APPLYING EXECUTIVE CORE QUALIFICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE ENTERPRISE LEADERSHIP IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Developed For:

United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Developed By:

ICF INTERNATIONAL

Applying Executive Core Qualifications for Effective Enterprise Leadership in the Federal Government

a New Day for Federal Service

Course Purpose

- To engage you, as SES government leaders, in an immersive, highly interactive classroom experience that will challenge you to apply integrated ECQ leadership skills in complex and demanding situations, in innovative ways.
- To provide you with an opportunity to learn alongside fellow government leaders who represent a diverse mix of agencies and experiences and who will ultimately provide you with an on-going professional network.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this course you should be able to…
- Describe the interdependencies of the five ECQs and how they affect decision making and advanced leadership skills.
- Apply ECQs to real-world scenarios in challenging and complex situations.
- Formulate advanced applications of the ECQs in order to build strategic partnerships across complex agency boundaries.

Course Learning Objectives (cont'd)

By the end of this course you should be able to…
- Demonstrate behaviors that encourage and inspire others to cooperate, innovate, and work as a team.
- Create an action plan for leading your agency through difficult transitions.

Course Agenda

8:00-8:30: Introduction
8:30-10:30: Module 1: Using the ECQ Competencies To Drive Success: A Real Life Application
10:30- 11:30: Module 2: Overcoming Leadership Challenges by Exemplifying the ECQs
11:30-12:30: Lunch
12:30- 1:30: Module 2 continued
1:30-3:30:   Module 3: Tools to Support ECQs
3:30- 4:00:   Module 4: Pulling it All Together
4:00-4:30: Wrap Up

Logistics

- Two official breaks – morning and afternoon
- Feel free to request additional breaks
- 1 hour lunch break
- Move around as much as you want

Ground Rules

- Silence your cell/smartphone
- Take all calls outside of the room
- Focus on what is most beneficial for the people in the class
- No idea is a bad idea
- Stay on schedule
- Allow everyone an opportunity to speak and be heard
- Respect confidentiality
- Others...?

Self-Introduction

- In small table groups, introduce yourselves to your neighbors.
  - Give your name, professional title, organization, years in Federal Service, and years as a leader.
  - State one thing you enjoy about being a leader.

Start to think about…

- A challenging, real-world scenario you are currently facing (or have faced in the past).
- Make a note and put it aside for later.
- If you cannot think of anything now, keep considering it during the day and make a note.

Ice Breaker: "Job Disclosure"

- Individually, take 5 minutes to respond to the following questions on your worksheet:
  – What would make my leadership role easier?
  – What makes my leadership role more difficult?
- After 5 minutes, pair off with a neighbor and share your responses.

Module #1

Using the ECQ Competencies To Drive
Success: A Real Life Application

Activity #1: ECQ Matrix

- **Purpose**: To assess the relationships between the ECQs in order to understand how they combine to produce effective leadership behaviors.
- **Directions**:
  – In groups, using your worksheet, take 10 minutes to identify the competencies that best relate to one another.
  – Discuss how these clusters of competencies can impact leadership behaviors and decision making.
  – Be prepared to debrief with the rest of the class.

Activity #2: Case Study (Part I)

- **Purpose**: To experience a robust example of the ECQs in action.
- **Directions**:
  - Read the case study pages 2-4 (then STOP).

Activity #2: Case Study (Part II)

- **Directions** (continued):
  - Read each challenge and write down brief points on the advantages and drawbacks.
  - Answer the question on your own by circling the letter of the response you would have performed.
  - Discuss the rationale for your choices within your groups. Based on your discussion, try to come to a consensus on one best response.

Activity #3: Overcoming Final Objections

- **Purpose**: To explore leadership behaviors that help you navigate unexpected resistance.
- **Directions**:
  - Read "Overcoming Final Objections."
  - In groups, answer the following questions…
    - What types of situations have you encountered in your agency that remind you of this case?
    - How did you handle these situations?
    - What went well?
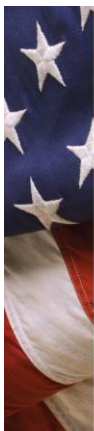   - What would you do differently next time?

Module #2

Overcoming Leadership Challenges by
Exemplifying the ECQs

Activity #4: Applying Lessons Learned

- **Purpose**: To apply the ECQs and lessons learned from the case study into challenging new environments.
- **Directions**:
  - The facilitator will assign each group a scenario:
    - Conflicting Agendas
    - Priority and Goals
    - Splitting Departments
  - Each table group will read their scenario and answer the questions provided.
  - Write your responses on a chart page and be prepared to briefly provide a summary of your scenarios.
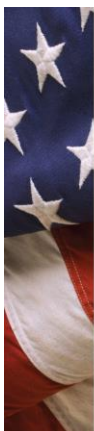
Activity #4: Debrief

Debrief Questions:
- What are some common leadership approaches that you heard across the groups?
- What are the top 3 ECQs that would help you be successful in all of these scenarios?
  - Leading People
  - Leading Change
  - Results Driven
  - Building Coalitions
  - Business Acumen

Slide 1

Module #3

Tools that Support Application of the ECQs

Slide 2
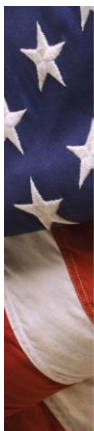
Tools that Support
Application of the ECQs

- Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Model
- Peter Vaill's Six Factors of Change
- Daniel Pink's Concepts of Motivation
- Components of Creativity

Slide 3
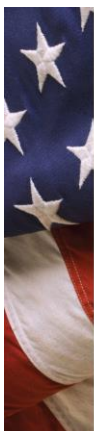
Managing Conflict while
Encouraging Cooperation

From Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument by K. W. Thomas and R. H. Kilmann, 1974, 2000. Palo Alto, CA: Xicom, Incorporated, subsidiary of CPP, Inc. Copyright 1974, 2000 by CPP, Inc.

Vaill's Six Factors of Change

Leadership

Lifelines

Common Direction

Reinforcement

Commitment

All-Ways Communication

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Relationship of Vaill's Change Factors to the ECQs

Leading People

Leading Change

Leadership

Lifelines

Common Direction

Reinforcement

Commitment

Driving Results

All-Ways Communication

Building Coalitions
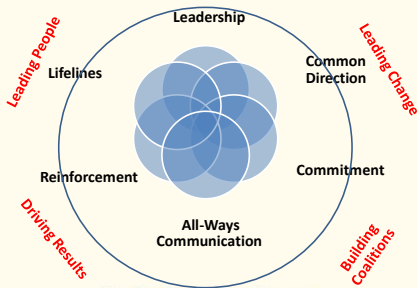
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Human Motivation

- What we know and assume about human motivation may be counterproductive to effectively leading people.

Motivation

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Leveraging Motivation to Improve Leadership Effectiveness

- How can you use…
  - Mastery
  - Autonomy
  - Purpose
- …to engage employees during times of difficult change?

Creativity and Innovation Defined

- How do you define creativity?
- How is innovation different than creativity?
- What are some examples in which creativity and innovation have helped you to solve leadership challenges?
- How do you create an environment for your employee where creativity and innovation flourish?

Three Components of Creativity

Expertise is knowledge; technical, procedural, and intellectual.

Expertise

Creative-thinking skills

CREATIVITY

Motivation

Creative-thinking skills determine how flexibly and imaginatively people approach problems. How often do they persevere and take risks?
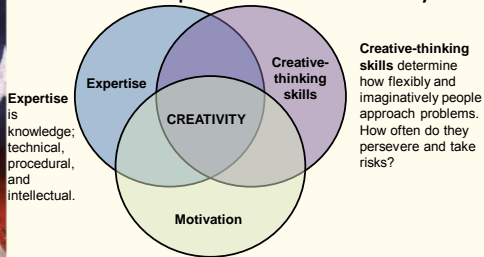
Motivation has to do with an inner passion to solve the problems at hand. This intrinsic motivation leads to solutions that are far more creative than those motivated by external rewards, such as money.

- T. Amabile

Activity #5: Choose a Model

- **Purpose**: To apply the tools we just reviewed to our own leadership challenges.
- **Directions**:
  - Consider the 4 tools/models we just discussed.
    - Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Model
    - Peter Vaill's Six Factors of Change
    - Daniel Pink's Concepts of Motivation
    - Components of Creativity
  - Select one and discuss how it could be used in your organization to help you be a more effective leader.

Module #4

Pulling It All Together

Activity #6: Leading Through Change in the Real World

- **Purpose**: To construct practical leadership approaches that participants will apply back in their agencies.
- **Directions**:
  - In your groups, individually each think of a challenging, real-world situation which you are facing.
  - Tell your group about the situation (in 2 minutes or less).
    - Specifically describe why this situation makes it difficult to lead staff effectively.
  - After everyone has described their situation, vote on the challenge to work on.
  - As a group, discuss novel ways of leading others through this situation.
  - Be sure to draw on what you have learned during this course and to frame your discussion within the context of the ECQs.

Activity #7: Note to Self

- **Purpose**: To increase the probability that participants will follow-up on their intended actions.
- **Directions**:
  - Write a quick letter to yourself that reminds you of what you hope to accomplish in the next 3 months, using the information you have learned in this class.
  - Address the envelope to yourself. We will mail it to you in 3 months.

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Asking…

What are your remaining questions?

…Answering

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Homework: Action Planning

- Select a challenging leadership scenario you are currently facing.
- Review the questions in the worksheet.
- Create action steps and dates you will achieve these steps by.

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Thank you!

ECQ Matrix Activity

Activity Purpose: To understand the inter-relationship between the ECQ competencies and how they support one another.

Activity Directions: Review the ECQ sub-competencies below. Enter a checkmark if the competency along the top row is required for the successful performance of the competency in the left column. If there are any competencies you are not familiar with, see the definitions on the following pages. As an example the first competency, Accountability, has already been completed. Remember, there are no correct answers and there may be multiple correct answers.

	1. Accountability	2. Conflict Management	3. Creativity & Innovation	4. Customer Service	5. Decisiveness	6. Developing Others	7. Entrepreneurship	8. External Awareness	9. Financial Management	10. Flexibility	11. Human Capital Management	12. Influencing/ Negotiating	13. Leveraging Diversity	14. Partnering	15. Political Savvy	16. Problem Solving	17. Resilience	18. Strategic Thinking	19. Team Building	20. Technical Credibility	21. Technology Management	22. Vision
1. Accountability	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2. Conflict Management	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
3. Creativity & Innovation	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
4. Customer Service	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
5. Decisiveness	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
6. Developing Others	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
7. Entrepreneurship	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
8. External Awareness	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
9. Financial Management	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
10. Flexibility	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
11. Human Capital Management	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
12. Influencing/ Negotiating	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
13. Leveraging Diversity	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
14. Partnering	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
15. Political Savvy	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
16. Problem Solving	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
17. Resilience	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18. Strategic Thinking	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
19. Team Building	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
20. Technical Credibility	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
21. Technology Management	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
22. Vision	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

ECQ Supporting Competency Definitions

1. **Accountability** - Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost-effective results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.
2. **Conflict Management** - Encourages creative tension and differences of opinions. Anticipates and takes steps to prevent counter-productive confrontations. Manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner.
3. **Creativity and Innovation** - Develops new insights into situations; questions conventional approaches; encourages new ideas and innovations; designs and implements new or cutting edge programs/processes.
4. **Customer Service** - Anticipates and meets the needs of both internal and external customers. Delivers high-quality products and services; is committed to continuous improvement.
5. **Decisiveness** - Makes well-informed, effective, and timely decisions, even when data are limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; perceives the impact and implications of decisions.
6. **Developing Others** - Develops the ability of others to perform and contribute to the organization by providing ongoing feedback and by providing opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods.
7. **Entrepreneurship** - Positions the organization for future success by identifying new opportunities; builds the organization by developing or improving products or services. Takes calculated risks to accomplish organizational objectives.
8. **External Awareness** - Understands and keeps up-to-date on local, national, and international policies and trends that affect the organization and shape stakeholders' views; is aware of the organization's impact on the external environment.
9. **Financial Management** - Understands the organization's financial processes. Prepares, justifies, and administers the program budget. Oversees procurement and contracting to achieve desired results. Monitors expenditures and uses cost-benefit thinking to set priorities.
10. **Flexibility** - Is open to change and new information; rapidly adapts to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.
11. **Human Capital Management** - Builds and manages workforce based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. Ensures that employees are appropriately recruited, selected, appraised, and rewarded; takes action to address performance problems. Manages a multi-sector workforce and a variety of work situations.
12. **Influencing/Negotiating** - Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.
13. **Leveraging Diversity** - Fosters an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the organization.
14. **Partnering** - Develops networks and builds alliances; collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.
15. **Political Savvy** - Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Perceives organizational and political reality and acts accordingly.
16. **Problem Solving** - Identifies and analyzes problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations.
17. **Resilience** - Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks.
18. **Strategic Thinking** - Formulates objectives and priorities, and implements plans consistent with the long-term interests of the organization in a global environment. Capitalizes on opportunities and manages risks.

19. **Team Building** - Inspires and fosters team commitment, spirit, pride, and trust. Facilitates cooperation and motivates team members to accomplish group goals.
20. **Technical Credibility** - Understands and appropriately applies principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise.
21. **Technology Management** - Keeps up-to-date on technological developments. Makes effective use of technology to achieve results. Ensures access to and security of technology systems.
22. **Vision** - Takes a long-term view and builds a shared vision with others; acts as a catalyst for organizational change. Influences others to translate vision into action.

USING LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO PRODUCE A LEADERSHIP APPRAISAL SYSTEM:
A CASE STUDY

Developed For:

United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Developed By:

ICF INTERNATIONAL

Using Leadership Skills to Produce a Leadership Appraisal System: A Case Study

Case Assumptions

The purpose of this case is to illustrate leadership skills, specifically the Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) and their interdependent properties. This case study is fictional and based on a combination of real-life events, including the interagency initiative lead by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to design and implement a government-wide Senior Executive Service (SES) performance appraisal system. Many of the situations described have been augmented and modified for instructional purposes. The names of participants in this process have been changed to preserve anonymity.

Executive Core Qualifications

Leading Change: Involves the ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.

Leading People: Involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts.

Results Driven: Involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to make strategic decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, using technology, and calculating risks.

Business Acumen: Involves the ability to manage human, financial, technology, and information resources strategically.

Building Coalitions: Involves the ability to build coalitions internally and with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals.

Background

OPM coordinated the collaborative efforts of representatives from over 30 Federal agencies and organizations to develop a government-wide SES performance appraisal system, drawing upon leading practices from the public and private sectors. The new system was designed to better meet the needs of all Executive Branch agencies and, in the long run, develop a more invigorated SES workforce. Previously, the Federal Government developed, communicated, and applied performance standards to SES members using several disparate methods – under multiple performance appraisal systems, uniquely created and operated within each Federal agency. Without a standard system, Federal agencies managed the performance of their SES members in diverse and inconsistent ways, including for

example: the application of different numbers of rating levels, varying definitions for rating levels, use of widely different methods to derive ratings, and different approaches to communicating ratings. Additionally, each agency communicated and documented performance appraisals with agency-specific forms, further complicating the clarity, consistency, and transferability of those appraisals to support cross-agency comparisons and executive mobility.

Varying SES performance appraisal systems across agencies and organizations impaired the Federal Government's need and ability to manage its SES cadre in a consistent fashion. For example, agencies placed varied emphases on SES leadership and results in the development and assessment of performance standards, with some agencies placing a premium on senior executives' accomplishments of organizational results while others valued the demonstration of executive leadership competencies. Agencies' different appraisal systems created inconsistencies, resulting in significant disparities in SES rating distributions across the government. Additionally, agencies were not required to provide explanations for ratings, and therefore took different approaches with varying degrees of success for assorted individuals (including the individuals being rated) to clearly understand the performance ratings.

Additionally, the inconsistent and perplexing approaches to SES performance management contributed to a potential barrier to executive mobility within and across Federal agencies and other organizations. Only a small number of career senior executives had ever changed agencies since joining the SES. Since performance evaluations across agencies had varying levels of rigor, hiring officials at other agencies did not necessarily have a clear understanding or confidence in other organizations' assessments of senior executives, thus inhibiting the mobility of SES members.

The vision for the new SES performance appraisal system was founded on the following principles:

- Consistency: Creates a common language; promotes consistent and reliable evaluations across agencies;
- Integrity: Demonstrates government-wide collaboration, agreement, and standards;
- Fairness: Promotes equitable evaluation across government;
- Focus on Leadership and Results: Ensures SES members are accountable for demonstrating executive-level leadership, using the Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) as a basis, in addition to achieving results;
- Clarity: Facilitates a clearer communication of performance standards;
- Flexibility: Allows use of customized performance metrics while maintaining the system's overall consistency; and
- Is informed by best practices in both the private and public sectors.

Case Study Set-up

A compelling business case existed for the development of a standard SES performance appraisal system; however, the coordination and collaboration required between and across agencies to accomplish this initiative made the task extremely daunting. This was an initiative that could not be resolved by one agency alone. To achieve a result that could and would be successfully applied across all

agencies interagency collaboration was critical, as well as coordination and sharing of resources to achieve the end goal. Furthermore, success required a group of determined leaders who could skillfully articulate a vision, foster ownership for the initiative from all stakeholders, and effectively manage change and obstacles. This case study examines (from a leadership perspective) the challenges that occurred during the development of the appraisal system and highlights how challenges were addressed through championing a vision, managing conflict, holding others accountable, and building coalitions. The case study key characters include:

1. Leader (representing the *U.S. Department of Human Capital (DoHC)*): Mr. Larry Leadership

2. Facilitator: Ms. Helena Helper

3. Saboteur (representing the *Division of Community Programs (DoCP)*)*:* Mr. Sean Saboteur

4. Stakeholder (Director of the *Bureau of Military Diplomacy (BMD)*): Mr. Ira Important

5. Working group members

    a. Mr. Carlos Contributor (*Administration on Currency (AoC)*)

    b. Ms. Pamela Participant (*Department of Research (DoR)*)

The Initiative: SES System Certification Process

Representatives from 30 agencies were assembled into a working group assigned to standardize, streamline, and ultimately drive improvements to the SES appraisal system. The working group was led by Mr. Leadership of the U.S. Department of Human Capital (DHC) (the agency responsible for providing government-wide leadership on human resources management), empowered to spearhead the project by the Director of DHC – a very prominent and influential appointee. The working group participated in five intensive, four-hour meetings scheduled over the course of one summer, due to the Director clearly stating they should not miss any deadlines and hoping to have the project completed by the end of the current fiscal year. The process began by categorizing all of the issues with the current system and dividing these issues into more manageable components. Next, the participants generated as many potential solutions for each category of issues as they could conceive. The working group also consulted with stakeholders, developed surveys, and conducted focus groups to gather feedback about the specific strengths and weaknesses of the current system. Critical questions examined the ramifications of different performance appraisal systems, such as the motivating of different leadership behaviors across agencies. The working group also researched leading practices from Federal and private sector organizations. As described in the following sections, the working group ultimately demonstrated extraordinary interagency collaboration. The leaders of the working group applied multiple ECQ skills, helping the working group to develop and reach near consensus on a broadly-applicable value-based solution.

SES Course Activity: Situational Judgment Questions

Purpose: The purpose of this exercise is to experience a robust example of the ECQs in action. There is no one correct answer, and most questions have multiple effective solutions. Responses involve using a combination of ECQ skills.

Instructions: Read each challenge and write down brief points on the advantages and drawbacks of each option. Next, answer the question on your own by circling the letter of the response you would have performed. Finally, discuss the rationale for your choices within your groups. Based on your discussion, try to come to a consensus on one best response. Record the group decision.

Challenge 1 – How does a leader influence others and motivate others to participate actively?

While Mr. Leadership was quite familiar with the challenges of getting buy-in from various stakeholder groups, he soon realized that this initiative had additional layers of complexity. In order to secure support and buy-in for the new system, he quickly realized the working group's collaboration would need to address the enterprise needs and perspectives of the entire Federal Government as well as the diverse needs and perspectives of each agency and their internal organizations. Mr. Leadership concluded the group would need to agree upon a standard and consistent structure with framework components anchoring a corporate and uniform approach to managing the performance of all senior executives in all agencies, while providing sufficient flexibility for agencies to tailor the system to meet their own diverse needs and actually accept the new system. Additionally, Mr. Leadership worried about the challenges of keeping the project on task and meeting an extremely short timetable, particularly in light of the diversity of agency philosophies on performance management, and in conjunction with the typical obstacles that accompany change management initiatives (e.g., anxiety, disruption, time, expenditures of resources, etc.).

Question: Mr. Leadership wants to engage the working group and get them excited about the project's vision. He is also worried about meeting the tight deadline. Given the Director's wish to have the project completed by fiscal year-end, how would you proceed?	Advantages	Drawbacks	Consensus Answer
A. Attempt to extend the project deadlines in order to effectively meet all phases required to design the new system.			
B. Enthusiastically articulate the project's vision to senior leaders outside of the working group and to the working group members and hope the enthusiasm will help accelerate the pace of the project.			
C. Ask each of the working group members to articulate the potential challenges anticipated with creating a new performance appraisal system and if they believe the current deadline is feasible.			
D. Bring in a trained facilitator to help manage the process and to keep the working group on task and on schedule.			

Challenge 2 – How does a leader advocate for change?

Advocating a change that affects a variety of organizations and individuals is complex due to competing priorities and needs. Unsurprisingly, a handful of participating agencies were resistant to changing their SES performance appraisal process. It is much easier to maintain the *status quo* than to invest the time and capital to create a new system, market it, train agency stakeholders, and implement it.

Question: Mr. Leadership wants to secure buy-in for the process. If you were him, which of the following actions would you take?	Advantages	Drawbacks	Consensus Answer
A. Remind the working group of the current performance appraisal system's inefficiencies and the negative consequences that would persist if the system was not improved.			
B. Encourage participants to share suggestions and formulate solutions. Discuss and consider each one, even those that may seem far-fetched or risky.			
C. Commiserate with working group members when they express doubts that a new system will solve any problems, since nothing productive is likely to materialize.			
D. Go directly to the supervisors of those who express doubt. Explain to them that they need to ensure their representatives are on board with the process and are productive in meetings.			

Challenge 3 – How does a leader secure and maintain commitment from agencies with varying levels of power and influence?

An important element of ensuring project success is to facilitate support from internal and external stakeholders who will have any influence over the project's successful development and implementation. Mr. Leadership highlighted the rewards of creating an effective new system and encouraged all stakeholders to envision a future system that is streamlined, fair, and unbiased. In addition to promoting the benefits, he wanted to also ensure that powerful and influential agencies were strong allies in this endeavor. With their support and understanding of the effort, he knew he would have exponentially better chances at getting the agencies to adopt the new appraisal system.

Question: If you were Mr. Leadership, how would you secure commitment?	Advantages	Drawbacks	Consensus Answer
A. Try to identify a leader from a large or influential agency and form alliances with him/her by engaging them outside of the working group.			
B. Work hard to understand and address the concerns of powerful stakeholders, even those who are not directly involved in developing the new system.			
C. Entice representatives from large and influential agencies by pledging support for their pet projects in return for their endorsement of the new appraisal system.			
D. Analyze the performance appraisal needs of the large agencies and incorporate solutions to those needs into the new system.			

Challenge 4 – How does a leader enlist the support of other leaders to help spearhead and promote the initiative?

One challenge faced by leaders instituting change is the amount of talk surrounding the change project. As working group members returned back to their home agencies and discussed the SES performance appraisal process change, information about the project – sometimes inaccurate – quickly spread outside of the working group and generated a great deal of discussion and sometimes anxiety. It was critical that the working group understood the importance of disseminating accurate information and maintaining a positive and constructive message. Mr. Leadership sought other leaders to help spearhead the initiative and promote it confidently.

Question: If you were Mr. Leadership, how would you identify champions?	Advantages	Drawbacks	Consensus Answer
A. Convince all working group members of their influence and underscore how instrumental they would be in stimulating support for the new system at their agencies and across the government. Make sure each one of them acts as champions in their own way.			
B. Do the promoting and spearheading yourself. After all, you probably should not count on other leaders to carry out the initiatives you have been trusted to oversee.			
C. Create written talking points that describe the initiative accurately and enthusiastically and ask for volunteers that will promote the points at their agencies.			
D. Identify one or two well-respected individuals who would be willing to advocate for the new appraisal system back at their home agencies and throughout the Federal Government.			

Challenge 5 – How does a leader ensure positive, constructive conversation?

Significant change is often met with some level of resistance. While Mr. Leadership sought diverse perspectives on the merits of the new system, he understood the threat posed by dissenters not interested in providing constructive contributions. In particular, Mr. Leadership worried about cynics and pessimists who intentionally worked to disrupt the flow of progress, by strongly influencing participants publicly or behind the scenes, and impeding the group's ability to focus on considering and resolving genuine issues. For example, during the working group's sessions, some team members privately voiced commitment but then would publicly express objections or attempt to influence the working group against the approach or idea to which they had earlier committed. At other times, the individuals would privately express negative opinions and attempt to build opposing coalitions with other working group members or with other stakeholders outside of the working group. Some agency representatives were strongly concerned that the new appraisal system would not align with the needs of their agencies and were strongly opposed to any change. Some individuals even spread false information about the system in an attempt to thwart the entire initiative.

Question: If you were Mr. Leadership, how would you deal with this type of resistance?	Advantages	Drawbacks	Consensus Answer
A. Question those that have been spreading false information in front of their fellow working group members to shame them and therefore prevent their negative behavior in the future.			
B. Wait to see if others in the working group will address the saboteurs themselves.			
C. Hold private, frank conversations with individuals who are acting as saboteurs to demonstrate a genuine interest in considering their diverse opinions and concerns.			
D. Let other influential leaders around the Federal Government know about your experience with the naysayers to caution them against working with them.			

Challenge 6 – How does a leader ensure engagement and commitment to meetings?

Mr. Leadership also worried about the continuity of group membership and the inclusive participation of agency representatives at each meeting – factors critical to ensuring broad representation of needs and solutions, as well as efficiency in making progress. Each session seemed to have a new set of members and a large number of absences. Some of those that could not attend in-person would dial in, but would be in listening mode and not contribute nearly as much as those in person. Without regular attendance and participation from each group member, Mr. Leadership realized that driving accountability would be difficult and that group decisions made by a few group members could later be challenged by those who were notably absent when decisions were made. Mr. Carlos Contributor expressed how difficult it was to remain engaged and committed to the working group's purpose. He supported the cause and understood the challenges with the current system all too well, but when he returned to his home agency he got busy with other work and often forgot about the project in between meetings. As passionate as he was about refreshing the performance appraisal system his other work persisted and, in fact, picked up a little bit during the course of this project. Additionally, Mr. Contributor's children were out of school for the summer; spending time with them and going on a family vacation were high on his priority list as well.

Question: If you were Mr. Leadership, how would you ensure engagement and commitment to meetings?	Advantages	Drawbacks	Consensus Answer
A. Tell participants that being a representative for one's agency is a notable distinction that denotes credibility and influence and that they should be proud to be involved in such an important project.			
B. Call some of the supervisors of the participants, ask them for their support and commitment, and ask that accommodations be made to encourage more consistent participation.			
C. Express the importance of regular meetings and summarize the project schedule, milestones, key accomplishments, and decisions at every meeting.			
D. Assign take home tasks in the hopes that participants will hold each other accountable and be more likely to complete them.			

Challenge 7 – How does a leader foster collaboration?

A key driver for success in this project was collaboration, and Mr. Leadership had to face a number of dynamics posing as potential obstacles to collaboration. For example, many of the working group participants had never worked with each other before and even had competing interests and resources. Mr. Leadership knew that establishing the value of collaboration to each of the working group members, so they would ultimately walk away from the collaboration with the feeling they had succeeded for their organizations and themselves, rather than feeling they had given up something without a return on investment, was key to fostering collaboration.

Question: If you were Mr. Leadership, how would you foster teamwork and get the participants to collaborate across boundaries?	Advantages	Drawbacks	Consensus Answer
A. Reiterate the goals of the project and the timeline, and allow participants the choice of full autonomy to accomplish the mission on their own or working with one another.			
B. Remind the participants of the importance of collaboration and the possible benefits of working as a team.			
C. Divide the working group into smaller teams in order to focus work around specific areas, such as system design and training.			
D. Extend the length of the first meeting by 45 minutes to allow time for a team building activity so the working group can get to know each other.			

Using Leadership Skills to Produce a Leadership Appraisal System: Overcoming Final Objections

While the successful completion of a project against stated goals and measurements is critical, the second phase of a project requires similar effort and calculated tactics. Mr. Leadership was met with the challenge of keeping the working group participants involved, post-content creation, and igniting their sense of commitment to seeing the project through to the implementation and adoption of the system by agencies.

Ms. Pamela Participant was on the design team working on improving the definitions of the SES competencies. As she was completing her responsibilities, she began to truly understand the impact of the changes and the potential benefits. She then called a meeting with her supervisor, who was the Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) at her agency. She showed him the progress that was being made and explained the expected value of adopting the new system. Once back in the working group, she explained how she was able to effectively persuade her CHCO to promote the system and to even share her excitement about it. Hearing this, Mr. Leadership encouraged participants to go back to their agencies and endorse the system in order to build champions, generate recognition from fellow executives about the system, and facilitate the eventual implementation. Mr. Leadership also continuously identified opportunities to showcase Ms. Participant and her agency's commitment at speaking engagements and other events to demonstrate the conviction and success of Ms. Participant's agency in implementing the new system. Mr. Leadership also relied upon the champions of the effort to persuade and to provide technical assistance to other agencies considering implementation of the new system. Mr. Leadership further commissioned subsequent small teams from the larger working group to develop materials on communications and implementation for the use of all agencies implementing the new system. Additionally, Mr. Leadership and his staff offered and regularly provided assistance through speeches, presentations, trainings, and technical support to implementing agencies. Finally, Mr. Leadership continued to engage key stakeholders at all levels and continued to implement a marketing strategy, providing information and visibility on the success of the new system to the public, members of Congress, senior agency leaders, senior executives at each agency, and human resources practitioners.

As the working group was getting closer to their deadline, they appeared to be making progress against their goals. At the conclusion of the second to last meeting, the group had very positive results from the smaller working groups. Mr. Leadership told the group the end was in sight and he could envision the positive impacts the work would have on government leadership. At the last meeting, however, close to their final deadline, things seemed to go off course. Mr. Saboteur began to openly criticize the new system, even though he had not privately expressed any concerns to Mr. Leadership. He surfaced old issues that had been previously resolved by the working group. Before long, other group members began questioning the decisions that had been previously made. Mr. Leadership used all of his leadership skills to try and get the meeting back on track, but ultimately had to admit defeat and ended the final meeting without being able to accomplish the end goal. He expressed disappointment but also

proudly complimented the working group on the significant and important work the group had accomplished in an exceptionally collaborative and effective manner; the group had come very close but could not reach agreement on a number of final key decisions. Mr. Leadership recommended holding one final conference call to summarize the work and decisions completed by the group and to memorialize the progress made by the group. The intent of the conference call was to simply summarize the accomplishments of the team (e.g., lessons learned, data gathered for future use, high level of collaboration, etc.) and close the project out.

After the group adjourned, Mr. Contributor and Ms. Participant separately approached Mr. Leadership. They each informed Mr. Leadership that his sincere admission of relative failure in front of the group was remarkable because many of the group's members had been convinced Mr. Leadership intended all along to unilaterally choose and push a solution irrespective of the group's input or support for a solution. Mr. Leadership's genuine focus on the interagency partnership and collaboration energized Mr. Contributor and Ms. Participant, who felt their commitment to the successful outcome of the project exponentially multiplied.

Following this feedback, Mr. Leadership decided to give the project one last shot. He organized conference calls with individual group members to enlist and renew their commitment. He also created a structured agenda for the final group conference to ensure an efficient and constructive discussion on the final decisions the group had not been able to resolve.

During the final conference call an amazing thing happened. To his great surprise, Mr. Leadership found that the group had galvanized and demonstrated a stronger commitment than ever to achieving a solution and the completion of the project. One by one, the remaining decisions and details of the project were resolved by the group. The group members demonstrated tremendous passion and enthusiasm, and engaged each other in substantive constructive discussion over issues that had previously generated great dissension and division. Group members felt heard while the group as a whole selflessly maintained an unwavering focus on the larger interests of the entire Federal Government. The group members achieved actual consensus – an amazing outcome with generally over 30 individuals in the room at every meeting, including this final conference call – on every major element of the new performance appraisal system. This consensus outcome further reflected the commitment of the group members to decisions and solutions reflecting and supporting the success of the entire government, while group members understood the approach was not necessarily the preferred direction of any individual agency. Ultimately, each working group member, including Mr. Saboteur, realized the benefits the new system would bring to each agency and to every SES member, and collaboratively applied their individual expertise and perspectives to create a standard solution for the entire Federal Government.

Applying Lessons Learned: Mini-Scenarios

Instructions

- Individually, read your assigned scenario.
- As a group, apply the concepts discussed so far to determine your next steps.

Mini-Scenarios

Conflicting Agendas: A new President has just been sworn into office. All through her campaign she has promised a restructuring of budgets, where she plans to enforce a mission to reduce defense spending to allow for more money to be spent towards higher education loan structures—to immediately reduce the burden of paying for college. You are an executive in the Department of Education and have been positioning for money, instead, to be spent on evaluating and developing mathematics and science programs in the public school curriculum. Your agency's focus for the past few years has been to develop creative ways to instill this mission. You believe this is a long-term solution to help improve the country's education standards and make the population better prepared for global competition. You are working on a committee with fellow leaders at a similar rank and they are split in their personal preferences between the two missions; undecided how they should focus their time. **What will you do, and how will you collaborate with others, in order to effectively resolve this challenge?**

Priority and Goals: You are a Chief Human Capital Officer at your agency, struggling with achieving priorities from the previous year. Congress has just announced a mandate that requires all HR professionals to achieve a new certification for job classification for Federal workers. Even before this change was announced, several of your staff have resigned or threatened to leave due to the overwhelming workload. Many of your employees feel burned out, and a hiring freeze in your agency has prevented you from back-filling positions. Complying with this new mandate will only make the problem worse, and your entire staff is questioning why everyone needs to be certified in this new system, considering that many of them do not even do job classification. **What will you do, and how will you collaborate with others, in order to effectively resolve this challenge?**

Splitting Departments: You work in the Financial Administration function at your agency, performing financial analysis and budgeting. You also advise on policy development. You have just been notified that the department will be split in two at the start of the next fiscal year. The new structure will separate the technical aspect of financial administration and the policy development side into two units. You have noticed that individuals have begun speaking about the function being transferred, long before it is to happen, and before it has been announced publically. The work and the responsibility of policy development still resides in your department, but the other department that will eventually take over policy development has been telling stakeholders outside the agency that the department has already moved and resides in their unit. You have heard that they have also been advising on policy matters using erroneous methods. Your stakeholders have come to you, confused about who they should reach out to and who is actually performing the work. **What will you do, and how will you collaborate with others, in order to effectively resolve this challenge?**

Action Planning

Activity Directions

- Think of a leadership challenge you are facing at work. You may use the challenge from Activity 6, whether it was chosen or not, or you may use a different challenge.
- Review the leadership competencies covered in this course and identify the ones you think will be key for addressing your challenge.
- Next, think of the primary barriers you will face as you address the situation and note them in the space provided.
- Review and respond to each of the key questions provided by indicating specific actions you will take. Indicate by when you will have these actions completed. An example has been provided to get you started.
- When you are finished, find a partner and discuss your responses.

What is your challenge? *Describe in a few sentences the problem you are facing.*	
What **key** competencies will you apply?	
What barriers will you face?	

Key Questions	Specific Actions	Due by:
How will you influence others and motivate others to participate actively?	• *Example: Request Mr. X to be a champion for the project.*	• *Within 30 days*
How will you advocate for this change?	• *Example: Encourage staff to share suggestions and formulate solutions.*	• *Ongoing*

How will you secure and maintain commitment from agencies with varying levels of power and influence?	• *Example: Work to understand and address the concerns of powerful stakeholders.*	• *Within 1 week of project start*
How will you enlist the support of other leaders to help spearhead and promote the initiative?	• *Example: Identify well-respected individuals to promote the project.*	• *Within 30 days*

How will you ensure positive, constructive conversation about the project and its objectives?	• *Example: Converse privately with dissenters to understand their motivations.*	• *Within one week of demonstrated dissent*
How will you ensure engagement and commitment to project meetings?	• *Example: Express the distinction of representing an organization at project meetings.*	• *At first project meeting*

How will you foster collaboration?	• *Example: Divide the working group into smaller teams.*	• *At first project meeting*