



USA CLASS:

Fast-Tracking the Future of Federal Hiring

How OPM used AI to modernize one of government's most persistent hiring challenges.



The Starting Line

Every federal hire starts the same way: with a position description. Before a single resume is reviewed, a fully classified position description (PD) has to be written, graded, and approved. It's a requirement baked into federal hiring law, and for good reason. PDs define the job, set the pay grade, and form the legal foundation for the hire.

For years, that process was entirely manual. HR specialists consulted dense classification standards, drafted major duties by hand, and worked through nine standardized factors to determine a position's grade level. It was slow, specialized work. And with 24 million job applications flowing through the federal government's hiring system in 2024 alone, the bottleneck had real consequences for agencies trying to fill critical roles, and for the talent they were racing to attract.



Did you know?

Every federal position is graded using the **Factor Evaluation System (FES)**, a nine-factor framework established by OPM that measures everything from job complexity to scope of impact.

A Better Way Forward

[The Office of Personnel Management \(OPM\)](#), the agency that oversees federal hiring, saw an opportunity to change that. Rather than working around the manual process, they decided to reimagine it - and they brought Excella in as a co-creator to help build it.

Together, the team built [USA Class](#), an AI-powered PD development tool, that transforms plain language input into fully classified, compliant position descriptions. It draws from a repository of over 300,000 federal PD documents and guides users through each of the nine classification factors, surfacing relevant standards and generating structured content along the way.

The goal was never to replace HR expertise. **It was to amplify it.**



Built to Be Trusted

A tool operating at the intersection of HR policy, classification law, and hiring operations has to earn user trust before it can deliver value. The team knew that from day one.

Federal employees and Excella engineers, data scientists, and UX designers worked side by side in two-week Agile sprints, moving from initial prototype to production-ready tool in less than two years. Federal HR classifiers and managers were part of the process throughout: testing, giving feedback, and shaping what the tool became.

That rigor paid off. By the time USA Class reached users, it was no longer an experiment. It was a tool people already believed in.



The HR classifier still has the steering wheel - but now they have GPS.

– Federal User

Results That Reach Further Than One Agency

The impact goes beyond faster paperwork. When positions are mis-graded, agencies absorb unnecessary personnel costs and face increased legal exposure. By grounding every output in a robust document repository and applying rigorous evaluation at every stage of development, USA Class brings consistency and accuracy to a process that has long been vulnerable to human error.

HR specialists who once spent hours navigating classification standards can now develop a fully structured PD in a fraction of the time - freeing them to focus on the higher-value work that actually moves hiring forward. And for agencies competing with the private sector for top talent, that speed matters.

Ready to explore how AI can modernize your workforce operations?

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