

Keys to Success for National Security Professionals

The *NSP Keys to Success* are important attributes and professional conduct necessary to succeed in an interagency environment. They are based on focus group discussions with Senior Executive Service (SES) National Security Professionals (NSPs) who attended the National Response Framework Orientation Training in September and October 2008.

NSP Keys to Success

To perform at a “meets expectations” level or better, working together on a multi-agency mission, NSPs believe that they should demonstrate and expect the following from their counterparts:

Interagency Leadership and Management. NSPs are dedicated to accomplishing the multi-agency missions of the federal government even when there are agency-specific concerns. They bring to bear the unique capabilities of their agencies to achieve national objectives in a timely and collaborative manner.

Strategic Insight and Solutions. NSPs explore—and bring forward—innovative, “whole-of-government” solutions to difficult national problems. They anticipate problems and take steps to plan and prepare to successfully meet difficult challenges.

Cooperation and Collaboration. NSPs work with interagency counterparts to identify and accomplish mission-related goals, even in the absence of clear lines of authority. They strive to achieve a common understanding of their national security mission, including our national security interests, objectives, goals, desired end-states, and the capabilities and cultures of other organizations.

Communication and Relationships. NSPs proactively and consistently communicate effectively with interagency counterparts. They show respect for organizational differences and support a culture of information sharing and open communication.

Attitude and Culture. NSPs guard against parochialism and bureaucratic behaviors that hinder mission accomplishment, e.g. withholding information or organizational support or rejecting compromise in defense of agency-specific principles, and/or resisting leadership instructions from multi-agency mission principals not associated with one’s own agency.