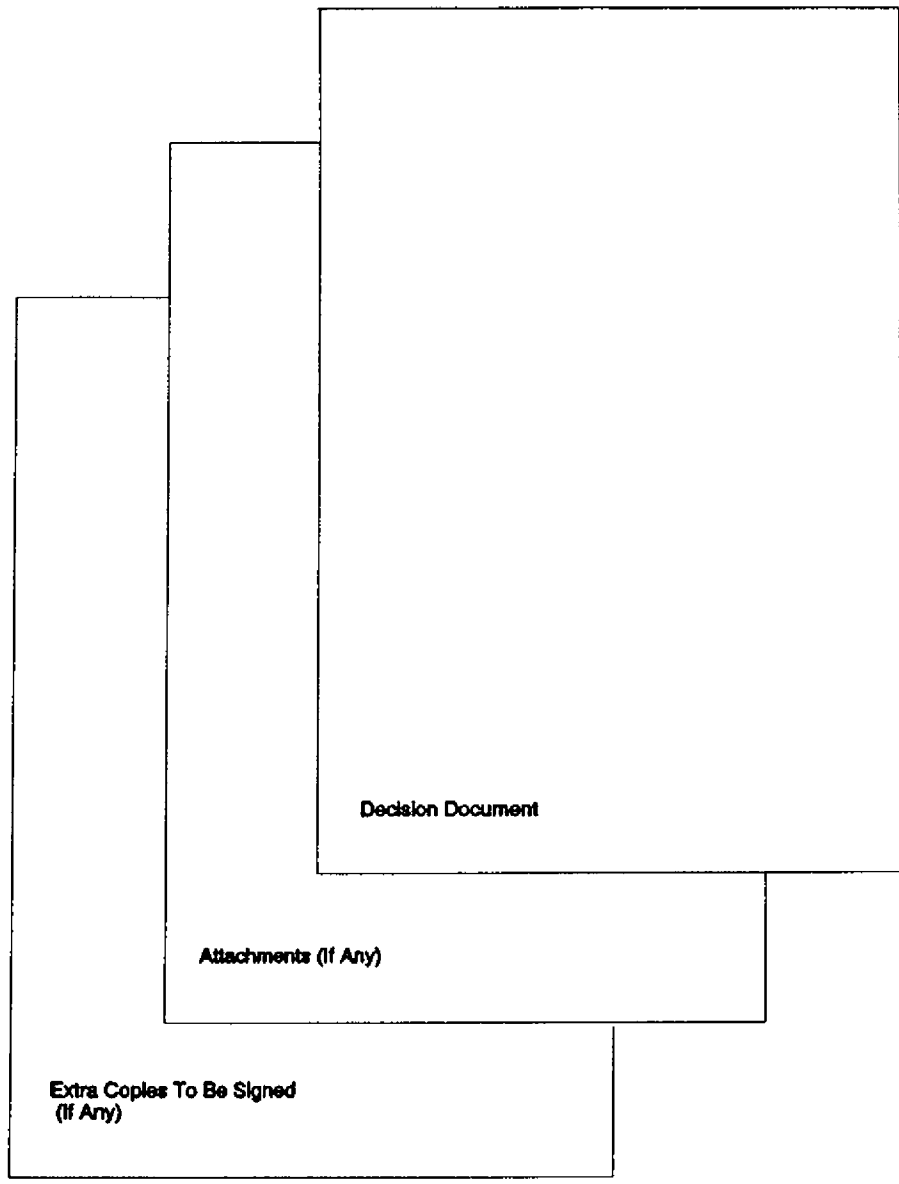
IMMEDIATE
ATTENTION
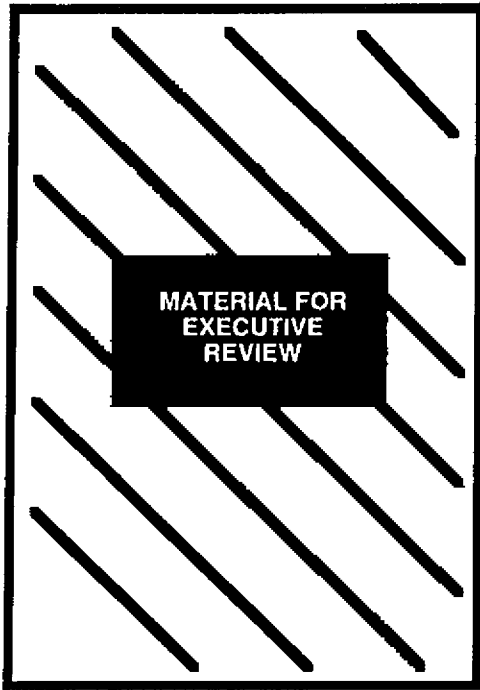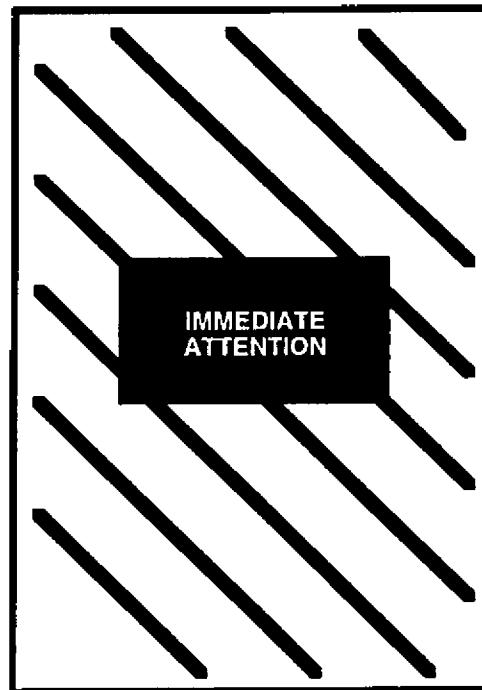
Red and White Folder

Figure 22

Folder

Director's Decision Summary,
OPM Form 1480-A

Internal Review Form,
OPM Form 1480

Official File Copy

Background Material
(If Any)

Envelope
(If Needed)

Figure 23

Left Side of Folder

Decision Document

Attachments (If Any)

Extra Copies To Be Signed
(If Any)

Figure 24

Right Side of Folder

Chapter 4
Information Memorandums

4-1. Checklist of Pieces You Will Need

Pieces You Must Prepare

☐ Information memorandums, "talking points," or other material requiring the Director's personal attention

☐ "Director's Decision Summary" (OPM Form 1480-A)

☐ "Internal Review Form" (OPM Form 1480)

☐ "Routing and Transmittal Slip" (Optional Form 41)

Other Pieces You Will Need

☐ Blue and white folder, labeled "Material for Executive Review," or red and white folder, labeled "Immediate Attention"

☐ Background material (if needed)

4-2. How to Assemble the Package

-- See Figures 25-27 on pages IV-4-3 through IV-4-5 --

Place the material in the blue and white folder, labeled "Material for Executive Review." If the matter is urgent, use a red and white "Immediate Attention" folder.

What Goes on the Right Side of the Folder

Material requiring the Director's personal attention, e.g., talking points, information memorandums, discussion papers, etc.

What Goes on the Left Side of the Folder

1. "Director's Decision Summary" (OPM Form 1480-A);

2. "Internal Review Form" (OPM Form 1480); and

3. Background material (if any).

Use **BINDER CLIPS** to hold the items together.

What Goes on the Top of the Folder

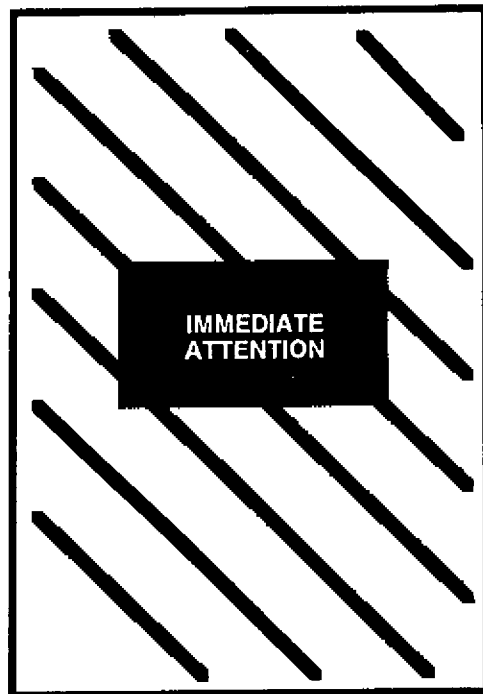Place the Optional Form 41, Routing and Transmittal Slip, on top of the folder.

4-3. How to Clear the Package

You do not have to clear an information memorandum outside your organization. Send it directly to the Executive Secretariat.

If the material contained in the information memorandum is of interest to other OPM offices, send them copies. Indicate on the Director's Decision Summary "copies provided to [name(s)]."
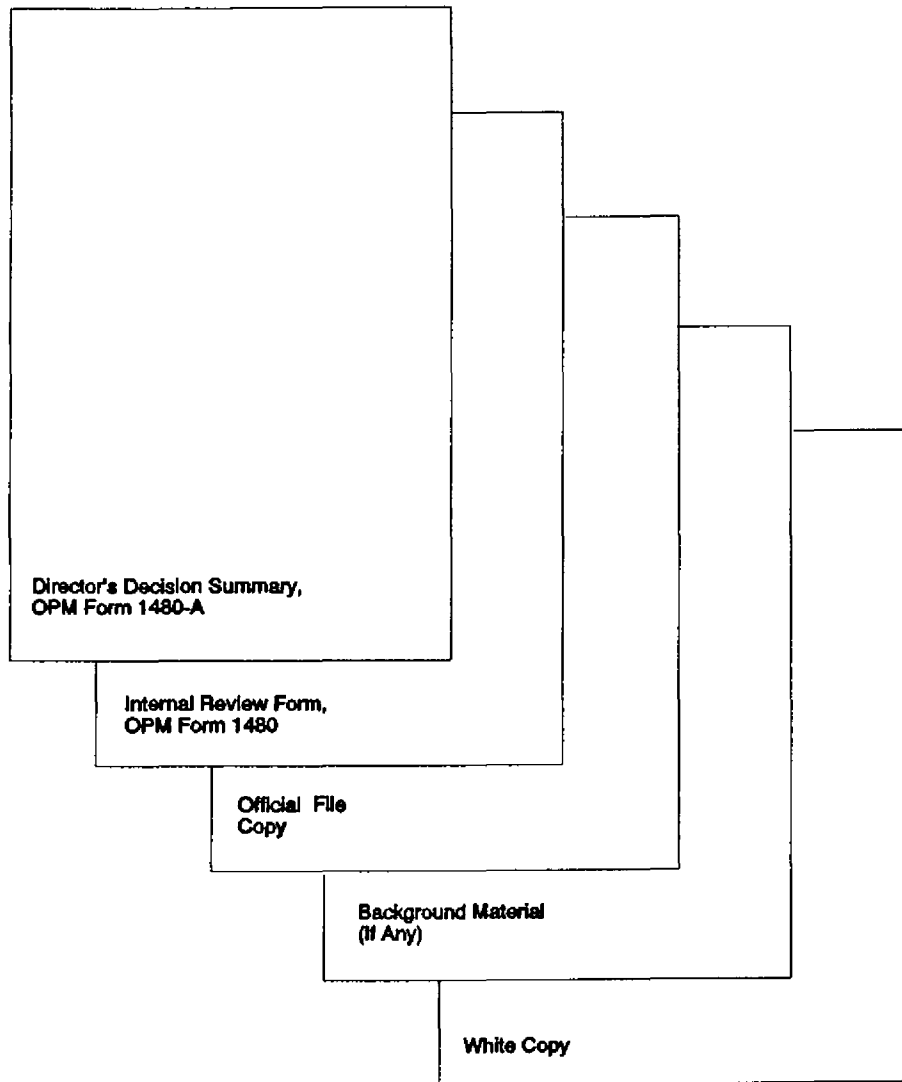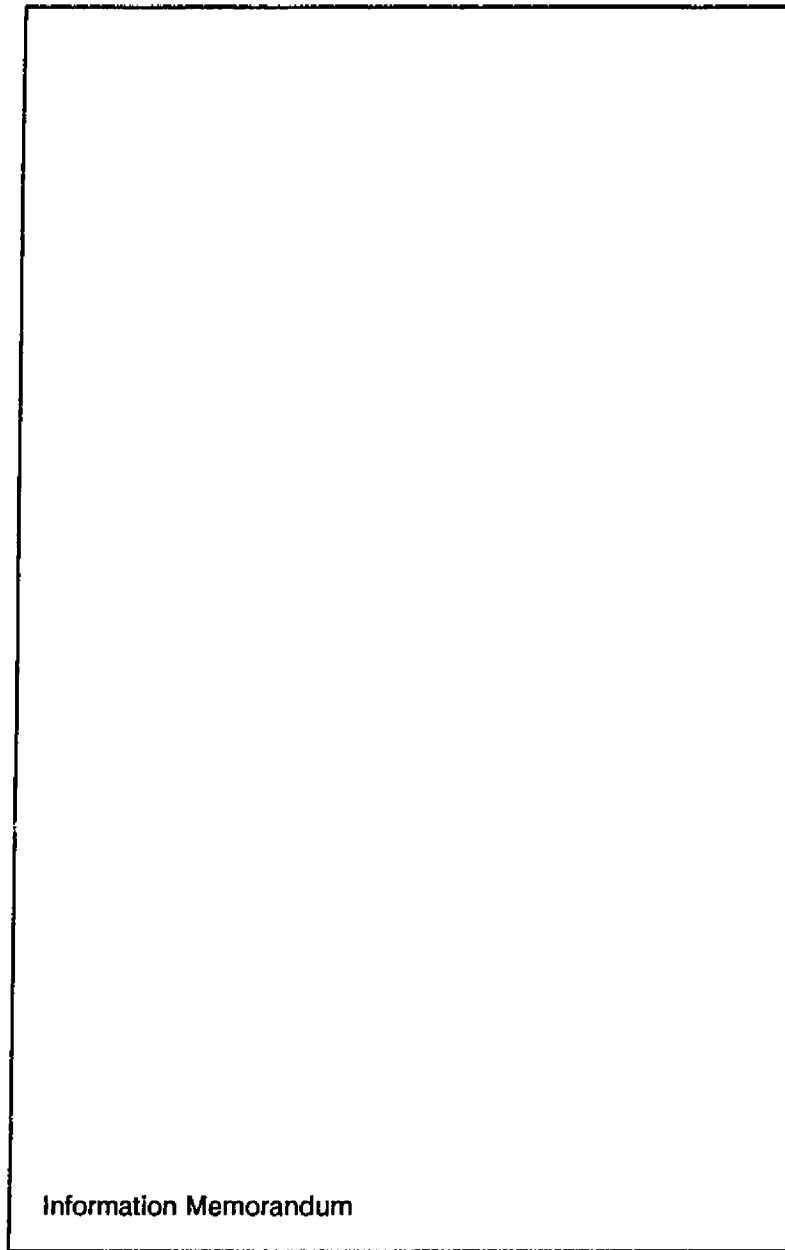
Blue and White Folder

MATERIAL FOR EXECUTIVE REVIEW

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION
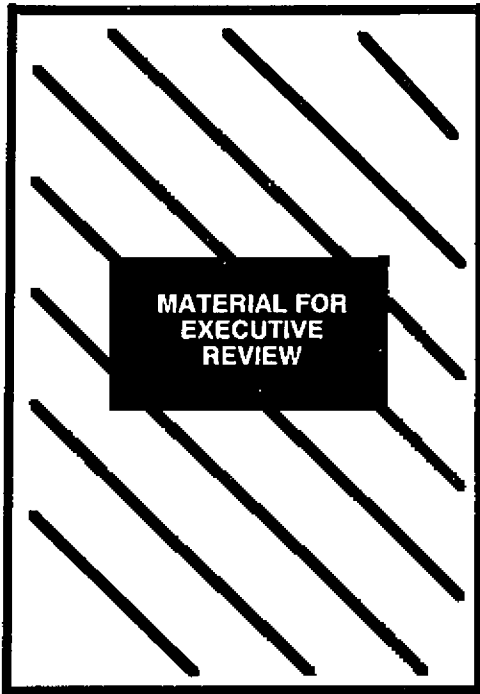
Red and White Folder

Figure 25

Folder

Director's Decision Summary,
OPM Form 1480-A

Internal Review Form,
OPM Form 1480

Official File
Copy

Background Material
(If Any)

White Copy

Figure 26

Left Side of Folder

Information Memorandum

Figure 27

Right Side of Folder

CHAPTER 5
How to Assemble
the Folder

5-1. How to Prepare "Right Side" Pieces

The "right side" pieces are documents that the Director has to sign or approve prior to dissemination, and other material, such as information memoranda and "talking points" that require the Director's personal attention.

Obtain information on preparing right side material as follows:

Letters for the Director's signature	Follow the guidelines contained in Part III.
Memorandums for the Director's signature	Follow the guidelines contained in Part III.
Information memorandums for the Director's review	Follow the guidelines contained in Part III.
Administrative Manual material	See AM Supplement 45-1, The OPM Issuance System, Chapter 3, or contact:
	Publishing Management Branch Publications Services Division Office of Procurement and Administrative Services Administration Group

Employee Letters	See AM Supplement 45-1, The OPM Issuance System, Chapter 3, or contact:
	Issuance Systems Office Publications Services Division Office of Procurement and Administrative Services Administration Group
Federal Personnel Manual	See AM Supplement 45-1, The OPM Issuance System, Chapter 2, or contact:
	Issuance Systems Office Publications Services Division Office of Procurement and Administrative Services Administration Group
Federal Register material, including regulations and notices	Contact the: Issuance Systems Office Publications Services Division Office of Procurement and Administrative Services Administration Group

5-2. How to Prepare the "Left Side" Pieces

1. How to Prepare the Director's Decision Summary (OPM Form 1480-A)

Use the Director's Decision Summary to tell the Director, as concisely as possible, what the package is about. Look at Figure 28 on page IV-5-5. It shows a Director's Decision Summary. Printed copies are available from the Issuance Systems Office. If you wish to complete the form on your computer, disk copies are available from the Publishing Management Branch.

How to Complete the "Handling/Type" Block

Check the "Urgent," "Expedite," or "Regular" box, as appropriate. Do not overuse the "Urgent" and "Expedite" boxes.

Complete "due date information" if the package needs action by a specific date to comply with internal or external requirements. Explain these requirements briefly. Don't assign an arbitrary deadline.

Complete "special handling instructions" if the package needs some kind of unusual treatment (for example, "hand carry to addressee by COB today").

Check the "Decision Memo," "Information Memo," "Correspondence," or "Clearance" box, as appropriate.

2. How to Prepare OPM Form 1480, "Internal Review Form"

Look at Figure 29 on page IV-5-6. It shows a sample of OPM Form 1480. Use this form to record staff reviews below the associate director/office head level. Printed copies of this form are available from the Issuance Systems Office. If you wish to complete the form on computer, disk copies are available from the Publishing Management Branch.

Use block 1, "Title and Description of Package," to label the form precisely enough to allow readers to identify the package it accompanies. In block 2, specify the office responsible for writing and compiling the package. Block 3 should state the name, room number, and telephone number of the person the Executive Secretariat should return the package to after the Director has signed it.

3. Background Material

Include as background material information that would be useful to the Director and staff when they look beyond the summary contained in the "Director's Decision Summary." Appropriate background material includes such things as copies of relevant laws or regulations and copies of prior correspondence or issue papers relating to the subject at hand. Also include GAO reports, legislation, or other material that has been referred to in the submission.

In most cases, background material has to be gathered rather than prepared. If it is necessary to prepare an original background paper, see Part III, Chapter 3, Guide to Preparing Information Memorandums for the Director.

4. How to Prepare the Routing Slip

Use the "Routing and Transmittal Slip" (Optional Form 41) to indicate desired routing. If a package has a deadline, say so in the remarks block, as well as on the Director's Decision Summary (Due Date Information).

Do not indicate clearance on the routing slip. Do not use it as the only place to transmit any information to the Director or the Director's immediate staff. These buck slips are sometimes lost in clearance.

The routing slip going to the Director is completed as follows:

1. Executive Secretariat, Room 5319
2. Deputy Director, Room 5518
3. Executive Secretariat, Room 5319
4. Chief of Staff, Room 5304
5. Director, Room 5AO9
6. Executive Secretariat, Room 5319
7. Your Associate Director/Office Head, Room_____

If the material contains Federal Personnel Manual or Federal Register material, change the routing as follows:

7. Issuance System Office, Room 1308

Director's Decision Summary

Handling:	Special Handling Instructions:	Type:
☐ Urgent (Handcarry) ☐ Expedite (Time-Sensitive) ☐ Regular	☐ Attention:	☐ Decision Memo ☐ Information Memo ☐ Correspondence ☐ Clearance

Due Date Information:

Summary and Recommendation:

Prepared By: *(Name and Telephone Number)*

Decision:

☐ Approved   ☐ Disapproved   ☐ Other:

Director	Date Signed	Acting Deputy Director	Date Signed

Clearances															
X	Org.	Initials	Date Signed	X	Org.	Initials	Date Signed	X	Org.	Initials	Date Signed	X	Org.	Initials	Date Signed
	AG				OCR				OIG				EXEC. SEC.		
	IG				OIA				WASC				ASST/ DEP. DIR.		
	RIG				OGC				OC				ACTING DEP. DIR.		
	CEG				HRDG				DIR./ POLICY				CHIEF OF STAFF		
	PSOG				ISO				CFO						

REPRODUCE LOCALLY

OPM Form 1480-A (Rev. 5/93)
Prior Editions Unusable

Figure 28 - Director's Decision Summary

Internal Review Form

1 Title and Description of Package *(FPM Letter, AM Supplement, etc.)*

2. Originating Office/Group

3 Return to.

Name	Room Number	Telephone Number

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Packages To Be Approved By The Director Or Deputy Director:** Use this form to record all reviews below final approval level. Record final approvals on OPM Form 1480-A, Director's Decision Summary.
   Packages That Will Not Be Forwarded To The Director Or Deputy Director: Use this form to record all reviews and clearances.
2. Review this package if a check appears by the name of your organization.
3. Enter "Comments Attached" next to your signature if comments are made.

X	ORG	SIGNATURE	DATE	X	ORG	SIGNATURE	DATE	X	ORG	SIGNATURE	DATE
	AG				RIG				OIA		
	CEG				OCR				OIG		
	PSOG				HRDG				WASC		
	IG				OGC				OTHER		

U.S. Office of Personnel Management

OPM Form 1480 (Rev.12/90)

Figure 29 - Internal Review Form

PART V

Forms of Address

Part V
Forms of Address

When using a salutation and closing, follow the models of address in this Part. Use them as patterns for other addresses.

Address all Presidential appointees and Federal and State elected officials, as "Honorable." As a general rule, do not address county and city officials, except mayors, as "Honorable." A person once entitled to "Governor," "Judge," "General," "Honorable," "His Excellency," or a similar distinctive title may retain the title for life.

Observe the following general rules when addressing communications to individuals by name and/or title:

1. Spell out titles in the address, except "Dr.," "Mr.," "Mrs.," and "Ms." Do not use two titles with the same meaning with the one name; for example, "Dr. Paul White," or "Paul White, M.D.," but not "Dr. Paul White, M.D."

2. Do everything you can to determine the gender of the addressee.

3. For women, use "Ms." unless you are aware the individual prefers "Mrs." or "Miss."

4. In some cases a person holding a Ph.D. degree prefers to be addressed as "Dr." (followed by the name) rather than as "The Reverend," "Dean," "Professor," etc.

When closing a letter, use "Sincerely" except:

1. "Respectfully" for the President of the United States.

2. "Very truly yours" for ambassadors, both foreign and American.

ADDRESSEE	ADDRESS	SALUTATION
President William J. Clinton	The President The White House Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mr. President:
Spouse of the President	Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton The White House Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mrs. Clinton:
Assistant to the President	Honorable *(full name)* Assistant to the President The White House Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mr. *(surname)*: Dear Mr. *(surname)*:
Former President	Honorable *(full name)* *local address)* 00000	Dear President *(surname)*:
Vice President Albert Gore, Jr. *(also President of the Senate)*	Honorable Albert Gore, Jr. The Vice President of the United States Washington, DC 20501	Dear Mr. Vice President:

The Chief Justice	The Chief Justice of
	   the United States
	The Supreme Court of
	   the United States
	Washington, DC 20543
		Dear Mr. Chief Justice:
		Dear Madam Chief
		   Justice:

Associate Justice	Mr. Justice *(surname)* Madame Justice *(surname)* The Supreme Court of the United States Washington, DC 20543	Dear Mr. Justice: Dear Madame Justice:
President of the Senate *(Vice President of the United States)*	Honorable Albert Gore, Jr. President of the Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Mr. President:

ADDRESSEE	ADDRESS	SALUTATION
United States Senator	Honorable *(full name)* United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Senator *(surname)*:
(local address)	Honorable *(full name)* United States Senator *(local address)* 00000	
U.S. Representative	Honorable *(full name)* House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Representative *(surname)*:
(local address)	Honorable *(full name)* Member, United States House of Representatives *(local address)* 00000	
Committee Chairman Senate	Honorable (*(full name)* Chairman, Committee on *(committee name)* United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Mr. Chairman: Dear Madam Chairman:
Committee Chairman House	Honorable *(full name)* Chairman, Committee on *(committee name)* House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr. Chairman: Dear Madam Chairman:
Subcommittee Chairman Senate	Honorable *(full name)* Chairman, Subcommittee on *(name)* United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Senator *(surname)*:
Subcommittee Chairman House	Honorable *(full name)* Chairman, Subcommittee on *(name)* House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Representative *(surname)*:

ADDRESSEE	ADDRESS	SALUTATION
Speaker of the House	Honorable *(full name)* Speaker of the House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr. Speaker: Dear Madam Speaker:
Cabinet *(generally)*	Honorable *(full name)* Secretary of *(name)* Washington, DC 00000	Dear Secretary *(surname)*:
(military title)	Honorable James D. Hot Secretary of Energy	Dear Admiral Hot:

Attorney General	Honorable *(full name)*
	Attorney General
		Dear Mr. Attorney
		  General:
		Dear Madam Attorney
		  General:

Deputy Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Under Secretaries	Honorable *(full name)* Deputy Secretary of *(department name)*	Dear Mr. *(surname)*: Dear Ms. *(surname)*:
Heads of Agencies	Honorable *(full name)* Comptroller General of the United States General Accounting Office Washington, DC 20548	Dear Mr. *(surname)*: Dear Ms. *(surname)*:

Special Case
Postmaster General
	Honorable *(full name)*
	Postmaster General
	Washington, DC 20260
		Dear Mr. Postmaster
		  General
		Dear Madam Postmaster
		  General:

American Ambassador	Honorable *(full name)* American Ambassador *(City, Country)*	Sir: Madam:
American Consul General or American Consul	*(full name)* American Consul General *(or American Consul)* *(City, Country)*	Dear Mr. *(surname)*: Dear Madam *(surname)*:

ADDRESSEE	ADDRESS	SALUTATION
Foreign Ambassador in US	His/Her *(full name)* Ambassador of *(Country)* *(local address)* 00000	Excellency:
United States Representative to the UN or OAS	Honorable *(full name)* United States Representative to the United Nations (or Organization of American States) *(local address)* 00000	Sir: Madam:
Governor of State	Honorable *(full name)* Governor of *(name of State)* *(City, State)* 00000	Dear Governor *(surname)*:
Lieutenant Governor	Honorable *(full name)* Lieutenant Governor of *(name of State)* *(City, State)* 00000	Dear Mr. *(surname)*: Dear Ms. *(surname)*:
State Senator	Honorable *(full name)* *(name of State)* Senate *(City, State)* 00000	Dear Senator *(surname)*:
State Representative, Assemblyman, or Delegate	Honorable *(full name)* *(name of State)* House of Representatives (or Assembly or House of Delegates) *(City, State)* 00000	Dear Representative *(surname)*:

In most States, the lower branch of the legislature is the House of Representatives. In some States, such as California, New York, New Jersey, Nevada, and Wisconsin, the lower house is known as the Assembly. In others, such as Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, it is known as the House of Delegates. Nebraska has a one-house legislature. Its members are called Senators.

Mayor	Honorable *(full name)* Mayor of *(name of City)* *(City, State)* 00000	Dear Mayor *(surname)*:

ADDRESSEE	ADDRESS	SALUTATION
Protestant Clergy	The Right Reverend *(full name)* Bishop of *(name)* *(local address)* 00000	Dear Bishop *(surname):*
	The Reverend *(full name)* *(Title), (name of Church)* *(local address)* 00000	Dear Mr. *(surname):* Dear Ms. *(surname):*
Catholic Clergy	His Eminence *(first name)* Cardinal *(surname)* Archbishop of *(Diocese)* (local address) 00000	Dear Cardinal *(surname):*
	The Most Reverend *(full name)* Archbishop of *(Diocese)* (local address) 00000	Dear Archbishop *(surname):*
	The Most Reverend *(full name)* Bishop of *(City)* (local address) 00000	Dear Bishop *(surname):*
	The Right Reverend Monsignor *(full name)* *(local address)* 00000	Dear Monsignor *(surname):*
	The Very Reverend Monsignor *(full name)* *(local address)* 00000	Dear Monsignor *(surname):*
	The Reverend *(full name)* *(add initials of Order, if any)* *(local address)* 00000	Reverend Sir *(surname):*
Catholic Clergy	Mother *(name) (initials of Order, if used)* Superior *(name of Convent) (local address)* 00000	Dear Mother *(name):*

ADDRESSEE	ADDRESS	SALUTATION
Jewish Clergy	Rabbi *(full name)* *(local address)* 00000	Dear Rabbi *(surname)*:
Chaplains	Chaplain *(full name)* *(rank, service designation)* *(post office address of* *organization and station)* *(local address)* 00000	Dear Chaplain *(surname)*:
President of a College or University (Doctor)	Dr. *(full name)* President, *(name of* *institution)* *(local address)* 00000	Dear Dr. *(surname)*:
Dean of School	Dean *(full name)* School of *(name of* *institution)* *(name of institution)* *(local address)* 00000	Dear Dr. *(surname)*:
Physician	*(full name)*, M.D. *(local address)* 00000	Dear Dr. *(surname)*:
Lawyer	(full name), Esquire *(local address)* 00000	Dear Mr. *(surname)*: Dear Ms. *(surname)*:
Two or more men	Mr. *(full name)* and Mr. *(full name)* *(local address)* 00000	Gentlemen:
Two or more women	Mrs. *(full name)* and Mrs. *(full name)* *(local address)* 00000	Gentlewomen:
One woman and one man	Ms. *(full name)* and Mr. *(full name)* *(local address)* 00000	Dear Ms. *(surname)* and Mr. *(surname)*:

It is correct to address a letter to two or more persons as illustrated, or you may address the letter to only one of them and mention the other by name in the opening paragraph.

ADDRESSEE	ADDRESS	SALUTATION
Service Personnel	*[full grade, name, and abbreviation of service designation (add Retired, if applicable)]* (title and organization) (local address) 00000	Dear *(grade)* *(surname)*:

PART VI

Legal Citations

Part VI
Legal Citations

OPM writers frequently cite Federal statutes and regulations in correspondence and other formal documents. This is our standardized method of citing statutes and regulations. Please be consistent to help our readers avoid confusion.

1-1. Citation of Law

1. The most commonly used methods of citing Federal statutes are the following:

<div align="center">

5 U.S.C. § 5301(a)   **OR**   5 U.S.C. 5301(a)

</div>

Note: In WordPerfect the "§" is usually produced by holding the Alt key and pressing 21 on the numeric pad. Ctrl-V: 4,6 also works.*

2. When writing for readers who may not be familiar with the abbreviations used above, spell out the citation as follows:

<div align="center">

section 5301(a) of title 5, United States Code,

OR

§ 5301(a) of title 5, United States Code,

</div>

Note: The words "section" and "title" are not capitalized when referring to the United States Code. "United States Code" is always set off by commas and should not be abbreviated when used in this form.

---

* If the "§" appears on your screen but does not print, OPM's Information Technology Center (ITC) may be able to fix the problem by adjusting your printer.

3. When referring to a subchapter of title 5, United States Code, the proper methods of citation are as follows:

5 U.S.C. chapter 53, subchapter I,

OR

subchapter I of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code,

4. When referring to a chapter of title 5, United States Code, the proper methods of citation are as follows:

5 U.S.C. chapter 53

OR

chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code,

5. Once you have given a full citation like those in #2, #3, and #4, above, you may shorten later references, as follows:

section 5301(a) OR § 5301(a)	[when it is clear that the writer is still referring to title 5, United States Code]
subchapter I	[when it is clear that the writer is still referring to chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code]
chapter 53	[when it is clear that the writer is still referring to title 5, United States Code]
title 5	[when it is clear that the writer is still referring to the United States Code]

Note: The words "subchapter" and "chapter" are not capitalized when referring to the United States Code.

6. Some Federal statutes have not been codified formally. The proper way to cite such a statute is as follows:

> sec. 4(f) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended (29 U.S.C. 204(f)).

1-2. Citation of Regulation

1. The Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, recommends that Federal regulations be cited as follows:

> 5 CFR 531.202(f)

Note: Unlike citations of the United States Code, "CFR" is not abbreviated with periods. (Do not write: "C.F.R.") Also, do not use the section symbol ("§") when citing the Code of Federal Regulations in this form. (Do not write: 5 CFR §531.202)

2. When writing for an audience that may not be familiar with the abbreviations used above, spell out the citation as follows:

> section 531.202(f) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations,

> **OR**

> § 531.202(f) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations,

Note: "Code of Federal Regulations" is always set off by commas and is never abbreviated when used in this form.

3. When referring to a subpart of the Code of Federal Regulations, the proper methods of citation are as follows:

> 5 CFR part 531, subpart B,

> **OR**

> subpart B of part 531 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations,

4. When referring to a part of the Code of Federal Regulations, the proper methods of citation are as follows:

<div align="center">5 CFR part 531</div>

<div align="center">**OR**</div>

<div align="center">part 531 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations,</div>

5. Once you have given a full citation like those in #2, #3, and #4, above, you may shorten later references, as follows:

section 531.202(f) or § 531.202(f)	[when it is clear that the writer is still referring to title 5, Code of Federal Regulations]
subpart B	[when it is clear that the writer is still referring to part 531 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations]
part 531	[when it is clear that the writer is still referring to title 5, Code of Federal Regulations]
title 5	[when it is clear that the writer is still referring to the Code of Federal Regulations]

Is this guide useful to you? If you have suggestions that could be included in our periodic updates to this guide, please contact the Office of Communications.