

SESCDP

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The 20% Solution???

With declining resources and a very mixed and less predictable retirement picture, is an SESCO the most cost-effective way to build your leadership bench to have a sufficient number of SES-ready candidates?

It depends....

Objectives

- **The Senior Executive Service (SES) was established to create a cadre of senior talent with vitality and initiative tempered with leadership skills and organizational ability. Executive development is a process comprised of tools, resources, activities, evaluation of learning and growth, and reflection on learning which when organized and matched to an individual's needs prepares that individual for a number of executive positions.**
- **The DOE SES Candidate Development Program (CDP) is a competitive program designed to create candidate pools for SES positions. CDPs address the five Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs), the leadership skills needed to succeed in the SES. The ECQs are defined in terms of generic management skills and leadership competencies.**
- **The Department of Energy's, SESCO is designed to train, develop and certify, candidates, who exhibit outstanding executive potential for SES positions.**

Objectives (cont.)

- **As part of the Department's Human Capital Leadership Development Initiative to address succession planning, the CDP is built upon leadership development that is provided in a series of programs for potential managers and supervisors, newly selected managers and supervisors, and incumbent supervisors.**
- **The goal is to identify outstanding individuals with demonstrated executive potential, to provide opportunities for them to prepare for the assumption of executive duties, to create a quality leadership workforce, and to develop a broader pool from which to select CDP candidates.**
- **Very simply, the program objectives were to:**
 - **Assist participants to become SES-Ready,**
 - **Obtain QRB Certification and**
 - **Be successfully placed in a SES position**

Brief Description

- **For the DOE SESCDP Class of 2011, the recruitment and ranking process for this program was accomplished between May 22 and September 13, 2009. OPM resources were utilized to formally advertise the training program opportunity, to complete accomplishment record scoring and to host the Assessment Center and Structured Interview Panels, which were conducted by 27 DOE Senior executives.**
- **On December 31, 2009, the Deputy Secretary selected 12 candidates to participate in the SESCDP Class of 2011**
- **The program officially got underway January 8, 2010. All participants recruited their own Mentors and were assigned Executive Coaches. This program is lasted 17 months and concluded on May 19, 2011.**

Brief Description (cont.)

- **Some of the main program elements included:**
- **Three core training events:**
 - ▣ **SESCDP Orientation and High performing Organizations (March 1-5, 2010)**
 - ▣ **Strategic Leadership and ECQ Workshop for QRB preparation (October 19-22, 2010)**
 - ▣ **Orientation to DOE Budget Process and Capitol Hill Briefings (March 14-17, 2011)**

Brief Description (cont.)

- **Action Learning Team participation**
- **A minimum of one 120-day development assignment outside of the candidates' position of record (should have stuck with two)**
- **Attendance at an 80-hour executive level, ECQ-based training program that provides for interagency participation**
- **Upon successful completion of program requirements, approved candidates submitted application to OPM for QRB Certification**
- **Action Learning Team Presentations – May 18 and 19, 2011 to DOE Secretary Chu**
- **Graduation – May 19, 2011**

Pre-Announcement Activities

Updated HC website for new program

Prepared and sent program invitation correspondence to eligible managers and employees

Created program promotional literature

Scheduled briefings with diversity groups

Activated cross-organization committee to review program plans and make recommendations

Concluded discussions with OPM for final announcement approval

Completed plans and scheduled with OPM for Assessment Center activities

Announcement Posted

Left open for six weeks

Scheduled two information forums at HQ main auditorium and video casted to interested outlying offices

Conducted additional marketing outreach efforts to each DOE element

Met with diversity groups and the cross-organization committee to review efforts

Rating and Selection

OPM conducted initial screening of all applications

OPM conducted Accomplishment Record Scoring for all of the remaining eligible candidates and forwards results to DOE

DOE and OPM identified top 48 candidates to be invited to the Assessment Center

DOE identified prospective SES interviewers

OPM conducted structured interview training for DOE interviewers

Assessment Center activities and structured interviews completed

Final selections made by DOE on December 31

2009 SESCDP selectees notified

SESCDP briefing conducted for all supervisors of selectees

January-March 2010

January 2010

- 8th Teleconference for official start of SESCO DP
- 11th Sent Leadership 360 enrollment to OPM
- 13th EDP Format, Guidelines and background materials sent to participants
- 14th Pre-class reading materials for High Performing Organizations sent to participants
- 15th Action Learning Team samples sent to participants. Candidates informed to start researching prospective topics. Candidates told to begin Mentor selection process.
- 27th Lessons Learned segment with last SESCO DP participants

February 2010

- 3rd Marshall Goldsmith presentation at Forrestal Bldg
- 4th Draft Bio due; Briefing for current supervisors of class participants
- 5th DOE Candidate Continued Service and Mobility Agreements due
- 8th SESCO DP Orientation; Evening Session Orientation Evening Session
- 9th SESCO DP Orientation; Evening Session Orientation Evening Session
- 10th SESCO DP Orientation; SES Reception
- 11th SESCO DP Orientation
- 12th SESCO DP Orientation
- 15th Executive Coaches assigned this week
- 19th Name of ALT Meeting Coordinator/Facilitator Due
- 25th Final Bio and photo due for publication
- 26th Projected schedule for meeting with Executive Coach due

March 2010

- 1st Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 4th Executed Mentor Agreements due
- 5th Draft EDP due to Mentor, Coach and Program Manager
- 8th Book purchase info due
- 17th SESCO DP Program Champion and Mentors' Meeting
- 19th Final EDP due for submission to SMRB (include non-DOE training)
- 22nd Draft ALT Proposals due

April-August 2010

April 2010

- 1st** Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 9th** Final ALT Proposal due to SMRB
- 16th** If not started, projected schedule for developmental assignment due (finish no later than January 31, 2011)
- 26th** Project plan for ALT activity due
- 30th** Quarterly review by Mentor

May 2010

- 3rd** Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 7th** SMRB briefed on Candidate progress; Candidate Progress Report sent to SES Supervisor
- 31st** ALT update due

June 2010

- 1st** Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 4th** ALT Presentation Leader(s) identified
- 11th** ALT Implementation Leader(s) identified
- 30th** Update on developmental assignments due

July 2010

- 1st** Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 30th** Quarterly review by Mentor; ALT update due

August 2010

- 2nd** Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 6th** SMRB briefed on candidate progress; Candidate Progress Report sent to SES Supervisor
- 31st** Update on developmental assignments due. Should begin no later than Oct 1

September-December 2010

September 2010

- 1st Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 30th ALT update due

October 2010

- 1st Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 18th CORE Training II; Leading Strategically: From Vision to Performance
- 19th Leading Strategically: From Vision to Performance
- 20th Leading Strategically: From Vision to Performance
- 21th ECQ Workshop
- 22nd ECQ Workshop
- 29th Quarterly review by Mentor

November 2010

- 1st Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 5th SMRB briefed on Candidate progress; Candidate Progress Report sent to SES Supervisor
- 15th First ECQ write-up for QRB due
- 17th SES Placement strategy meeting with Mentors and Program Champion
- 30th Action Learning Team update due

December 2010

- 1st Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 13th ECQ reviews by Mentor and other SES due to be completed
- 20th Update on developmental assignments due

January-May 2011

January 2011

- 3rd Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 10th Candidate progress review with SESCO DP Program Champion
- 14th Candidate progress report to SMRB
- 24th Action Learning Team updates due
- 28th Draft package for QRB certification due
- 31st All developmental assignments must be complete and evaluations received

February 2011

- 1st Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 4th SMRB briefed on Candidate progress; Candidate Progress Report sent to SES Supervisor
- 14th Final Mentor Assessment due
- 16th SES Placement strategy meeting with Mentors and Program Champion
- 21th Final QRB Certification app due for submission to SMRB
- 25nd QRB Pkgs reviewed and submitted to SMRB for approval

March 2011

- 1st Schedule monthly meeting with Mentor
- 4th Draft PowerPoint presentation of ALT results due; *Other ALT tasks
- 7th QRB Pkgs sent to OPM for approval
- 16th Mentor and Program Champion review of Action Learning Team results complete
- 31st Videotape Practice run-through of Action Learning Team presentations

April 2011

- 19th Action Learning Team presentation to ERB, Deputy and Undersecretaries
- 20th Action Learning Team presentation to DOE SES and Senior Leaders; SESCO DP Graduation

May 2011

- Graduation

Program Accomplishments

- From beginning to end, extensive involvement and inclusion of more than 135 DOE SES and Senior Leaders in all aspects of the program;
- Presented a panel forum to a DOE nationwide audience, announcing the program, providing a detailed overview, applications procedures, followed by a Q & A Session with several DOE Senior Leaders and an Executive Coach;
- Conducted two additional Q & A Sessions, one HQ and one for field office employees;
- Smooth coordination with OPM and others in finalizing competitive announcement;
- Recruited 33 SES to complete Structured Interview Panel Training and serve on panels;
- Assisted OPM in coordinating Assessment Center and Structured Interview week;
- Worked with OPM staff to finalize candidate rankings for Deputy Secretary considerations with 10 days after conclusion of Assessment Center and Interviews;
- Managed to keep prospective candidate interest in staying under consideration until selections were made 3 ½ months later;
- Conducted briefing for candidate supervisors to prepare them for the loss of staff time and enlist their support for candidate program involvement;
- Orientation Week was effectively planned and administered, with more than 14 different presentations and an FEI Class on site;
- Different from past classes, this SESCO involved a strategic partnership between the Program Manager and Class that empowered them to be active participants in planning key aspects of the program;

Program Accomplishments (cont.)

- Candidates identified, interviewed and selected their DOE Mentors; they also researched and proposed their own Action Learning Team topics to the SMRB;
- CORE II week of class was very well received. ECQ Training received rave reviews; we combined SESCO Candidates and incumbent SES for a DOE first in jointly attending a Stanford University on-site course. While the course would have been more optimal with a greater emphasis on the federal sector environment, the interaction and learning with the combined group was excellent;
- By hosting Stanford University on site, DOE saved more than \$52,000+ in tuition and travel expenses;
- Provided multiple opportunities for Candidates to meet individually with incumbent SES through receptions, networking events, executive learning series events and one-on-one coaching regarding their draft ECQ's;
- All commented positively on the helpful and effective mix of traditional and experiential learning approaches;
- Without exception, Candidates believed they had full and unconditional support by the Program Manager;
- All who submitted applications for QRB Certification, received same from Secretary Chu prior to graduation;
- Seven of Graduates have already been placed in SES positions; three others have received promotions;
- Feedback from Secretary Chu, members of the SMRB and other SES across DOE was positive, encouraging and appreciative of the efforts by this Class of 2011 in making their contribution to mission accomplishment;
- The DOE SESCO has been cited on occasion by OPM and others as being a best practice effort; we have provided assistance to four other agencies in the last six months;

Areas for Improvement

- Have one additional ½ to ¾ -time professional working on SESCO - planning through completion; there were literally more than a thousand phone and in-person contacts made throughout the program; this does not include event management; I personally worked every weekend for the first five months of the program;
- Try to line up external training vendors and conference rooms much farther in advance;
- Engage SMRB and ERB more regularly during the program;
- Enlist CHCO and SMRB support to pilot an effort where Candidates are released from current positions (with right of return) and assigned to deputy or assistant-to positions while participating in SESCO;
- Identify strategies to encourage agency leadership to identify “entry-level” SES positions;
- Continue finding more ways of providing candidates and SES opportunities to interact and lessen SES concerns for hiring someone straight out of the program; had lots of positive feedback from both the SES and Candidates about wanting greater number of conversations;
- Put more structure in the Budget/Capitol Hill Orientation;
- Attempt to target rotational assignments to current or projected SES vacancies;
- Once calendar is set, coordinate with S-1 and S-2 schedules farther in advance;
- Ensure formal classes have sufficient federal sector emphases;

Areas for Improvement (cont.)

- Drop or change EEO and General Counsel presentations to Candidates;
- Solicit DOE SES for priority concerns or ideas for Action Learning Teams; the teams would still need to do their own research, but this could enhance the process;
- Consider alignment between Action Learning Team topics and building opportunities for SES placement;
- Consider reinstating 2nd rotational assignment back in the program; one at Headquarters and one in a field office location;
- Add more structured situations for Candidates to be invited to attend meetings or participate on short-term efforts for DOE or other local agencies;
- Add a segment that allows Candidates to speak with senior agency leaders regarding the differences they see between the executive skill set they are learning and the leadership skills they observe across the complex;
- Find a better way to conclude QRB application review; spent way to many evening and weekend hours, touching every page in each application;
- Help Graduates prepare a fact sheet about the SESCO to include as an attachment for an SES position application;
- Ask Graduates to serve as “Buddies” for future program participants;
- Identify additional/better ways to recognize and thank key SES and others who supported the program; not everyone wants or needs a plaque

Lessons Learned

- Find additional/better ways to better prepare current supervisors to take advantage of the SES-ready participants as they return to their former positions;
- Having more freedom to manage the program by working with the SMRB only, undermined the support needed from the entire ERB for supporting candidate placement after QRB Certification;
- Don't take university promises at face value. Stanford University presented an excellent academic program, but did not achieve sufficient "contextualization" for federal sector application;
- Funding the different events and expenses within the program was challenging; the further ahead we can anticipate expenses and arrange payment, the smoother implementation we will have;
- Anticipate that not every rotational assignment supervisor will provide sufficient guidance and support to assigned candidate;
- Identify potential home office supervisor problems earlier in the program to provide candidate greater degree of support; meet with each supervisor individually to go over program and request their support; two candidates received undeserved "meets expectations" ratings;
- Need to encourage OPM and other agencies who have participants in our class to sponsor events or activities that would provide additional experiential learning as well as SES exposure for rotational assignments and future SES position placement;

Lessons Learned (cont.)

- Give more consideration to SES “Role Modeling”; identify key SES to spend time sharing perceptions on what it’s like to be an SES;
- Do a more thorough mid-term check on Executive Coach and Candidate relationships;
- Don’t let it up to the candidates about whether or not to do practice run-throughs on presentations;
- Have an earlier understanding of what the QRB submission requirements are going to be;
- Coordinate QRB submission needs with Executive Resources staff earlier in the process;
- Be really clear on exact contract provisions with hotels for SESCDP events;
- Triple-check finished program placques for correct spelling, even if the proofs were accurate;
- Immediately following graduation, send a letter to senior agency leaders relevant to each candidate and request consideration be given to placing them in an appropriate SES vacancy or anticipated vacancy;
- Better prepare SESCDP Graduates to more effectively “out-brief” the offices and leadership on their experiences in the program, how they’ve changed and what they hope to contribute;
- Don’t assume DOE SES are inclined to hire graduates; have to build a better strategy to affect cultural change and encourage placement in appropriate 1st-level SES positions.