

THIS GUIDE IS FOR SUPERVISORS OF A/P FACULTY TO DISCUSS THE NEW POSITION CLASSIFICATION AS IT PERTAINS TO THE EMPLOYEE.



**Virginia Tech's A/P faculty classification structure - along with the structures in place for staff and T&R faculty - is foundational to how we hire, pay, develop, and advance our workforce through clear career paths and competitive and equitable compensation strategies.**

BRYAN GAREY, VICE PRESIDENT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES

## JOB ARCHITECTURE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### SUPERVISORS

- Understanding the employee's function, sub-function, discipline, career track, career track level, and system title.
- Discussing questions with the HR division director/HR representative.
- Meeting with the employee to discuss the function, sub-function, discipline, career track, career track level, and system title.
- Sharing resources with the employee.
- Bringing questions to HR.

### EMPLOYEES

- Reviewing the function, sub-function, discipline, career track, career track level, and system title.
- Sharing questions with the supervisor and the HR division director/HR representative.

### HR DIVISION DIRECTOR/HR REPRESENTATIVE

- Responding to questions from supervisors.
- Liaising between the department and the Compensation team.
- Supporting employee conversations.
- Remaining committed to transparency in communications and providing context where applicable.

## SUPERVISOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

## MANAGER CHECKLIST: CONFIRMING EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS AND SYSTEM TITLES

*As part of the job architecture project, employees are mapped to positions in Virginia Tech's new job architecture.*

The mapped function, sub-function, discipline, career track, and career track level should capture the essential function of the employee's position: the **autonomy** of the position, the **complexity** of the work the position performs, **experience and knowledge** needed to do the work, and the **scope of impact** this position has, such as departmental, college-wide, or universitywide.

To confirm the position classification that your employee's position has been mapped with, consider the following questions:

- Does the career track reflect the essential role and responsibilities of the position?
- If you were to summarize the position in one to two sentences, would your summary look like the definition of that career track?
- Does the career track level support the autonomy, complexity, experience and knowledge, and scope of impact for this employee's position?

*If you did not answer "yes" to all the questions:*

- Explore other jobs in the job architecture framework. Review other sub-functions and disciplines that may better match your employee's position.
- Reach out to your HR representative. Describe the key responsibilities that are missing from the career track and suggest alternative career tracks or career track levels.

**Remember** that the function, sub-function, and discipline present an overall picture of the **type of work** the position does for the university. It does **not** relate to the person currently in the role or where the position reports at the university. Additionally, career tracks and career track levels will not include every task your employee performs but should reflect the core functions of the position.



# SUPERVISOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

## BEFORE THE EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION

As a manager, your role is crucial in explaining the new A/P faculty position classification information to your employees. While your employees will not be impacted directly in their day-to-day roles, this conversation holds high stakes due to the changes, making effective dialogue essential. You'll meet individually with your employees, and possibly your HR representative, to discuss their new classification.

**Start with heart:** Keep in mind the collaborative intent of this discussion. Frame the message to share context and intent, aiming to avoid misunderstandings.

**Set expectations:** Inform your employee about the job architecture project and what will be discussed. Let them know you value their questions and will share information as it becomes available.

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*When people know what to expect, they are more likely to respect the process and get comfortable with what is ahead.*

## GOAL OF THE CONVERSATION

Provide the employee with the information and explanation of their new A/P faculty position classification, including the function, sub-function, discipline, career track, career track level, and system title.

### Get informed:

- Familiarize yourself with the project's purpose and benefits.
- Familiarize yourself with what will change and what will stay the same.

### **Prepare for questions:**

- Jot down the questions you anticipate from the employee.
- Find the answers to some of your anticipated questions - review the FAQ page, and resources on the website, and reach out to your HR representative.

# SUPERVISOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

## BEFORE THE EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION

### **Confirm function, sub-function, discipline, career track, career track level, and system title:**

- Be prepared to explain why the position classification captures the job duties and complexity of the employee's current position.
  - **NOTE:** If you disagree with the position classification information, contact your HR representative to discuss your questions and reasons. Together, you will either better understand the rationale for the assigned position classification or identify and update the position classification.
- Review related sub-functions and disciplines.
  - If the employee's new system title has a level, review the other levels of the job.
  - Review related jobs in the same sub-function and discipline.
  - Review other jobs with which the employee might identify.

### **Set expectations:**

- Share information about the job architecture project, such as the [website](#).
- Let your employees know what will be discussed.
- Invite your employees to bring their questions.
- Let your employees know you may not have all the answers, but you will share what you know, and communicate as you get more information.

## DURING THE EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION

When the stakes are high, and let's be honest, stakes are high when things are changing that aren't always understood clearly. So, when emotions run high during change, your ability to maintain effective dialogue is crucial.

**DURING THE EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION**

**Start with facts:** Begin with specific, observable descriptions. Align your thoughts with context and clear intent. Consider what you want for yourself, the other person, the relationship, and the organization.

**Share your intent:** Make your positive intent clear. Reassure them of your respect and shared values. People rarely get defensive because of the content of the message, but because of the perceived intent behind the message. "I don't intend..." [pause] "I do intend..."

**Use state my path and explore their path:**

1. Share the purpose of the job architecture project.
2. Explain how system titles were assigned and career track and career track levels were created.
3. Share the new classification and explain its appropriateness.
4. Review responsibilities of the new career track and career track level.
5. Discuss the facets that remain unchanged.
6. Invite the employee to ask questions.
7. Listen actively to their questions and reasoning.

**Create safety and maintain curiosity:** Encourage questions and be open to their perspective. Don't focus on convincing. Instead, encourage the sharing of ideas and listen before responding.

**Confirm shared understanding:** Based on the information shared, ask if they understand where their classification aligns with the new Virginia Tech A/P faculty job architecture.

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Use the following checklist to help drive the conversation.

**DURING THE EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION****To help the employee understand *the project*, have I:**

- Shared the purpose of the job architecture project?
- Explained how the functions, sub-functions, and discipline were determined for this position?
- Explained how the career track and career track level was determined?

**To help the employee understand *their classification*, have I:**

- Shared and explained their new system title?
- Reminded them of what does not change?
- Reviewed their career track and career track level?
- Given opportunities for the employee to ask questions about their new classification?
- Listened to the employee's questions and reactions?

**To help the employee understand *what will happen next*, have I:**

- Invited the employee to follow up with me regarding additional questions after the meeting?

**AFTER THE EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION**

**Move to action:** Summarize the discussion and outline the next steps.

**Document next steps:** Make sure to document key points and any agreed-upon actions.



*Remember, the goal is to ensure that your employee understands the changes, feels heard, and is aligned with their new classification. Maintaining open dialogue and fostering a collaborative atmosphere will lead to a smoother transition and positive outcomes.*