

IT Classification Project Questions and Answers



Q1. Why does the current IT classification system need changed?

A1.

Because:

- It has been 20 years in a rapidly advancing field since IT classifications were reviewed for the State of Ohio. When the classifications were written, a 386 megahertz PC running DOS was considered top-of-the-line technology. As the technology has so dramatically changed, so too have the jobs.
- Some classifications are obsolete and employees find it difficult to know what work the state agency needs them to perform. These obsolete classifications also become barriers to managers trying to recruit, hire, appropriately utilize and retain a qualified workforce. An example of this is the COBOL minimum qualification required in the classification.
- Including career ladders will help retain the workforce already in place and provide avenues for talent development. These efforts will also help to recruit new workers into these jobs.
- Changing the classifications to reflect the work being done could provide an opportunity to identify and bring consultant work in-house that may be better performed by the State workforce.
- The state needs an accurate description of the skills and abilities required to perform the work in order to improve workforce utilization. Using the terminology of today's technology will help us accurately describe the work the state needs and skills employees must have.

Q2. When did the project begin?

A2. Discussions began between DAS and OCSEA after the first of the year (2008). The joint committee began work in April and has met almost every Thursday since then, which indicates the level of commitment from both management and the union.

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Q3. Who is on the joint DAS and OCSEA committee?

A3.

Management	Labor
John Audet - DAS	Bruce Wyngaard - OCSEA
John Albrecht - EPA	John Anthony – TAX
Jeff Clouse – DPS	Tim Huntsman – IC
Katrina Flory – OIT	Kenny Keirns – DAS
John Wanchick – JFS	Lawrence McKissic - BWC
Spencer Wood – DOT	Gregg Miller - DNR
Ashley Hughes – OCB	Ed Nagel – JFS
Jessica Schuster – DAS	Sandi Friel – OCSEA
	Anissia Goodwin – OCSEA
	Sharon Ralph - OCSEA

Q4. How was the joint committee assembled?

A4. The joint committee was assembled of equal parts union leadership and management representatives and included a range of agency representation. For the union, members were selected from the Union IT Committee membership (a group of interested members who meet once a month to discuss IT issues). The parties ensured that persons from large and small agencies and with diverse backgrounds in education and experience were involved.

Q5. Who are “Subject Matter Experts”?

A5. The people who can best describe the kind of work and qualifications that are needed in a specific content area. In this case the Subject Matter Experts were IT employees from various agencies, IT Functional areas (e.g., networking, software development, etc.) and who work on different platforms, applications, etc.

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Q6. How were Subject Matter Experts chosen?

A6. Subject Matter Experts were chosen to mirror agency diversity and to ensure representation from small and large agencies. They also represent a range of experience in content areas identified (Database Administration, Infrastructure, Software Development, Consultant / Architect, and Business Process Analyst). They are the people who do the work or supervise the work; a balance of management and labor.

Agency		No. of Participants
Bureau of Workers Compensation	BWC	3
Department of Natural Resources	DNR	2
Department of Public Safety	DPS	3
Department of Taxation	TAX	3
Department of Transportation	DOT	4
Environmental Protection Agency	EPA	6
Job and Family Services	JFS	11
Office of Information Technology	OIT	6
Ohio Department of Education	ODE	1
Ohio Industrial Commission	OIC	3

*includes representation from the joint committee as well

Q7. How will current employees' job duties be identified for allocation into the new IT classification system?

A7. Currently we are in Phase 1 of this project, which involves defining the classifications. Discussions regarding implementation, allocation and compensation will not occur until after the classification proposal has been submitted to DAS for approval. The focus to-date is on identifying the business needs of the state and the duties necessary to accomplish the IT element.

Q8. Will the new IT classification system affect the operational structure within my agency?

A8. The IT Classification Project is intended to address the classifications and identify a framework within which the job duties and IT functions are accurately described and meet the business needs for the State of Ohio. Recommendations will not include dictating structural operations within agencies.

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Q9. When will the new IT classification system be implemented?

A9. Discussions regarding implementation, allocation, and compensation have not been discussed. The focus to-date is on identifying the business needs of the state and the duties necessary to accomplish the IT element. This is the first phase of change. As this is a new approach for both management and the union, it is not certain how long it will take to work out the different pieces. However, we do hope to finish as quickly as we can with success.

Q10. Is there a management component to this project?

A10. Both sides agree that you cannot expect the new structure to work if you only look at half the picture. The entire State of Ohio IT workforce will be addressed. Currently, OCSEA and DAS are working jointly on the bargaining unit IT Classification Project. However, management positions will be reviewed as a separate project by DAS through the Office of Compensation and Recruitment.

Q11. The classification I am currently assigned is not a match based on the difference between the duties I perform and the duties described in the classification specification. When allocation occurs will positions be moved based on current classification assignment or will there be an assessment of job duties performed?

A11. Discussions regarding implementation, allocation and compensation have not been discussed, but both parties are aware that currently, two people assigned the same IT classification could be performing very different duties. Vice versa, there is an understanding that people performing the same duties may be assigned three different classifications. The purpose of this project is to remedy such occurrences by developing classifications accurately describing the work performed now and into the future.

Q12. I have heard there will be a training component to the new IT classification system. How will DAS and OCSEA ensure employees who are offered and/or receive training do so in an objective manner?

A12. Both the union and management are on new ground here and are only to the point of discussing the classifications and duties. This topic will be addressed in later phases of the project and possibly through upcoming negotiations.

Q13. Will my pay be impacted as a result of this project?

A13. In Phase I, work is only being done on the classifications and duties. Phase II which will include discussions of compensation, implementation and allocation will begin after the Phase I proposal is submitted and approved to move forward. A timeline has not been established beyond the first phase of the project pending this direction.

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Q14. When do DAS and OCSEA intend to forward the recommendation for the new IT Classification system?

A14. Currently, the recommendation is expected to be submitted prior to negotiations.

Q15. Who will the Phase I proposal for the new IT classification system be submitted to?

A15. The Phase I proposal will be submitted to the Director of Administrative Services, Hugh Quill, through the State of Ohio Chief Information Officer, Steve Edmonson and the Human Resources Division Deputy Director, Nancy Kelly.

Q16. What are the new IT classifications?

A16. Presently, the classification groupings are being referred to as the following:

- Business Process Analyst
- Consultant/Architect
- Database Administration
- Infrastructure
- Software Development
- Information Technologist

However, the committee's work is not complete and changes will likely continue to occur. The committee expects changes to continually occur even after the system is implemented to stay current with ever changing technologies.

Q17. Where do I go or who do I contact if I have valuable input to provide for/to this project?

A17. Either visit the webpage or call DAS or OCSEA using the following:

www.das.ohio.gov/hrd/classcomp.html - DAS or 614. 466.7795

www.ocsea.org/infotech - OCSEA or 1.800.969.4702 ext 4713

Q18. Will DAS and OCSEA provide time or the opportunity for those not on the joint committee, identified as Subject Matter Experts or randomly selected for the Focus Group to review and provide edits or comment to the new IT classification system before the proposal is submitted?

A18. The draft classification specifications for database administration, infrastructure, software development, consultant/architect, business process analyst and information technologist will be available for review and comment at the DAS webpage Monday, September 15th – Noon, Friday, September 19th. Visit the link here to access: www.das.ohio.gov/hrd/classcomp.html

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Q19. Is this project an effort aimed at centralizing IT?

A19. No. This project is aimed at accurately describing the work performed in a way that will standardize the IT Classification(s) so there is a statewide system in place applicable across agencies.

Q20: What was the purpose of the Focus Group?

A20: To solicit, obtain, and validate the work completed to date. The following four (4) questions were the focus:

- ▶ Have significant IT duties been captured as part of the general IT framework for the State of Ohio?
- ▶ Is current terminology familiar to the users/professionals used?
- ▶ Do distinctions exist between the functionality of each content area (e.g., Infrastructure, Database Administration, etc.)?
- ▶ Do distinctions exist between levels within the content areas (e.g., 1, 2, 3 and 4 where applicable). For example, is the level of work assigned, responsibility for problem resolution, prioritization, knowledge required and/or supervision received, etc. clear and complete?

Q21: Will there be another Focus Group?

A21: No other focus group of this kind is planned at this time. If someone has feedback to offer please visit the DAS webpage and use the feedback link to provide input, questions or concerns.

www.das.ohio.gov/hrd/classcomp.html

Q22: What feedback was received from the Focus Group?

A22: Feedback from the focus group was abundant and useful. It took the joint committee three (3) full meetings to review and discuss the 17-page document of comments, questions and concerns verbalized or submitted via survey. Common topic areas discussed relating to job duties to be added or clarified in the draft classifications specifications were, among others:

- ▶ Web-Design (not content editing or creating);
- ▶ Security; &
- ▶ Telecommunications.

The joint committee is working to edit the drafts per the feedback received. However, it was communicated that the content areas make sense and do capture the job duties to describe the world of information technology in the State of Ohio. The committee expects to post the draft specifications for further review and comment on the DAS webpage September 15th to September 19th.

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Q23: Who are the Focus Group participants?

A23: Randomly selected management and union employees from classifications that appeared to relate to information technology. Participants came from all over the state and captured input from even more agencies.

Participation from...			
Agency	Joint Committee	Subject Matter Experts	Focus Group
Aging	-	-	2
Budget and Management	-	-	1
Commerce	-	-	1
DAS, Human Resources Division	2	-	-
DAS, Office of Collective Bargaining	1	-	-
DAS, Office of Information Technology	2	4	10
Education	-	1	2
Environmental Protection Agency	1	5	2
Health	-	-	5
Industrial Commission	1	2	1
Job and Family Services	2	9	16
Lottery Commission	-	-	4
Mental Health	-	-	2
MRDD	-	-	4
Natural Resources	1	1	-
OCSEA	4	-	-
Public Safety	1	2	11
Rehabilitation Services Commission	-	-	3
Taxation	1	2	2
Transportation	1	3	7
Worker's Compensation	1	2	2
Youth Services	-	-	1

Q24: Have current classifications been mapped to show where they will fit into classifications being proposed?

A24: Discussions regarding allocation, implementation and compensation have not been discussed. However, both management and the union are aware that currently, two people assigned the same IT classification could be performing very different duties. Vice versa, there is an understanding that people performing the same duties may be assigned three different classifications. It is for this reason that current classifications have not and cannot be mapped from point A to point B as it has been traditionally. Phase II of this project will include developing a process for allocation.

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Q25: Will professional certifications be used for/as minimum qualifications?

A25: Management and the union have acknowledged the need to have this discussion, but the discussion has not occurred. The focus has been to identify the job duties required to meet the needs for the State and to validate that work before moving to include the details of the classification specifications.

Q26: Are all six (6) of the new classifications going to be available to all agencies?

A26: Yes, but that does not mean the agencies will have a need to use all six (6) of the classifications.

Q 27: What questions did you ask and what did you find out by benchmarking with other states?

A27: We asked questions like and received different answers from different states. Some of the questions and answers were:

1. Why did you change your IT classification structure?
 - a. One state responded that salaries were a problem in recruitment
 - b. All agencies had their own IT department with everything being done differently agency-to-agency – no consistency
 - c. The state contracted out a lot of their work
2. How did you approach making the change?
 - a. Did not make the change with union input (all states)
 - b. Phased in the changes (all states)
3. What was your biggest problem?
 - a. Allocating criteria which are based upon organization-wide impact. Example: a person in a smaller agency might have agency impact where as a person in the same classification in a large agency would not (one state)
 - b. Lots of people's jobs changed (downgraded), but no jobs were lost (but were red-lined) and that left a lot of individuals very unhappy (one state)
4. What are some of the changes made to the classifications?
 - a. Classifications were broadly written (all states)
 - b. Moved from "minimum qualifications" to "desirable qualifications" (one state)

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- c. Specialty is selected management (no input from the employee) (all states)
 - d. New positions are tested and then selected from the pool who pass the test – seniority is not a factor (one state)
 - e. Instead of “Job Duties”, they have “Typical Work” which allows them to be much broader (one state)
 - f. A History section is included at the bottom of the class spec indicating from what positions the current class was derived from (one state)
 - g. Instituted “set of senior standards” that means (one state)
 - i. Recognized resource – one of a kind
 - ii. Lead worker – assign and review work, but no HR work
 - iii. Project manager – includes HR work
 - h. Specialists are outside the union and referred to as “professionals”, while there is only one series for the bargaining unit and rarely does anyone from there move into a specialty (one state)
5. How do plan to keep your classifications current in the ever changing world of technology?
- a. Management on an “as needed” basis directed by management and doesn’t happen very often (one state)
 - b. Changes are made on the 2 year bargaining cycle and only pertain to salaries (one state)
 - c. Have 5 categories and review one category every year so that everything is updated at least every 5 years; however, monthly meetings are held to discuss IT classes (one area)