

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP CAPACITY SERVICES

# THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE FEDERAL CANDIDATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

FOSTERING FUTURE AGENCY LEADERSHIP



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

In July 2005, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in partnership with participating agencies, conducted the first governmentwide recruitment and executive development program. During the first quarter of fiscal year 2008, the Office of Personnel Management will offer the program to further assist agencies in their leadership succession planning efforts.

I invite you to read the brochure and learn more about the Senior Executive Service (SES) Federal Candidate Development Program (Fed CDP). We have modified the program based on agencies' input. To better address agencies' needs, we have changed the applicant eligibility, the program length, and the assessment and training components.

Although the Fed CDP has been modified, the primary goal is to train outstanding leaders and prepare them for entry into the Senior Executive Service (SES) after successful completion of the program and certification by the Qualifications Review Board. The Fed CDP continues to serve as a vehicle for meeting agencies' succession planning goals and contributes to the creation of a viable SES corps. Candidates develop a governmentwide perspective as well as an agency perspective, which equip them to work collaboratively on issues spanning beyond their home agency.

The Fed CDP also serves as a resource for agencies with minimal assessment and executive development resources. With the Fed CDP, OPM in partnership with participating agencies will assess applicants using a standardized process.

Here is an opportunity to learn about the program and join us in creating great leaders for great Government.



Linda M. Springer

Director, United States Office of Personnel Management

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## DEVELOPING LEADERS FOR THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE

*As today's Federal Government evolves to meet ever-higher standards, agencies are challenged to find and train the very best executives to achieve our nation's goals. Increasingly, many agencies must provide leadership training that focuses on global and crosscutting management issues. The Office of Personnel Management, working in partnership with Federal agencies and key stakeholder groups, has developed this governmentwide Federal Candidate Development Program (Fed CDP) to achieve these goals.*

The Fed CDP is based on the five Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) for SES entry and takes 12 months to complete. This governmentwide CDP trains and prepares graduates for immediate entry into the SES. The program complements Federal agency strategic human capital management and leadership development initiatives. As a benefit, participating agencies receive a temporary SES allocation slot, for up to three years, for each sponsored candidate.

The curriculum is comprehensive and includes classroom work, interagency experience, on-the-job learning, mentoring, coaching, field experiences, and Web-based learning. Participants will gain, and therefore offer, a broader perspective as they learn with and from other agency candidates. A core benefit of the program is access to senior White House and Cabinet-level personnel, who serve as speakers and workshop leaders.



### *The Fed CDP Provides Agency Benefits including:*

1. Human capital and succession planning strategy enhancement
2. An immediate temporary SES allocation slot (up to three years) for each sponsored candidate
3. Partnership with OPM to address governmentwide leadership development needs
4. Training conducted by OPM's Federal Executive Institute

## CANDIDATE SELECTION & RECRUITMENT

Merit is the driving principle in the process. OPM is aggressively recruiting candidates from inside Government and working closely with agencies to identify and meet their specific needs with regard to succession planning and hard-to-fill positions.

## SELECTION PROCESS

- OPM will announce the Fed CDP on [www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov).
- Eligible candidates will be identified. Individuals must be able to show one year or more of leadership experience at the GS-15 level, or comparable experience, to be considered.
- OPM in partnership with participating agencies will review, interview, and select candidates using OPM-approved guidelines.
- Selected candidates who meet the applicable requirements will serve in GS-15 positions (temporary or permanent, depending on their existing positions), for the duration of their participation in the program. Candidates from within the Government who are not serving under career appointments or under career-type appointments will be given a temporary Schedule B appointment. A Schedule B appointment is used for developmental purposes connected with an SES candidate development program.
- Agencies will certify their candidate selections to OPM.

## BALANCING WORK & TRAINING

The 12-month program allows candidates time to complete their training and development. Candidates attend three training sessions. Additional one-day workshops and sessions will be held locally during the course of the training.

## PROGRAM FUNDING

Sponsoring agencies will invest \$25,000 per participant for the assessment and educational component. This fee covers all costs for running the program, including the assessments. Additional expenses paid by agencies will include travel and per diem to attend program events.



## EXECUTIVE CORE QUALIFICATIONS (ECQs)

The Fed CDP complements Federal agency strategic human capital management and leadership development initiatives and is based on the five ECQs for SES entry. The ECQs describe the leadership skills needed to succeed in the SES.

### Fundamental Competencies

- Continual Learning
- Integrity/Honesty
- Interpersonal Skills
- Oral Communication
- Public Service Motivation
- Written Communication

### ECQ 1: Leading Change

- Creativity/Innovation
- External Awareness
- Flexibility
- Resilience
- Strategic Thinking
- Vision

### ECQ 2: Leading People

- Conflict Management
- Developing Others
- Leveraging Diversity
- Team Building

### ECQ 3: Results-Driven

- Accountability
- Customer Service
- Decisiveness
- Entrepreneurship
- Problem Solving
- Technical Credibility

### ECQ 4: Business Acumen

- Financial Management
- Human Capital Management
- Technology Management

### ECQ 5: Building Coalitions

- Influencing/Negotiating
- Partnering
- Political Savvy

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## COMPREHENSIVE LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The Fed CDP draws from the latest research on learning and leadership development. The program offers an ongoing cycle of assessment, feedback-intensive training, challenging work and learning opportunities, as well as support from mentors. Through a combination of classroom, hands-on projects, and interagency experiences, candidates will experience a powerful mix of learning methodologies to prepare them for the variety of challenges they will face as executives within the Federal Government.

### PROGRAM CURRICULUM DETAILS

#### *Classroom Learning*

##### **Program Orientation**

Candidates and supervisors will be invited to a program orientation. This two-hour session will include a welcome from OPM, a briefing on the program, Q&A, and an informal networking social.

##### **Executive Leadership Assessment Experience**

Prior to attending the first week of residential classroom training, candidates will complete skills assessments and targeted readings on values-based leadership. The focus for this initial week will be fivefold:

- 1) Engaging participants in an active and supportive learning community, including a participant-led and -managed Leadership Forums Committee (formed during the first week of training);
- 2) Preparing a personalized Executive Development Plan;
- 3) Establishing Executive Learning Teams (five to seven candidates);
- 4) Providing individual feedback on leadership skills through skills assessment instruments and exercises;
- 5) Building skills in the areas of values-based leadership, emotional intelligence, and team development.

##### **Mentor Selection and Training**

Candidates will select an SES mentor. Each candidate will meet initially with her/his mentor to establish a mutual set of expectations and to receive assistance in finalizing the Executive Development Plan and its activities. Candidates and mentors will continue to meet during the course of the program.

#### *Program Highlights*

- Personalized Executive Development Plans
- Residential, Classroom, Field, and Web-based Training
- Executive Learning Teams
- Team Leadership Projects
- Individual Coaching and Mentoring
- Cabinet-level and White House Speakers
- Developmental Assignments with Leadership Responsibility
- Policy Seminars and Leadership Visits
- Field Experiences Outside Government
- Reading Groups



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### Strategic Leadership Seminar

This seminar will focus on those competencies critical to strategic leadership: vision, external awareness, strategic thinking, political savvy, and partnering. Candidates will participate in a mix of readings, lectures, discussions, and interactive projects, drawing upon experts in the field.

### Focused Skills Seminar

This one-week residential seminar will be custom-designed to address developmental needs based directly on the candidates' assessments and Executive Development Plans. This ensures that a core portion of the classroom component responds specifically to candidates' needs. For example, topics could include working with the Congress, media relations, e-Government, Homeland Security, and performance management.

### Administration Speakers and Policy Leaders

White House and Cabinet-level speakers will lecture and interact with candidates. These top-level speakers, along with senior experts charged with implementation coordination, will provide candidates with critical executive perspectives and a broad view of high-level leadership and policy issues. The program will also bring candidates together with policy leaders in executive development to provide the most current thinking on high-performance leadership.



**Reasonable Accommodations:** OPM provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application, hiring, and training processes, please notify OPM. Reasonable accommodation will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

### *Federal Executive Institute*

OPM's Federal Executive Institute (FEI) and partnering learning providers will manage and deliver the curriculum. For over 30 years, FEI has served as the Federal Government's development center for senior executives. FEI brings SES members and high-performance GS-15s together for courses that help executives develop broad viewpoints, understand their constitutional roles, and enhance essential leadership skills.



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## ***Work-Based Learning***

Based on their initial assessments, the program will organize candidates to accomplish the following supplemental learning activities that take place outside of the classroom.

### **Developmental Assignments**

Each candidate will complete at least four months of developmental assignments involving challenging leadership responsibilities outside their positions. These assignments are designed to expand the candidate's understanding about the functions of Government, its operations, and the role of senior executives in public policy formulation and administration, as well as to build executive skills. Each assignment will be selected by the candidate to address specific goals in her/his Executive Development Plan.

### **Team Leadership Project**

Each Executive Learning Team will participate in a group project at the department/agency level. They will explore an important leadership issue, practice and receive feedback on individual and team skills, and provide a product useful to the broad community of Government leaders. Examples might include developing a guide of best practices in succession planning, creating a "lessons learned" database on knowledge management, or providing a workshop on change management and decisionmaking.

### **Leadership Forums Committee**

Candidates will learn a great deal from each other and, drawing from their own networks, will have access to a wide range of leadership learning possibilities. The Leadership Forums Committee, formed during the program's initial residential session, taps candidates' resources to offer two types of learning events: 1) Issue Forums—one- to two-hour sessions facilitated by candidates to help their colleagues address a compelling leadership or public policy issue in their agency, and 2) Leadership Visits—half- to full-day visits to see and talk to high-level leaders in action at Government agencies.

### **Field Experiences**

A series of one-day offsite leadership programs will host candidates in settings normally unavailable to them. Such unique experiences might include leadership lessons that can be learned from a leadership tour of the Gettysburg battlefield, and a tour of the Holocaust Museum and conversations with museum historians. Additional leadership experiences may include a day spent with the executive team of a nonprofit organization, or a day spent exploring succession planning at a major corporation.



## Program Timeline

### Selection Process

<i>Fed CDP Application Period Opens</i>	Week 1
<i>Fed CDP Application Period Closes</i>	Week 3
<i>Fed CDP Selection</i>	Weeks 8–14

### Fed CDP Content

<i>Fed CDP Orientation for Candidates and Supervisors</i>	Program Start
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Assessments Distributed</i></li><li>• <i>Mentor Matching Process Described</i></li></ul>	
<i>Mentor Pool and Developmental Assignments Identified</i>	Month 1
<i>Initial Assessment Week (residential)</i>	Month 2
<i>Mentor Training/First Meeting with Mentors</i>	Month 2
<i>Second Core Training</i>	Month 4
<i>Third Core Training Week (residential)</i>	Month 7
<i>Program Graduation</i>	Month 13



Please contact us at:

[fedcdp@opm.gov](mailto:fedcdp@opm.gov)  
[www.opm.gov/ses/fedcdp](http://www.opm.gov/ses/fedcdp)

### Reading Groups

Successful leaders continually explore new ways of thinking. Each candidate will be expected to read relevant materials throughout the program, and share insights and applications with others through discussion groups. Information sharing may be through meetings or via Web-based chat rooms.

### Web-Based Learning

The Fed CDP has its own Website to support candidate learning outside the classroom. The site will include:

- 1) all key program materials and guidelines,
- 2) profiles of all mentors and developmental assignment opportunities,
- 3) workrooms to support team projects and the Leadership Forums Committee, and
- 4) chat rooms for reading groups and other topical conversations. Program faculty and candidates are encouraged to post articles and other leadership learning resources.

### PROGRAM COMPLETION

The program concludes when each candidate has:

- Completed all of the program requirements;
- Accomplished the learning objectives set in the Executive Development Plan;
- Received certification from her/his mentor that the candidate has completed the work. The mentor will also submit a letter summarizing the candidate's learning in the program. This letter may be used to accompany the candidate's application when it is submitted to the OPM Qualifications Review Board upon graduation from the program.

A graduation ceremony will be the last formal event in the program.

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