

Unrealized **VISION**

Reimagining the Senior Executive Service

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PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Booz | Allen | Hamilton

The Partnership for Public Service is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works to revitalize the federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and by transforming the way government works.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thirty-one years ago, as part of the most sweeping civil service reforms in more than a century, Congress created the Senior Executive Service (SES) to provide a unified, government-wide cadre of federal career executives with shared values, a broad perspective and solid leadership skills. This leadership corps, reformers believed, would move across agencies, bring their expertise and strategic thinking to a range of difficult issues and problems, and operate under a uniform and performance-based pay system.

Today's Senior Executive Service, however, only vaguely reflects and demonstrates this vision. Perhaps more alarming, though, is that the underlying expectations set forth in 1978 have survived and not enough has been done to strengthen, reinvigorate, and prepare the federal government's senior career leadership corps.

This is highly problematic because workplace norms have radically changed from three decades ago when the SES was created, and the number and complexity of the challenges have grown exponentially. Information now flows through social and technological networks at a rapid pace, changing the rules of engagement. Events have the potential to escalate more quickly and unpredictably. Addressing problems requires greater collaboration and negotiation between agencies and across sectors.

The issues faced by government executives also have grown increasingly difficult and global, and include the most serious financial meltdowns since the Great Depression, two foreign wars, an aging population, soaring budget deficits, and serious energy and health care problems. At a time when the public is looking for government to be part of the solution, government must respond with strong and forward-looking executive leadership.

This can't happen unless the top political leadership makes the people of government a priority. The president and his appointees must see it as their responsibility to cultivate, develop and nurture high-quality senior career leaders and hold them accountable for their performance.

In the best of times, high-performing organizations invest substantially in their leadership development. Look at General Electric or the military services. In bad times, these exemplary organizations focus even more intently on developing leaders. For too long, the federal government has faced a serious leadership gap, and that gap has only grown given the challenges currently confronting our nation.

This is why the Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton decided to study the SES, to examine to what extent it has achieved its original goals and is keeping up with the times, to see if there are impediments to its success, and to determine if changes should be made to improve the management of government. Specifically, we looked at how the executive corps is structured and how government develops, recruits, hires, retains, pays and trains its top managers.

We interviewed key stakeholders, practitioners, policymakers and academics; analyzed available data; surveyed development and training officials; and conducted focus groups with members of the SES, federal middle managers and SES recruiting and hiring managers.

Our primary finding is that the Senior Executive Service as envisioned by reformers has fallen short of its promise. The original vision of the SES was never realized. More importantly, we find that the original vision itself is inadequate for today's needs and does not provide the blue-

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We found that:

- Most career senior executives remain in the same agency and do not move through the government to share their expertise or provide an enterprise-wide, collaborative approach as envisioned by the 1978 law. In fact, only 2.3 percent or fewer members of the SES left their jobs annually between 2004 and 2008 for another SES position in a different agency. This is due to a number of factors, including the inability of a decentralized federal human capital system to provide the needed support for a centralized executive service.
- Numerous executives are understandably focused on the day-to-day management of their programs and organizations rather than strategic leadership. Others have technical and professional specialties that are needed more than executive competencies, and they should be classified in the separate “Scientific and Professional” or the “Senior Level” job categories rather than in the SES. But fewer than 900 individuals (versus the approximately 7,000 in the SES) are in these separate senior job classifications, largely because the SES is perceived to be more prestigious and, until recently, more highly compensated.

Another overarching finding is that building a consistently high-caliber, government-wide executive organization is impeded by decentralized talent development and recruitment processes, passive recruiting, an exceedingly cumbersome and lengthy hiring system, inadequate leadership training programs and a pay structure that can allow subordinates to earn more than top-level executives.

We found that:

- Agencies take a passive approach to locating top talent, primarily recruiting internally and rarely looking outside government. Even when agencies look inside the government for executives, they often fail to identify potential candidates early enough to provide training and development to adequately feed the talent pipeline with individuals who are ready for the jobs.
- The senior executive hiring process is broken. It is time consuming, complicated, frequently relies on jargon-filled job announcements and requires too many lengthy written essays. There is too much emphasis on technical skills rather than core management competencies in the evaluation process, and little value is added by a centralized Qualifications Review Board.

- Pay is a serious impediment to recruiting top talent, with pay caps imposed regardless of performance and a system in place that allows some employees to earn more than their senior managers.
- Candidate development programs are not strategically linked to succession planning; onboarding programs to help new executives adjust are rare; and development programs for senior executives are decentralized, lack coordination and are inadequate.

To improve and strengthen the SES to meet the pressing needs of the 21st century, we recommend that:

- Congress should divide the SES into two distinct executive segments by creating a sizable new “National SES Corps” of mobile managers who will have rotational assignments and clear expectations that they will work in multiple agencies, at different levels of government or in the private sector during their careers. To complement the National Corps, there should also be an agency-based SES corps whose members will focus on developing the talents and skills needed primarily within a single department or agency.
- The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) should work with federal agencies to reevaluate existing SES positions to determine whether the actual responsibilities and competencies of some executives would be better suited for the separate “Scientific and Professional,” and “Senior Level” job classifications.
- OPM should consolidate its various program responsibilities for the SES into one office and provide coordinated and expanded services. For example, OPM should conduct executive searches, develop and maintain an SES “talent bank,” and manage the interagency and cross-sector mobility of the National Corps.
- OPM should work with agencies to phase out lengthy written narratives as the primary means of evaluating senior executive candidates and develop and promote better and more applicant-friendly assessment tools.
- OPM should work with Congress to abolish the centralized Qualifications Review Board that vets candidates at the end of the process. In place of the board, OPM should expand its oversight and post-action review capability.
- Agencies, with the help of OPM, should institute onboarding programs to help new executives integrate into their jobs, develop new programs to identify and train potential future leaders, and provide ongoing development and training for all senior executives.

- **As part of this development, OPM or another central organization should also provide ongoing opportunities for senior executives, including executive coaching and peer-to-peer executive networking.**
- **Congress should de-link its pay from SES pay to help eliminate the growing problem that permits some subordinates to earn more than senior executives and help the federal government maintain or accelerate progress diversifying the SES. Congress should ensure sufficient support for training and development of current SES members.**
- **Congress should also establish a counterpart program to the Intergovernmental Personnel Act that will allow senior leaders to be temporarily exchanged between the federal government and the private sector for developmental purposes.**

As our nation faces many new and complex challenges, it is important to ensure that government has the right mix of leaders and managers who are highly competent, creative and well-prepared. Addressing the problems highlighted in this report will lead to better implementation of national policy and improved delivery of services to the American people.

INTRODUCTION

The United States government is the nation's largest employer, an expansive enterprise with 1.9 million civilian workers, an annual budget of trillions of dollars and a broad mission to protect the health, safety and welfare of the American people.

This huge and complex organization is managed by 1,455 political appointees who come and go with presidential administrations, a Senior Executive Service (SES) that includes nearly 7,000 career executives and 665 other noncareer individuals who hold their positions through political appointments.

This SES was created during the Carter administration as part of the Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA) of 1978. The *Washington Post* described the Oct. 13, 1978, signing ceremony as one of both “hope and hype,” while other accounts of the event quoted President Jimmy Carter as saying that the new law would revitalize the government and make it more responsive to the needs of the electorate.¹

The law abolished the Civil Service Commission that was viewed as too powerful and bureaucratic, and replaced it with three agencies—the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board that was set up to adjudicate employee work appeals; the Federal Labor Relations Authority to handle labor management issues; and the Office of Personnel Management, a human resources agency that would set policies for hiring and pay for all civilian employees.

Prior to the enactment of the 1978 law, senior government executives were classified as “super grades”—General Series (GS) S-16s, 17s and -18s—and were part of individual agency executive systems. The SES was designed to be a more cohesive government-wide system for managers who had shared values, a broad perspective of government and solid executive skills.²

The SES also was meant to be—and is today—a corps of career civil servant executives, though up to 10 percent of SES positions may be filled by political appointees. Mobility of executives across government was intended to be a key advantage of this new government-wide executive

corps. The SES was designed to operate under a uniform and performance-based pay system, be held accountable for individual and organizational performance and have opportunities for continual and systematic development.

Later personnel reforms added additional senior positions outside the SES that were not executive or managerial in nature—Senior Level (SL) and Senior Scientific (ST) positions. However, there are only about 900 SLs/STs compared to more than 7,000 career and politically appointed members of the SES.

The Partnership for Public Service, in cooperation with Booz Allen Hamilton, examined the state of the SES, seeking to determine how it is faring three decades after its creation as the responsibilities and challenges of the government and its managers have become increasingly complex and daunting.

Our study found that many of the hopes of the reformers of 1978 were never realized and that the SES in many respects has fallen short of its goals. The vision of a government-wide corps of thousands of leaders who would rotate across agencies has never come to pass. Regardless, it is a vision that is no longer fit for today's complex challenges and now should be refined to encompass a smaller grouping within the broader senior executive corps which would move across agencies, different levels of government and the private sector.

Common criticisms about senior executives from our focus group with GS-14s and -15s centered on members of the SES being preoccupied with day-to-day management of their programs or organizations (making the trains run on time), but lacking the necessary soft skills of leading people and change. Many also were concerned that the SES as a whole is stovepiped within agencies and is

A Center for Creative Leadership report: “What’s Next? The 2007 Changing Nature of Leadership Survey” notes that, “leaders have a clear view of what skills will be needed to provide effective leadership in the future. The survey shows that future leadership skills will focus on a number of key characteristics, the foremost being collaboration (49 percent). In addition, leadership change, building effective teams, and influence without authority ranked high in terms of leadership skills needed for the future.”

1 Sawyer, Kathy. “White House Signing Is a Celebration.” *The Washington Post*. October 14, 1978. A2.

2 Office of Personnel Management. *Senior Executive Service*. http://www.opm.gov/ses/about_ses/history.asp.

not providing a corporate or enterprise-wide view of the federal government.

Yet the nature of problems today requires collaboration across agencies and other governmental organizations; with the private, nonprofit and academic sectors; and across borders and cultures.

Food safety provides just one example of how what may appear to be a discrete issue is actually far more complex and interconnected with participants both domestically and abroad.

There are at least 12 federal agencies with food safety responsibilities. The Food Safety and Inspection Service and the Food and Drug Administration are the primary federal regulatory agencies responsible for this critical area, but other federal organizations such as the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Homeland Security play important roles. Adding to this complexity, state government agencies augment inspection and regulation within their borders, and private-sector companies regulated by the federal government are intimately involved in the process.³

As a result, career federal leaders must effectively work with numerous counterparts in other federal agencies, state and local governments, plus the private sector, to ensure our nation's food supply is safe. And with our food originating in increasingly dispersed locations around the world, leading our nation's food safety and security efforts is quickly becoming a global job.

This is just one example of the complex, global and multi-sector challenges federal leaders face, which are now routinely replicated across the government.

To respond, the federal government must aggressively recruit, effectively hire, strategically develop and consistently retain the most talented leaders with management skills from within—and outside—government. Government must also offer competitive total compensation; reward high performers and deal with poor performers; as well as plan for, and systematically develop, a strong internal talent pipeline of future members of the SES.

The government also must do a better job of coordinating SES activities—the central theme of legislation introduced in the Senate and House (S. 1180 and H.R. 2721,

respectively). The bills would require OPM to create an office devoted to SES oversight and policymaking. This office would have responsibilities to design standards for SES performance management systems, train senior executives and SES candidates, establish mentor programs for those candidates, and create a recruiting program targeting talented women and minorities.

While the majority of study participants we spoke to held individual members of the SES in very high regard, the perspectives on the SES as a leadership corps were less positive. The SES was frequently described as a compensation tool to attract and retain senior technical talent, or as a group of technical experts who do not focus on their broader leadership responsibilities.

Strong leadership is essential for an effective federal government and an engaged workforce. The Partnership's *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government* rankings have shown that effective leadership is closely linked to employee satisfaction. Other research demonstrates that employee satisfaction also is tied to organizational performance.

Unfortunately, the latest rankings, like previous surveys, showed low ratings for senior leadership. For example, barely 51 percent of respondents, government-wide, agreed with the question, "I have a high level of respect for my organization's senior leaders," in the 2008 Federal Human Capital Survey (on which the 2009 *Best Places* is based).

To address the shortcomings in executive leadership and to meet the growing needs of the government, we make recommendations for some restructuring of the SES. We also propose changes in recruiting, hiring, development, and compensation practices that could serve to attract top talent, improve leadership and result in a better managed federal government.

³ Government Accountability Office, *Food Safety: Overview of Federal and State Expenditures*, GAO-01-177 (February 2001). Available online at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d01177.pdf>.

THE ROLE AND STRUCTURE OF THE SES

FINDING 1

The SES is Not a Mobile Corps of Executive Leaders as Envisioned

A major goal of the SES was to create a corps of mobile and experienced career executives that could move across agencies, gaining extensive knowledge of government and applying their executive skills to a wide array of management challenges. It was hoped that having a mobile corps would improve cooperation and trust across agencies, promote the exchange of ideas, reduce obstacles to coordination and allow executives to develop a corporate or enterprise-wide view of the federal government.

In their 2005 book, public administration experts Robert Klitgaard and Paul Light argue for this kind of mobility in government. “The more senior the position is, the more important it is for an incumbent to understand how his or her activity relates to the overall objectives of its larger organization and how the organization relates to its environment.... Job rotations, appropriately managed, often provide the most powerful means of broadening and deepening domain knowledge and developing an enterprise perspective.”⁴

This vision, however, has not become reality. Over the course of the existence of the SES, senior executives have been viewed primarily as agency-specific assets, not federal or national assets.

Few SES managers have ever worked or even sought to work outside their own agency. During the 2004 to 2008 timeframe, the annual number of SES members who left their jobs for another SES position in a different agency ranged between only 1.8 percent and 2.3 percent.⁵ This is less than the percentage of SES members who voluntarily quit each year, and demonstrates a culture that does not encourage, promote or reward mobility.

There are a number of reasons why the SES has failed to develop a mobile corps during the past 31 years, including a cultural bias against mobility that started soon after the Service was created. From the beginning, SES mobility and job rotations were quickly viewed as a negative.

4 Robert Klitgaard and Paul Light. *High-performance government: structure, leadership, incentives*. 2005, pp. 258-268.

5 Data is from FedScope, all numbers are for full-time permanent employees.

“All the really big, tough problems are intergovernmental, and require working across agencies.”

A federal HR executive

“An agency-based approach kills an SES corps that is mobile.”

A public management expert

Patricia Ingraham, an authority on public administration and the SES, wrote, “The mobility provisions were widely perceived to be punitive and a method to get rid of unwanted personnel, rather than as tools for improved management or career-development purposes.”⁶

The failure of the SES to build a government-wide mobile executive corps also was due in part to the decentralized way in which the federal workforce is managed.

The same legislation that created the SES eliminated the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and reconstituted it as the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The CSC had a more active and direct role in government-wide applicant recruitment and assessment for new hires at all levels including top managers. OPM has almost totally delegated that recruitment and assessment role to agencies.

Ingraham said OPM, in effect, became a “monitoring and advisory agency rather than as an administrator of personnel policies,” delegated many human resource management functions to the agencies, and began serving in an oversight role.⁷

6 Patricia Ingraham, *The Foundations of Merit: Public Service in American Democracy*, 1995, pg. 85.

7 Patricia Ingraham, *The Foundations of Merit: Public Service in American Democracy*, 1995, pg. 77.

“[The] SES should be managed as a corps. We need to create an atmosphere/culture where the jobs that require mobility are the jobs that people aspire to. Represent these jobs as the ones that really run things in the government. Right now the SES is very agency-centric; we need to do it corporately.”

A federal HR executive

So as the federal government’s personnel system was reorganized to provide agencies with more autonomy and flexibility, the SES was created as a government-wide executive system. Just as it became necessary to build a government-wide infrastructure to manage senior executives across federal agencies, the agency charged with carrying out that role was decentralizing management authority.

OPM’s decentralized approach has focused on issuing SES regulations, periodically showcasing SES best practices, and supporting hiring by convening the Qualifications Review Board (QRB), a panel of SES members that certifies candidates as meeting the qualifications to be appointed into the senior service.

In a November 7, 2008, memo, “Guidelines for Broadening the Senior Executive Service,” Acting OPM Director Michael Hager urged agencies to increase mobility and rotational assignments. He said events have shown, “the disadvantages for national security and disaster preparedness when leaders lack a government-wide perspective or are not experienced in working across agency lines to respond to national threats or issues.”⁸

The memorandum encouraged members of the SES to consider details, sabbaticals, employment outside the federal government, significant participation in inter-agency projects or rotations to new executive positions. However, the director also cautioned that mandating in-

teragency rotations without exceptions “is likely to be difficult and impractical, especially for small agencies and very specialized positions.”

In the absence of a strong central coordinating organization, individual agencies have tried to fill the vacuum. Some have proactively created the infrastructure for, and expectation of, intra-agency mobility for development and training.

Some experts believe that while having a government-wide mobile corps is more important than ever given the nature of today’s government responsibilities and challenges, the original concept of including every senior executive in this rotation system was unrealistic. An alternative would be to create a sizable, but smaller, tier of career executives within the SES who would have broad leadership and management expertise and be capable of moving into jobs across agencies, different levels of government and the private sector.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), using the military promotion process as a model, has created a system where rising leaders must work in another agency within the community and receive a “joint duty certification” before they can be promoted to SES equivalent positions.⁹ The Department of Defense has similar requirements for civilian employees. Other agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service and the Environmental Protection Agency also have created intra-agency rotational expectations and processes.

At the same time that individual agency mobility systems have been created, others have been separating themselves entirely from the SES, and, in effect, undermining the underlying premise of a government-wide senior executive corps.

For example, several agencies have been exempted from participating in the SES. With varying levels of autonomy, the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Office of Comptroller of the Currency, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and others have created their own separate executive systems and do not participate in the SES. Ironically, this fragmentation is precisely what the SES was designed to replace in 1978.

8 *Guidelines for Broadening the Senior Executive Service (SES)*, Office of Personnel Management Memo, November 7, 2008. Available online at: <http://www.chcoc.gov/Transmittals/TransmittalDetails.aspx?TransmittalID=1696>.

9 Thompson, James and Rob Seidner. “Federated Human Resource Management in the Federal Government: The Intelligence Community Model.” 2009, IBM Center for the Business of Government.

FINDING 2

Many SES Positions Are Filled by Technical Experts Instead of Leaders

Members of the SES are expected to have “solid executive expertise” with a focus on providing executive management and leadership with a broad perspective of government.¹⁰ Yet many individuals in today’s executive service are scientists or technical specialists who have strong skills in their fields, but do not necessarily possess managerial and leadership competencies. Misclassification of these individuals represents a significant flaw in the government’s executive system.

An alternative route exists in the federal government for senior-level career employees with strong technical expertise, but these job classifications are not widely used. They are known as the Scientific and Professional (ST) and Senior Level (SL) positions.

Both categories are classified and paid as senior positions, but management and leadership responsibilities are expected to constitute less than 25 percent of their time. The number of people in these two senior job categories is dwarfed by the SES. There are fewer than 900 people in these two senior categories compared to more than 7,000 in the SES.

As with the SES, OPM controls the allotment and allocation of SL/ST positions at agencies across the federal government.

The Scientific and Professional category covers non-executive positions classified above GS-15 that involve high-

level research and development in hard sciences or related fields. The Senior Level system is for non-executive positions above GS-15 that do not meet the criteria for the SES and are not involved with fundamental research and development responsibilities. Examples of Senior Level positions include a special assistant or senior attorney in a highly specialized field who is not a manager, supervisor or policy advisor.

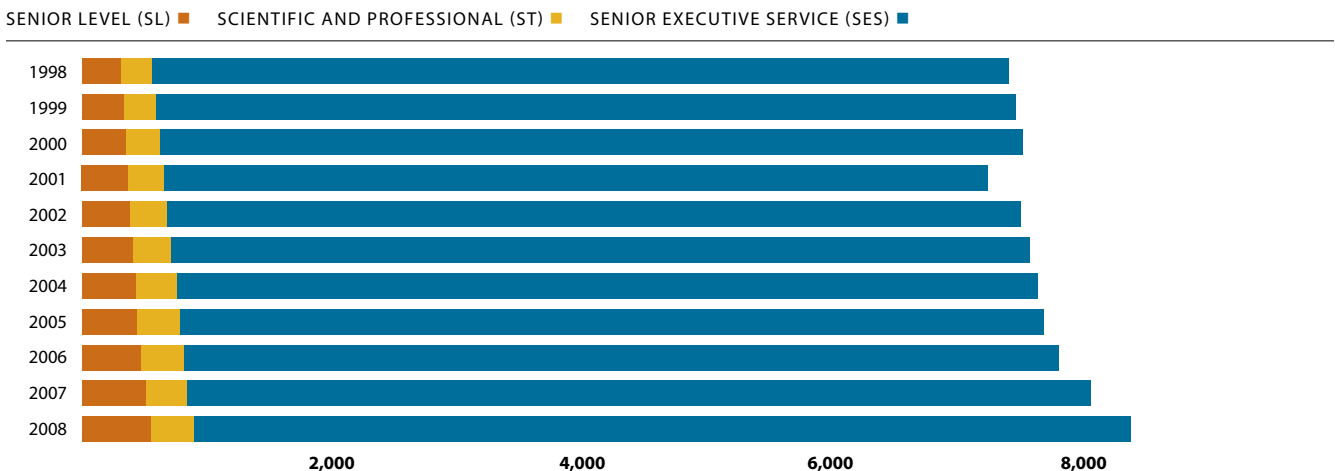
In a 2008 survey, OPM asked members of the SES how they spend their time. Only 44 percent said they devote 55 percent or more of their time to work that involves leadership, management or advising top management. Almost one-third spend at least 36 percent or more of their time on technical or professional work.

We also asked groups of GS-14s and -15s to describe their view of the role and purpose of the SES. Answers varied, but one single theme emerged: senior executives should provide leadership.

All this suggests that some members of the SES with professional or scientific skills should be in the alternative job categories. With a ready alternative to the SES that focuses on technical competence, why aren’t there more people in the Senior Level and Scientific and Professional classifications? There are at least three answers:

- When the SES was created, nearly all of the former “super grade” positions—GS-16s, -17s and -18s—were folded into the new executive corps regardless of whether the work was truly executive-level. This unintentionally muddied the waters of what a true SES position was supposed to encompass.

FIGURE 1
NUMBER OF FEDERAL SENIOR EXECUTIVES BY POSITION CLASSIFICATION CATEGORY



Source: FedScope, full-time permanent employees

10 OPM document, “General Information about the SES” February 2004.

- Until 2009, senior, scientific and professional jobs categories had a lower pay cap than the SES. Through 2008, annual Senior Level and Scientific and Professional category base pay ranged from \$114,468 to \$149,000 (compared to SES base pay of \$117,787 to \$177,000). In 2009, the pay for the Senior Level and Scientific and Professional groups was adjusted upward, though, to match the SES pay cap. While this was a positive change, it did not correct any misclassification of SLs/STs to SES positions.
- The prestige issue may be a more important barrier. The SES is viewed as highly prestigious while the two other job categories don't hold the same status. In our interviews and focus groups, we heard examples of talented people who were more suited to technical, professional and scientific classifications being promoted into the SES based on years of contributions to an agency.

In order for the nation to have senior federal leadership that is ready and capable of meeting the country's challenges, it is crucial that there is clarity around the role of the SES. This means employing a dual track advancement system so that talented technical performers can advance to appropriate senior positions, and the SES can be a true leadership corps.

TABLE 1
PERCENTAGE OF POLITICALLY APPOINTED
SES MEMBERS BY AGENCY

Department/Agency	# of Political SES	Total SES	Percent Political
VETERANS AFFAIRS	8	241	3.3%
JUSTICE	45	715	6.3%
GOVERNMENT WIDE	665	7479	8.9%
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	48	419	11.4%
INTERIOR	30	258	11.6%
AGRICULTURE	43	341	12.6%
COMMERCE	33	257	12.8%
HOMELAND SECURITY	61	468	13.0%
TRANSPORTATION	31	219	14.2%
EDUCATION	14	89	15.7%
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT	18	106	17.0%
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION	17	97	17.5%
LABOR	29	162	17.9%
SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	10	51	19.6%
STATE	36	157	22.9%

Source: November 2008 Plum Book, FedScope, September 2008

FINDING 3

Some Agencies Have Disproportionate Numbers of Politically Appointed SES Members

The Civil Service Reform Act that created the SES allows up to 10 percent of SES positions government-wide to be filled by political instead of career appointees. As Table 1 shows, the government wide average is less than nine percent, so the law is being followed. While this restriction applies to the SES as a whole, individual agencies can deviate from this limit, and this has created disparities. For example, as the table also illustrates, the percentage of political SES positions can range up to almost 23 percent. While this does not violate the letter of the law, it seems to violate the spirit.

FINDING 4

The Government is Not Collecting the Information it Needs to Properly Manage the SES

Our government lacks a proven system of measurements to properly gauge programmatic success or to determine if federal agencies have the right people with the right skills. And the data available on the state of the federal workforce is not systematically organized, evaluated or disseminated in a way that is meaningful to all key stakeholders.

This is certainly true for the SES, the most important element of the federal workforce. You can't manage what you don't measure, and due to the challenges of measuring success in the public sector, federal executives have very few indicators to determine what is working, what is not, and why.

We don't conduct exit interviews systematically to gather candid feedback when SES members leave. Even when the data that are collected suggest possible concerns, there is no systematic follow-up to assess whether there are underlying problems. For example, why did 72 percent of the SESers in place when the Department of Homeland Security was created in 2002 leave the department by 2008?

Furthermore, the government doesn't comprehensively measure whether candidate development and senior executive training programs are effective. There is little or no data on how agencies select candidates into candidate training programs and whether they select the right individuals.

THE HIRING LIFECYCLE

RECRUITMENT, APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT, AND ONBOARDING OF EXECUTIVES

The hiring process across government is broken. It is lengthy, opaque and antiquated. For senior executives, the entire process that comprises the hiring lifecycle is onerous, and at every step of the way presents a barrier to building a first-class corps of leaders needed to ensure effective government. The recruitment efforts are passive and inadequate to find and attract top talent, and the application process is too complicated. The assessment of candidates is heavily reliant on a cumbersome narrative-based approach. As one HR professional we interviewed put it, “I cannot think of a strength.”

The section below breaks down the hiring process into its component parts—recruitment, application and assessment, and onboarding—and offers a more thorough discussion of the challenges of each phase.

RECRUITING

FINDING 5

Passive SES Recruiting Limits the Pool of Candidates

Hiring the right talent is an ongoing challenge in the federal government, especially for critical career executive positions. Unfortunately, the government agencies do not take a proactive approach to finding and recruiting top leaders for the executive ranks.

Agencies are responsible for recruiting for their executive positions, and today largely take a passive attitude and do not aggressively search for the best talent. The vast majority of new SES hires come from within the federal government and, while hiring from within is important, agencies are not even identifying executive talent early enough to adequately feed the internal talent pipeline.

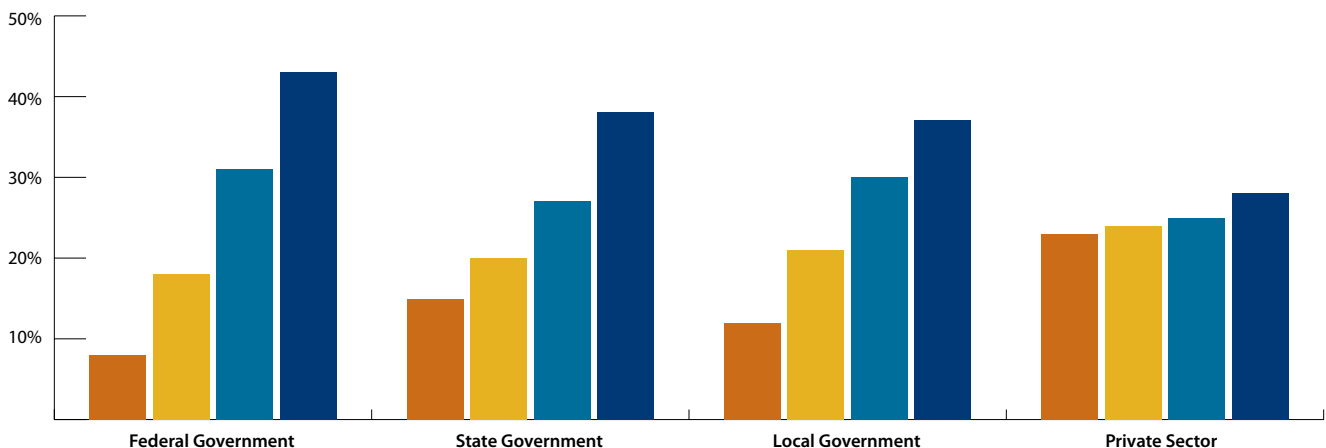
The in-house tactic may prove to be even more difficult as demands increase and the government experiences a brain drain over the next decade stemming from a large wave of baby boomer retirements.

In the private sector, progressive organizations have realized that they will be impacted by this demographic tidal wave. To fill the gap, many of these private sector firms have placed a high priority on leadership development programs and succession management practices to accelerate development of mid-level and high potential leaders.

Federal government agencies are lagging behind despite the fact that they will be disproportionately impacted by this demographic reality. The federal government workforce is older, on average, than any other sector of employees in the United States (see Figure 2). Nearly one-third of the full-time, permanent federal workforce is projected to leave government in the next five years,

FIGURE 2
AGE DISTRIBUTION BY SECTOR

UNDER 30 ■ 30-39 ■ 40-49 ■ 50 AND OVER ■



Source: Current Population Survey and FedScope, September 2008

mostly through retirement. OPM also projects that more than one-third of the current SES will retire in the next five years and, by the end of that five-year period, about 70 percent will be retirement-eligible. Certainly, intentions and decisions to leave government service are affected and have been delayed by economic realities, but it is clear that more will leave the federal government based on pure demographics.

Positions for SES jobs are advertised primarily or sometimes exclusively on USAJOBS.gov, the federal government's central portal for accepting job applications and resumes. The June 2, 2009, postings on Monster and CareerBuilder, two major job sites used by the private sector, listed only one SES position. While USAJOBS.gov does cast a wide net, executive recruitment needs to go beyond this single site. According to one federal HR leader, "Should we really be recruiting for our executives the same way we recruit for an entry level GS-7 position?"

The private sector, in contrast, is generally more aggressive in seeking top executive talent. Many private sector organizations use executive search firms to seek out candidates who may not be actively looking to make a job change, but might nevertheless be interested in the right opportunity. While this headhunter model may not always fully transfer to government in part because executive searches are expensive (fees can be \$75,000 or more), it demonstrates the need to aggressively recruit executive talent. Executive search firms also have found that they are viewed as a last resort when it's clear that a qualified candidate from within the agency or the federal government cannot be found.

Given this passive recruiting, it is no surprise that most SES hires come from within government. This also reflects three other realities. First, executive compensation in the federal government lags behind the private sector, making it harder to attract top talent to switch sectors. Second, the hiring process is very difficult for external candidates to navigate. And third, the federal space is an environment very different from the private sector, requiring major adjustments for many external hires. As one former government executive said, "Government's instinctive look inside is not unwarranted" given these obstacles.

FINDING 6

Promising Leaders Are Not Consistently Identified and Groomed as Prospective Members of the SES

Many whom we interviewed or spoke to in focus groups pointed out there is a reticence to do succession planning that will strategically develop leaders. In particular, they cited concerns that targeting potential candidates will result in "pre-selection" that violates merit principles. Federal agencies also often feel constrained to identify and to develop potential leaders because those actions could be perceived as a failure to provide equal competition for training and development resources, and for promotions.

"Do you bring in just enough candidates to place or do you cast a wider net and perhaps not place all candidates? (This organization) prefers to cast a wider net."

An advocate for government managers

In contrast, many private sector organizations begin identifying future leaders early on in the careers of these "high-potentials."

The limitations in the federal system are more perceived than real. Merit principles require open and fair competition for jobs and promotions, but that doesn't preclude establishing long-term succession planning and strategic development programs that create talent pipelines for future executives.

In addition to private sector models that nurture talent early, the military provides an effective counterpoint to the civil service's often short-sighted approach. Klitgaard and Light thoughtfully state that the military services are "mindful that they are feeding a personnel system with virtually no lateral entries, they screen not only for the cognitive and motor skills needed for success in entry-level jobs, but also for evidence of the leadership skills that will be needed in the future."¹¹ One HR expert we

¹¹ Klitgaard, Robert and Paul Light. *High-performance government: structure, leadership, incentives*. 2005, pg. 264.

“Succession planning in the federal government is difficult because it opens itself to charges of ‘pre-selection.’”

An advocate for government managers

interviewed echoed this view, saying that the “military is always looking for that next general.”

While the private sector does not operate in the same regulatory environment as the federal government, private firms must follow equal opportunity regulations. Government agencies can do succession planning, although as one member of the SES said, “There is a tendency to think about what we can’t do instead of what we can do.” Savvy individuals that we interviewed were aware that as long as the process is competitive and transparent, agencies can develop pipelines. This gives agencies the ability to more strategically utilize candidate development programs as a recruiting tool.

Some of those we interviewed said that programs for candidate development should be more selective and that openings should be more closely tied to the available number of SES positions. In other words, those who successfully complete these candidate development programs should be promoted into available SES positions.

Others favor “casting a wider net” even if not all candidates are placed or promoted into SES positions. Their reasoning centers on the fact that a GS-14 or -15 that has been through this leadership development will be a better employee regardless of a promotion into the SES.

OPM periodically sponsors the SES Federal Candidate Development Program (Fed CDP) to help federal agencies meet their succession planning goals and “contribute to the government’s effort to create a high-quality SES leadership corps.”¹²

In a November 2008 report, “Human Capital: Diversity in the Federal SES and Processes for Selecting New Executives,” the GAO noted that, “According to OPM officials, from the first OPM-sponsored federal candidate development program, 12 graduated in September 2006. Of those, nine individuals were placed in SES positions within one year of graduating. In 2008, OPM advertised

There are differing perspectives on the centralizing or decentralizing development programs for our nation’s most senior executives.

Pros of Decentralized Candidate Development Programs:

- Programs can be more readily tailored to the specific mission needs and culture of an agency or department, although programs are subject to a limited number of OPM requirements; and
- Agencies have more control over who attends these programs and can develop their own eligibility requirements and selection criteria.

Cons of Decentralized Candidate Development Programs:

- Programs may not provide for sufficient standardization of development practices such as mentoring, rotational and stretch assignments, and coaching;
- Programs perpetuate agency “silos” and do not sufficiently foster mobility consistent with the original intent of the SES;
- Programs are currently being used more for general leadership development and are graduating too many candidates for the number of SES positions available; and
- Decentralization does not facilitate managing the SES as a corps, particularly in the absence of a federal SES talent management function.

the second OPM-sponsored federal candidate development program, and 18 candidates were selected and have started their 12-month training and development program.”¹³

Given the low numbers in the OPM program, it becomes clear that most SES candidates participate in agency or third-party sponsored development programs. There is little information about how agencies select candidates into candidate training programs. Agencies may be filling the pipeline with the right talent or the wrong talent, but there isn’t a comprehensive way to know.

A limited number of candidates attend centralized development programs like the Fed CDP at the Federal Executive Institute and the Eastern and Western Management Development Centers, or attend programs implemented by third-party providers like the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and the American University School of Public Affairs.

¹² OPM website, <http://www.opm.gov/fedcdp/>

¹³ Government Accountability Office, *Human Capital: Diversity in the Federal SES and Processes for Selecting New Executives*. GAO-09-110. November 2008. Available online at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09110.pdf>.

TABLE 2
OBJECTIVES OF SES CANDIDATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

For the objectives below that apply to your program, to what extent is your program meeting those objectives?

	To a very great extent	To a considerable extent	To a moderate extent	To some extent	Not at all	Not applicable
To place graduates directly into the SES	18.2	18.2	27.3	27.3	–	9.1
To prepare and qualify candidates for the SES	72.7	9.1	18.2	–	–	–
To provide general leadership training	63.6	36.4	–	–	–	–

Source: March 2009 Survey of CLOs and agency training officials. Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton.

As shown in Table 2, in our survey of Chief Learning Officers (CLOs), all of those who reported that their agencies had development programs believe that their training meets the objectives of preparing and qualifying candidates for the SES and of providing general leadership guidance. However, only 63.7 percent said that these same programs are meeting the objective of placing graduates directly into the SES.

If such programs are to be truly effective, they should be competitive and selective—based on well-defined and objective criteria. These programs should also be integrated with succession planning and talent management, at least for the top tier of truly mobile, enterprise-minded senior executives.

FINDING 7

Pay Compression Discourages Recruitment of Top Talent

The government pay schedule creates situations where federal workers qualified to become senior executives have little financial incentive to apply. In some instances, GS 15s can earn as much as their bosses who are members of the SES. Such inequities, created by what is known as pay compression, pose serious problems to recruiting top talent into the senior executive ranks.

Pay compression occurs when senior executives reach the maximum salary allowable by law, and cannot receive raises or performance bonuses while non-SES employees under the General Schedule (who are not subject to the same limitations) continue to receive annual pay adjustments, including step increases, locality pay and cost-of-living adjustments. Since SES pay is tied to congressional salaries, pay increases must wait for Congress to take the often politically unpopular step of voting itself a raise. At the top, senior executives who have reached the pay cap, regardless of performance, are unable to earn more.

Pay compression creates a disincentive for GS-14s and -15s to apply for SES positions. As one chief human cap-

ital officer stated, “SES pay compression is a problem, you’ve got some people earning more than their bosses.”¹⁴

Prior to 2004, senior executives received automatic cost-of-living adjustments as well as locality pay.¹⁵ However, since the pay reforms of 2004, members of the SES do not receive those adjustments, while employees under the GS pay system still do. This has created a scenario where employees in the GS-15 pay range can earn more than senior executives.

Focus group participants consistently told us that the

PAY RANGES		
GS-15 (Base)	\$98,156	\$127,604
GS-15(D.C.)	\$120,830	\$153,200
SES (Base)	\$117,787	\$162,900
SES (OPM approved)	\$117,787	\$177,000

lack of pay differentiation between GS-15s and the SES is a deterrent to many who might otherwise apply for SES positions. GS-14s and -15s that we spoke to associate SES roles with more hours, less work-life balance, fewer employee rights (e.g., members of the SES cannot appeal performance evaluations) and higher stress but not significantly higher pay.

Changing this system and the inequities it causes is possible. A number of agencies, including the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Federal Aviation Administration and the Securities and Exchange Commission, already operate outside the SES structure and

14 Partnership for Public Service and Grant Thornton. *Elevating Our Federal Workforce: Chief Human Capital Officers Offer Advice to President Obama*, 2008.

15 Locality pay provides adjustments to pay for those living in locations around the country with higher costs of living. For example, a federal employee in the Washington, D.C. metro area would make more than a federal employee in the Raleigh-Durham metro area of North Carolina, all things being equal except their locations.

have senior career positions that are paid above the current SES salary cap.

A change in the compensation system could also help lower the barriers to attracting external talent. Many interviewees voiced concern that low executive compensation compared to the private sector is hindering the ability to recruit top executive talent. According to one former federal executive, “Who are the people we don’t get [because of low pay]? And can we afford that?” For example, according to Salary.com, the median base salary for a private sector chief financial officer (CFO) is \$304,813, far above the maximum SES pay of about \$177,000. And bonuses can increase the compensation of private sector CFOs by up to 50 percent.

Private sector executive compensation is typically market-based, and private sector firms also have the flexibility and budget to provide other perks such as company cars, expense accounts and club memberships. They also have sizable relocation packages. Federal agencies can provide moving and relocation expenses, but these flexibilities are not always authorized for positions. Even when they are approved, agencies may not have enough money. As shown below, agencies’ investment in relocation bonuses for newly hired senior executives have increased. However, it lags behind the private sector, where relocation expense allotments range to \$75,000 or higher.

RELOCATION EXPENSES		
Calendar Year	2006	2007
Total Number	36	67
Average Incentive	\$25,674	\$25,715
Total Amount	\$924,297	\$1,722,911

It can also be a challenge to convince candidates from outside of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area to relocate because of the high cost of living. While 85 percent of all federal jobs are outside the Washington, D.C. area, roughly half of SES positions are located in and around the nation’s capital.

Study participants across the spectrum worried about the federal government’s ability to attract external candidates into the SES with the current compensation structure. Yet few thought pay was as big a barrier in retention of senior executives. The most common perspective was that senior executives know what they are getting into in terms of compensation, and therefore that isn’t a key reason people leave the SES.

FINDING 8

Progress Toward Increasing SES Diversity Requires More Aggressive Recruitment Efforts

As the SES enters into its fourth decade, projections indicate that relying primarily on internal talent will no longer increase diversity. For continued growth in executive diversity, the federal government needs to recruit aggressively from external talent pools and do a better job of developing and recruiting talent internally.

An SES that reflects the nation’s diverse cultures and backgrounds can help bring different and fresh perspectives and approaches to policy development, problem solving and decision making. While the SES does not yet reflect the demographic diversity of the nation as a whole or the progress made in the federal workforce itself, the government has made significant strides in diversifying the senior ranks.

Overall, 15.5 percent the SES are members of racial/ethnic minority groups, and 29 percent are women. In comparison, the federal government overall has 33.1 percent minority representation, and 43.6 percent are women.¹⁶ The SES percentages represent an increase from 2000, when women constituted 23.2 percent of the executive corps and minorities accounted for 13.9 percent minorities.¹⁷

While racial and gender diversity of the SES has increased in the past decade, recent work by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) cautions that the levels of diversity in traditional SES feeder pools (GS-14s and -15s) will make it difficult to sustain this progress if agencies continue to look primarily inside government for candidates and not engage in more aggressive recruitment efforts.

Legislation pending in the Senate and House (S.1180 and H.R. 2721, respectively) proposes new SES oversight responsibilities for SES, including creating a recruiting program targeting talented women, minorities and people with disabilities for SES slots, and helping coordinate agencies’ recruiting programs with their equal employment opportunity offices.

¹⁶ Fedscope, FY 2008 for Full-time Permanent Employees.

¹⁷ Government Accountability Office, *Diversity in the Federal SES and Processes for Selecting New Executives*. GAO-09-110. November 2008. Available online at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09110.pdf>.

APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT

FINDING 9

Applying for an SES Job is too Onerous

The application process for senior executive positions involves many lengthy steps, takes a long time and is over-reliant on too many written essays that are designed to determine if a candidate has a range of competencies needed for the job.

Although the SES was designed to be a government-wide executive system, individual agencies manage their own hiring processes, while following a standard set of steps.

SES positions are posted on USAJOBS.gov, and after applications are submitted, the hiring agency reviews the applications and then rates and ranks the candidates to decide whom to interview.

All too often, however, an SES job posting on USAJOBS.gov is a jargon-filled description written for insiders (see Appendix A). The best-qualified candidates proceed through a series of interviews, including with the agency's Executive Resources Board (ERB). The board reviews the executive and technical qualifications of each eligible candidate and makes written recommendations to the appointing official who ultimately makes the selection.¹⁸ Then the agency sends the selected candidate's package of qualifications to the OPM-convened Qualifications Review Board (QRB) for final approval or rejection.

Internal and external candidates use this process when applying to enter the SES. For both internal and external candidates, one adjective comes through time and time again in descriptions of the process: long. This greatly increases the likelihood that the best external candidates will drop out to accept offers from the private sector before they hear from the government.

Even current members of the SES view the hiring process as problematic. In the 2008 OPM SES survey, only 30 percent of the responding members of the SES disagreed with the statement, "The SES application process discourages high-quality candidates from applying."

One major discouraging element in the process is the requirement for candidates to submit written essays re-

lating to the various leadership competencies needed for the job. Known as the Executive Core Qualifications (ECQ), the focus is on job-connected knowledge, behavior, ability and skills. When combined with essays on additional technical or "desirable" qualifications, the application process becomes burdensome. The core qualification narratives—basically essays where applicants write how they have demonstrated their competencies through work experience or training and development—run 10 pages or more. Addressing technical qualifications makes this paper chase even worse.

According to one former federal government executive, "The ECQs tend to stifle the dialogue about what we really need in this job. They can bog down the process."

Others referred to the application process as a writing exercise that, in some cases, leads applicants to hire and pay outsiders to write their competency essays. This has become common enough that a cottage industry has developed.

OPM has responded to concerns about the traditional hiring process by developing alternatives.

The government personnel agency tested two approaches from June to November of 2008: an accomplishment record and a resume-based application. The accomplishment record asked candidates to target specific competencies rather than write broad, lengthy descriptions of every single item on the competency list. As its title indicates, the resume-based application simply required applicants to submit a standard resume. Both pilots also used structured interviews to assess well-qualified candidates.¹⁹

OPM reported that applicants said the process was more user-friendly, and the resume-based pilot attracted a much higher proportion of external applicants than the traditional method. Agencies, on the other hand, reported an increased workload and resource requirements. But they also reported that the process became less burdensome over time.

OPM has made these alternatives available to all agencies that complete its training program. However, a review of all SES job postings on USAJOBS.gov on June 2, 2009, revealed that no agencies were using the resume-based or accomplishment record approach.

¹⁸ Government Accountability Office, *Diversity in the Federal SES and Senior Levels of the U.S. Postal Service and Processes for Selecting New Executives*. GAO-08-609T. April 3, 2008. Available online at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08609t.pdf>.

¹⁹ Office of Personnel Management. *Memorandum for Chief Human Capital Officers: Results of SES Selection Pilot*. January 12, 2009. Available online at: <http://www.chcoc.gov/Transmittals/TransmittalDetails.aspx?TransmittalID=1953>.

The difficulties of producing numerous lengthy core competency essays, especially for outsiders, have resulted in creation of a small industry that offers SES resume and core qualifications narrative writing services for fees ranging up to several hundred dollars. These services promise a quick turnaround and a high rate of success. In addition, federal agencies sometimes help the candidates that they have selected revise their narratives in preparation for submission to the Qualification Review Board, further diluting the value of the process.

One company takes advantage of the variety of formats that agencies require by offering more than just Executive Core Qualification creation, but also resume tailoring. Another company nearly guarantees getting the job for which you are applying and also offers express services to respond to narrow application windows.

Executive Federal Job Seekers



When filling an executive opening, especially for the ultra-selective Senior Executive Service, hiring managers for the federal government focus on quality: forward-thinking leadership, skilled management, and proven results. That means your entire application package, including your federal resume, federal resume cover letter, KSA, ECGs, and MTQs, must be persuasive. With our federal executive resume service, our executive resume writers work with you one-on-one to create an application package that sets you apart from the competition.

All resumes and CVs are keyword optimized to improve results for documents posted online or scanned by potential employers.

View one of our samples resumes to see how we make drastic differences in others resumes.

View a Sample Resume

Already have a resume? Start here:

Resume Editing Service - Most popular!
Choose this if you have a resume, but want a professional rewrite.

- Maximize impact with dramatically improved wording, organization, and design
- Enjoy one-on-one consultation for the perfect articulation of your strengths
- Turn your resume into a top-notch marketing piece in just 48-72 hours

Resume Editing Service	Add KSA Creation
\$319.95	SAVE \$20!
\$549.90	\$599.90

Need to create a resume? Start Here:

Resume Writing Service
Get matched with an expert who will create a knockout resume from scratch.

- Work one-on-one to determine the approach that will get you the interview
- Map your skills to the position for which you're applying and show why you're the top candidate
- Receive an expertly edited resume within 48-72 hours

Resume Writing Service	Add KSA Creation
\$359.95	SAVE \$20!
\$599.90	\$599.90

Additional Executive Federal Resume Services:

Resume Tailoring
Federal resumes must conform to a particular agency's guidelines in terms of page length, font choice, and formatting. Tailor your existing resume to a new agency. (For returning customers only.)

\$269.95

- Discuss the required changes with your editor by phone and email
- Revise the content and format of your previously created federal resume to meet the new agency's requirements
- Work directly with your writer for optimal reformatting and revision
- Receive a revamped document that's ready to go in just 72 hours (48 hours for an additional fee)

Add a cover letter for \$60 and **Save \$20: \$369.95**

ECQ Creation
Showcase your superior ability in each of the Executive Core Qualifications.

- Determine the best approach for the ECQs for Senior Executive and other top positions: Leading Change, Leading People, Results Driven, Business Acumen, and Building Coalitions/Communications
- Use the Challenge/Context/Action/Result model (unless otherwise requested) and spotlight your ability to face and overcome professional obstacles
- Expertly highlight your credentials and get the interview

\$249.95

Why We Should Write Your Federal SES Resume

- ✓ Our Professional Resume Writers are **specialized in SES Resumes, ECQ's, PTQ's, MTQ's** and Federal Government applications
- ✓ Our Professional Resume Writers are **certified** through PARW, CPRW or NARW
- ✓ Our Professional Resume Writers have more than **30 years of experience**
- ✓ Our Professional Resume service has a **93% success rate**
- ✓ Our Professional Resume service has a track record of helping more than 11,000 applicants get new jobs
- ✓ See for yourself what our customers have to say: check out our [success stories](#)

Testimonials

Here are a couple of the latest testimonials we received ([click here for more testimonials](#)):

"I am sooooo pleased with the work you did! I tried to to this following the SES guide provided by OPM and really never even came close to what you accomplished!"
C.

"Thanks for making this the best experience. There are so many online companies out there that say they can do it. You got my resume done and it was top of the line."
W.L.

"I received a call for an interview within days of sending my resume. I was offered a job one week later to make over 40% more in salary than my old job. I accepted it right away and started on November 5th. I have referred about 10 people to your service."
C.T.

"Thank you again for all your work. I could have worked on my resume for weeks and the end result wouldn't have been half as good! I am impressed with the end result and the high quality of customer service from beginning to end. I will definitely be recommending your company!"
S.H.

How Does It Work?

Step 1: Order our services & pay
It's easy and it's fast! It takes less than 2 minutes to sign up and get started.

Step 2: Get a Personal Call
You will get a call to welcome you to our service and guide you through the process.

Step 3: Send in your resume information & job history
You can email us your information or use our online resume wizard to send us your information.

Get your own professional resume writer
You will be assigned your own professional resume writer with whom you will be in constant communication through a resume desktop that we specifically set up for you. Our customer service will also be available to help you, over the phone, by e-mail or through the desktop.

Turn Around Time
Turn over time is 3 to 5 business days but a 12-business-hour rush order is available for an additional \$69.95, if you need your resume sooner: SES resumes being such complex documents, you should make sure that you have at least 5 business days left to get your resume ready before the deadline (business days are Monday to Friday). However, if you need your documents very fast, ordering a rush is easy: just place the order for your resume online. You will then get access to our interactive resume desktop through which you can contact customer service to get your 12-hour rush.

Of the 61 SES positions listed that day, each one required full Executive Core Qualifications narratives plus a resume. The narrative requirements ranged widely, with some agencies specifying the number of pages and even a few dictating font size and margin format. Other agencies added additional requirements such as narratives addressing technical qualifications, proof of education, past performance assessments (which clearly targets internal candidates) and references. The application instructions

also varied considerably, with some agencies requiring hard copies to be physically mailed, others allowing only e-mail and some requesting applications through an online portal.

While the results of the OPM pilot are encouraging even though agencies aren't widely using these new approaches, an even larger cultural leap from current processes may be necessary.

One interviewee said it is “absurd” that 18-year old military recruits undergo more rigorous behavioral and leadership testing than those who will manage huge budgets and lead important programs. Many interviewees and focus group participants cited private-sector practices that require less, if any, essay writing and that instead focus on more intense interviews and behavioral assessments as key to selecting talent. While the hiring process for private-sector executive positions can also be long and tedious, they thought it was long and tedious for the right reasons—rigorous assessments and revealing interviews with key individuals within the organization.

FINDING 10

Executive Core Qualifications Required for SES Should be Dynamic and Reflect the Evolving Workplace

Despite the decentralization of the SES, the set of required job competencies known as the Executive Core Qualifications (ECQ) represents a uniform set of standards for federal senior managers. Under this system, a candidate must demonstrate the knowledge, behaviors, abilities and skills required for successful job performance. Competencies should line up with the organization’s mission and strategy. They should also drive that mission by standardizing leadership expectations and integrating human capital processes such as recruiting, selection, performance management, succession management, training and development.

OPM issued the core qualifications in 1997, and they were reviewed and updated in 2006 to reinforce the concept of an “SES corporate culture.” Each of the five basic competencies includes three to six related talents or desired characteristics. As Table 3 shows, some departments

Leadership Competency Benefits:

- Link development activities to organization mission, strategy and goals;
- Clarify areas of talent strength and weaknesses;
- Serve as development targets for those who aspire to SES;
- Standardize performance and development expectations;
- Create a common performance language;
- Provide consistency in recruiting, selection, performance management, succession management training and development; and
- Enable human capital process integration.

and agencies such as the Department of Defense have added to the Executive Core Qualifications. Additionally, those agencies that do not operate under the SES have tailored the executive competencies to meet their needs.

For example, the intelligence community and the Federal Aviation Administration have adjusted their approaches to the leading change competency to better fit their workplace requirements. Leading change is also reflected in private sector companies, such as General Electric, which has competencies of inclusive leadership and external focus.

Although the current competencies are very broad and comprehensive, there is a need to periodically review and update them to make them more relevant to the needs of federal agencies, particularly as the nature of the workplace and leadership requirements change.

For example, emerging competency areas identified by organizations such as the Center for Creative Leadership and the National Academy for Public Administration (but not explicitly identified in the current ECQs) include leadership of virtual employees and organizations, global perspective, managing a multi-sector workforce, cross-cultural competence, working across boundaries, improving work processes and response times, and understanding how to use and interpret statistical analysis.

FINDING 11

Agencies Often Emphasize Technical Skills Over Executive Competencies When Hiring

Another weakness in the SES assessment process involves a tendency to overemphasize technical skills over leadership qualities.

Even though agencies work within the executive core competency-based system and understand that the candidates they choose will ultimately undergo certification of their executive qualifications, there is sentiment that agencies overemphasize technical skills in hiring decisions. Several factors converge to produce this result.

First, assessing technical skills is easier than assessing core competencies. Relying on quantifiable measures such as years of experience is easier than measuring competency levels of so-called “soft” skills like “leading change” or “building coalitions.” A technical emphasis also allows agencies to promote and reward high performers they do not want to lose. These stars can be promoted into the SES even if they do not have executive ability.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF OPM’S EXECUTIVE CORE QUALIFICATIONS AND RELATED FUNDAMENTAL COMPETENCIES TO THOSE USED BY OTHER AGENCIES AND A PRIVATE SECTOR COMPANY

OPM	DOD	INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY	FAA	GENERAL ELECTRIC
<i>Leading Change</i>	<i>Leading Change</i>	<i>Enterprise Focus</i>	<i>Leading Strategic Change</i>	<i>Imagination</i>
Creativity and Innovation External Awareness Flexibility Resilience Strategic Thinking Vision	Creativity and Innovation External Awareness Flexibility Resilience Strategic Thinking Vision	Enterprise Acumen External Awareness Systems Thinking <i>Executive Leadership</i> Leading Change Leading People Vision	Innovation Agility Strategy/Formulation Vision	
<i>Leading People</i>	<i>Leading People</i>	<i>Values-Centered</i>	<i>Leading People</i>	<i>Inclusive Leader</i>
Conflict Management Leveraging Diversity Developing Others Team Building	Conflict Management Leveraging Diversity Developing Others Team Building	Assuring Diversity Instilling Values	Building the Model Equal Employment Opportunity Developing Talent Building Teamwork and Cooperation	
<i>Results Driven</i>	<i>Results Driven</i>	<i>Domain Knowledge</i>	<i>Achieving Operational Results</i>	<i>Clear Thinking</i>
Accountability Customer Service Decisiveness Entrepreneurship Problem Solving Technical Credibility	Accountability Customer Service Decisiveness Entrepreneurship Problem Solving Technical Credibility	Domain Agility Leveraging Expertise	Accountability and Measurement Customer Focus Managing Organizational Performance Business Acumen Problem Solving	
<i>Business Acumen</i>	<i>Business Acumen</i>	<i>Management Tradecraft</i>		<i>Expertise</i>
Financial Management Human Capital Management Technology Management	Financial Management Human Capital Management Technology Management Computer Literacy	Business Acumen Strategic Thinking		
<i>Building Coalitions</i>	<i>Building Coalitions</i>	<i>Collaboration and Integration</i>	<i>Building Relationships</i>	<i>External Focus</i>
Partnering Political Savvy Influencing/Negotiating	Partnering Political Savvy Influencing/Negotiating	Building Strategic Networks Leading Integrative Action	Communication Building Alliances Interpersonal Relations and Influence Integrity and Honesty	
<i>Fundamental Competencies</i>	<i>Enterprise-Wide Perspective</i>			
Interpersonal Skills Oral Communication Integrity/Honesty Written Communication Continual Learning Public Service Motivation	Joint Perspective National Security Lead the Institution			

More subtly, the bias for technical ability may reflect a short-term focus. Technical expertise can provide an agency with a manager who can run a program today, but not necessarily an executive who can move a program forward strategically.

One thought leader we interviewed noted, “People come up the ranks because of their technical expertise, so there’s a mismatch between organizational structure, technical expertise and skills needed today.”

One study participant admitted, “If we actually applied the intention behind the ECQs, we would see a better qualified SES cadre over time, but we’re not getting significant differences in results because we are still selecting on the ability to get the job done rather than leadership.”

A search firm executive stated that his company does not use the core qualification system with its federal clients at all. Instead, the client and the executive recruiting team develop a separate position description to include two to four “must have” competencies and required technical skills.

FINDING 12

The OPM Qualifications Review Board (QRB) is Not the Best Way to Certify Candidates

A mandatory step in the assessment process for each SES vacancy involves a Qualifications Review Board (QRB) that examines the credentials of a recommended candidate and then decides whether the individual has met all five required core qualifications.

While some view the review board process or the threat of the board rejecting a candidate as essential to preventing politicization of the SES and unfair appointment of cronies, others question its real value.

OPM convenes each three-person review board, which must have at least two SES career members. The review board membership rotates, with each executive member serving for short periods of time.

The QRBs often do not take more than a few weeks and rarely reject candidates, but they represent another step in an already long hiring process. Agencies also point out that it’s not necessarily the time it takes for the board’s scrutiny of a candidate’s package; the real time and resource commitment comes from work it takes the agencies and candidates to prepare the package of material for the qualification oversight. In some cases, this can be expensive, particularly when agencies contract out for help in pulling together their review board submission.

Also troubling is the rotational nature of board membership. If a candidate fails to pass a review the first time, but succeeds the second time, this may not reflect a change in the strength of the candidate’s credentials. Instead, the different verdict could simply stem from inconsistency in how the review board assesses candidates.

ONBOARDING

FINDING 13

Agencies Don’t Adequately Help Executives Transition into Government Leadership Roles

New SES hires are attracted by the opportunity to take on big challenges and programs and make a positive impact. Unfortunately, for both internal and external hires, their transition does not always set them up for long successful tenures.

Executive search firms report that the external candidates they place in the federal agencies often have difficulty adjusting to the government space. First, there is the sheer scale of the federal government. External hires find it both motivating and discouraging. At the same time, they also struggle with the more rigid systems and culture of government. Candidates believe they are hired to create large-scale change, yet are met with resistance when they try to implement change, or change occurs too slowly.

As one senior executive told us, in response to the question, “When you became a member of the SES, was there anything for which you were unprepared?” The reply: “*Everything!*”

Less than half of the respondents to our survey of training and development officials said that they meaningfully invested in ways to transition new senior executives, a process known as “onboarding.”

Effective onboarding minimizes the time it takes for new employees, including members of the SES, to reach full performance level and also maximizes retention. New employees, including executives, need to be equipped so they can succeed. As detailed in the Partnership and Booz Allen Hamilton study, “Getting On Board,”²⁰ agencies should tailor onboarding programs and content to specific new employee groups, including executives. Even those promoted from within can benefit from comprehensive onboarding to their new executive role. The most effective onboarding programs continue to provide support to new hires for up to a year after they start.

20 Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton. *Getting On Board: A Model for Integrating and Engaging New Employees*. May 2008.

MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

FINDING 14

Executive Competencies Need to Be Fully Integrated into Performance Management

The legislation that formed the SES specifically stated that executive compensation was to be tied to individual and organizational performance. Results from OPM's 2008 SES survey reveal that 93 percent of the senior executives agree or strongly agree that pay should be based on performance.

The effort to fulfill this legislative requirement has been a work in progress for 30 years. Compensation and performance management have been challenges in the federal sector, but improvements have been made at the executive level.

According to OPM, in 2007 about 47 percent of the SES received the highest performance rating ("outstanding"), while less than one percent of the participants were rated below fully successful. This is a positive—and notable—shift away from the previously nearly universal assessment of members of the SES as "outstanding."

Another potential performance management issue stems from the fact that many career senior executives report directly to political appointees. While this is an inherent feature of the federal system, it creates a risk that political appointees responsible for conducting evaluations will not have sufficient experience or an understanding of managing performance. Even the best performance management process can easily be undone by poor execution. Political appointees need guidance and training to understand the federal performance management system, and they need to make performance management a priority.

Furthermore, there is a continuing challenge linking performance management systems to the core competency requirements.

According to a General Electric executive we interviewed, the firm builds its leadership competencies into all aspects of the human capital lifecycle including recruiting, selection, training, development, succession planning and especially performance management. Clear and consistent integration of core competencies into performance management builds leadership accountability,

and is a strong lever for leaders to drive individual and organizational performance.

In contrast, a former agency chief human capital officer who also has private-sector experience remarked that one of the big differences in government was the absence of a connection between the core competency qualifications and the performance management process.

A performance management system should tie an individual executive's goals to organizational objectives. This "line of sight" between an individual's goals and an agency's overall objectives is important for all employees, but especially for senior executives whose actions impact the work of the organizations they lead.

As the Obama administration calls for improving government performance, this line of sight becomes increasingly important and must be given serious attention.

FINDING 15

Development Programs for Senior Executives Are Primarily Decentralized, Lack Coordination and Are Not Achieving Their Full Potential

Senior career executives must demonstrate a high degree of competency and training in many areas to be appointed to the SES, but they need ongoing learning and development opportunities to expand and grow. Enhancing the executive core qualification skills requires accelerated developmental opportunities and rotation to other executive positions inside or outside of government, in addition to ongoing mentoring, coaching and performance feedback.

The SES follows a decentralized approach to executive development. As a result, there is no comprehensive or accessible information about the quality and effectiveness of programs that are in place to help federal career executives grow.

What evidence that is available suggests that continuing development for senior executives is not a priority. Study participants noted that senior executives do not have the time to devote to ongoing training and development. These leaders spend too much time "doing" and not enough time "leading." Given limited budgets and

the cost of training, executives often opt to allocate the resources to others in their agencies.

In the 2008 OPM SES survey, only 55 percent of respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their developmental opportunities, and just one-third have had their development needs assessed. Less than 25 percent said that they've had a mentor or received developmental coaching.

This is a major shortcoming. The SES is the most important segment of the federal workforce—the career executives who are in charge of carrying out policy and programs, delivering services and managing people. Yet according to the 2008 OPM survey of the SES, less than one in four members of the SES has received executive coaching. In our survey of chief learning officers, one out of three said they provide little or no continuing development opportunities targeted for SES members.

While there are a wide range of available developmental opportunities (programs at Harvard University, FEI, National Defense University's War College, SES Forums and Executive Learning Series, executive coaching, SES development programs, job rotations and 360 assessments), these are ad hoc. Compared with the military and the private sector, this is a poorly coordinated approach to developing our nation's senior career leaders.

Government also does not take full advantage of readily available resources. For example, every year the government gives Presidential Rank Awards to senior executives who have demonstrated sustained accomplishments and

have achieved extraordinary results. Government can use the award recipients as a developmental resource and as mentors to help develop other potential or current executives.

Beyond the minimum standards that OPM requires of agencies, there is little to no coordination of development programs for current executives across agency lines. Each agency meets some minimum qualifications and approaches executive development in its own way.

The law creating the SES required OPM to “establish programs, or require agencies to establish programs, for the (1) systematic development of candidates for SES positions and (2) continuing development of SES members. If OPM chooses to delegate the responsibility for establishing executive training and development programs to agencies, the law requires it to (1) establish criteria for the agencies' programs, (2) assist agencies in their implementation, and (3) oversee and enforce adherence to its prescribed criteria.”²¹

Leading private-sector organizations approach leadership development in a more coordinated and centralized fashion. When the Partnership developed programming for its Center for Government Leadership, we benchmarked more than 100 organizations renowned for their leadership development practices such as General Electric, Boeing and Procter & Gamble. The majority of these organizations set the strategic direction of their programs, and delivered executive training centrally to maintain quality and consistency.

“Another challenge is that leaders need to spend less time “doing” and more time “leading.” This training should be mandatory—unless it's mandatory, we won't make/get time for it.”

Government management expert

21 Government Accountability Office. *Senior Executive Service: Training and Development of Senior Executives*. GAO/GGD-89-127. September 1989 Available online at: <http://archive.gao.gov/d26t7/139989.pdf>.

SYSTEMATIC PRIVATE SECTOR APPROACH TO ASSESSING AND DEVELOPING TOP TALENT: GENERAL ELECTRIC

General Electric consistently ranks among the top three companies in the nation for developing leaders—the result of an organizational commitment. Leadership development is a priority at the company, and permeates every HR activity from hiring to training and performance management.

GE takes a centralized approach to assessing and developing its leaders. Through a systematized succession planning process, the company identifies high-potential employees early in their careers and ensures that these employees have long-term development plans that build leadership skills in alignment with GE's missions and values.

Leadership development and performance management at GE are integrated into this systematized succession planning process. GE's rigorous performance management system (referred to as "Schedule C") sorts employees into three performance buckets—the top 10 percent are rewarded, developed, tracked and promoted aggressively.

These top employees participate in selective executive development courses at key transition points in their careers. These courses are centrally administered through Crotonville—GE's executive development center—to ensure consistency, alignment with the company's values and greater collaboration across business lines and geographical regions. More than 10,000 GE leaders participate in courses at Crotonville annually.

All of GE's leadership courses are heavily steeped in action-learning, with participants addressing critical business challenges and delivering recommendations to the CEO Jeff Immelt. The courses often are taught by GE leaders, including Immelt. To ensure the transfer of learning, GE proactively identifies developmental opportunities, rotations and stretch assignments for rising leaders. These real-time learning opportunities, which often rotate employees into different business lines and geographic regions, provide employees with a greater understanding of GE's mission and how disparate business lines are interconnected—ultimately leading to enhanced collaboration.

The results have been impressive. GE retains 95 to 97 percent of its top 600 senior executives and consistently ranks as one of Fortune's Top 10 Most Admired Companies in the World.

Source: Welch, Jack and Suzy Welch. *Winning*. Harper Collins Publishers. April, 2005

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The SES was created to be a high-prestige, high-reward and therefore higher-risk system for executives who meet stringent qualifications and are also held to high standards of individual and organizational performance. More than 30 years later, however, it is clear that while many senior executives may have the desired executive characteristics, this may be in spite of—rather than because of—the operation of the SES.

Based on our review of a substantial body of literature, relevant statistical data, and interviews and focus groups with current and former members of the SES along with a wide variety of other individuals, experts and stakeholders, we have come to the following conclusions and corresponding recommendations.

The original concept of the SES as a mobile corps of highly skilled leaders and managers who would provide cross-fertilization of ideas, strengthen collaboration and build interagency relationships as they moved among agencies was never fully realized. The 1978 concept is inadequate to meet both current and future leadership needs.

Recommendation: OPM, in collaboration with each agency, should review all existing SES positions to identify those that truly need to be filled with executives who can be mobile and must have a mastery of the Executive Core Qualifications. Based on the results of that review, the following actions should follow:

- Congress should create a “National SES Corps” within the existing SES that consists of those positions identified by OPM as requiring mobile executives who must fully master the Executive Core Qualifications.
- The positions better suited to be Senior Level and Senior Technical positions should be reallocated to those classifications and the SES allotments should be reduced proportionately. Together, these two actions will create three senior-level positions—the National SES Corps, Agency SES and the Senior Level/ Senior Technical category.
- For the National Corps, agencies should establish mobility agreements with new senior executives and/or write developmental rotations into their executive development plans.

- To enable candidates to qualify for the National Corps, agencies, with OPM coordination and oversight, should develop joint duty/rotational assignment requirements, similar to those used in Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community to spur increased inter-agency mobility.
- Congress should also establish a counterpart program to the Intergovernmental Personnel Act that will allow senior leaders to be temporarily exchanged between the federal government and the private sector for developmental purposes.

There is little organizational structure or centralized coordination to facilitate movement for the National Corps executives. Moreover, there are few incentives to encourage mobility.

Recommendation: OPM should consolidate existing senior executive services into one office and provide additional talent management services to help agencies and other stakeholders work with OPM. OPM could provide more robust services such as:

- Conducting executive searches.
- Developing and maintaining an SES “talent bank” to facilitate tracking of experiences and skills and managing inter-agency mobility of the National Corps. OPM should also partner with the Office of Management and Budget to facilitate and broker the movement of a National SES Corps across agencies, other levels of government and the private sector.
- Delivering meaningful support, guidance and advice to help political appointees who manage the performance of career senior executives.
- Conducting exit interviews of departing members of the SES. This third-party collection of data should ensure that exiting senior executives provide candid feedback. Exit interview data can inform recruiting needs, as well as identify engagement and performance management issues that should be addressed systemically and/or in individual agencies.

The OPM director has pledged to consolidate existing senior executive services into one OPM office. Legislation has also been introduced in the Senate and House

that would mandate such a consolidation. Both of these developments are steps in the right direction.

We also recommend that additional financial incentives such as higher base salary, as well as enhanced bonus potential, be made available for National Corps members who excel.

The process for recruiting and hiring federal executives—as with much of the hiring process in the rest of government—is too long, too complicated and not applicant-friendly. This is particularly troublesome for the SES. As a result:

- Only a very small percentage of new executives enter the SES from outside government.
- The opportunity to continue gains in the diversity of the SES is at risk.
- The aspect of the hiring process that is unique to the SES (i.e., the requirement that applicants be approved by a central OPM Qualifications Review Board) provides little added value.
- While the current Executive Core Qualifications are comprehensive and cover a wide range of important competencies, the screening process for them—primarily through narratives—is too cumbersome.
- The rapid pace of change and complexity of the challenges facing the federal government—and senior career executives—require continual updating of the Executive Core Qualifications.

Recommendation: OPM should work with agencies to phase out the use of Executive Core Qualifications narratives as the primary means to evaluate and screen senior executive candidates. Alternative hiring screens, such as accomplishment records and resumes, should be the government-wide standard, augmented by approaches such as structured interviews, and/or behavioral and leadership assessments often used in private sector executive hiring. This should be coupled with more aggressive agency recruiting of external candidates, including approaches that closely resemble executive search firm methods to find and reach out to passive candidates, rather than entry-level federal hiring processes.

OPM should work with Congress to abolish the Qualifications Review Board and give agencies the authority to certify SES candidates. OPM should also work with Congress to help maintain or accelerate progress diversifying the SES. OPM should then perform post-audits on

SES hiring decisions to protect against improper political appointments into the career SES.

OPM should also review the Executive Core Qualifications on a regular basis and revise them as needed to assure their continued relevance, including for the new National SES Corps.

Many current federal senior executives are of greatest value to their agencies for their technical expertise and in-depth knowledge of agency operations. The Senior Level/Scientific and Professional classification may be a better fit for many in this group. Furthermore, the current set of Executive Core Qualifications which defines the competencies needed by senior executives is a good fit for only a subset of federal executives and is not a good fit for those senior executives who actually function more in the mode of the Senior Level and Scientific and Professional groups.

Recommendation: In addition to reallocating SES positions better suited to the Senior Level and Scientific and Professional classifications, for those SES level positions that are not part of the National Corps, OPM should modify the Executive Core Qualifications to better match the management and skill sets actually needed (for example, building coalitions may not be as key to some jobs).

Although the percentage of political (noncareer) members of the SES is limited by law to 10 percent government wide, individual agencies can—and do—exceed this percentage.

Recommendation: Congress should amend existing law to apply the 10 percent limit to individual agencies. The amendment should allow OPM to approve limited exceptions (e.g., for agencies with low numbers of SES members).

Effective onboarding minimizes the time it takes for new appointees, including members of the SES, to reach full performance level and also maximizes retention. Newly appointed executives need to be equipped so they can succeed. The most effective onboarding programs continue to provide support to new hires for up to a year after they start.

Recommendation: Agencies should take the lead, with support from OPM, to develop and put in place on-

boarding programs specifically tailored to the needs of new senior executives, including those promoted from within the federal government as well as those entering government from the private sector. In addition, feedback from new senior executives should be rigorously collected throughout their first year on the job via surveys, interviews, focus groups and other means.

The overall limit on senior executive compensation is leading to pay compression in which SES pay is not much higher than the GS-15s they manage, and executives, after they reach the pay ceiling, can be paid the same even with vastly different levels of responsibility. Pay compression is a disincentive to entering the SES. Moreover, SES bonuses do not count toward the computation of retirement annuities, and SES members do not receive locality pay.

Recommendation: As it has already done for select agencies, including FDIC and SEC, Congress should decouple SES pay from congressional pay to help eliminate the growing problem of pay compression. While there is no expectation that federal senior executives will match the total compensation package of their more richly rewarded private-sector counterparts, they should at least be able to earn significantly more than their subordinates. OPM should also work with Congress to allow SES bonuses to count toward an employee's retirement calculation (i.e., the "high three"), and restore locality pay to the SES.

The SES performance management system does not fully integrate assessments of how well executives have demonstrated their mastery of the Executive Core Qualifications nor does it fully take into account contributions to organizational performance.

Recommendation: OPM should work with agencies to further refine the SES performance management system, including incorporating the core qualifications. Executives who do not demonstrate mastery of the core competencies because their job responsibilities do not require the competencies should be considered for placement in the Senior Level or Scientific and Professional pay system. Those who are expected to perform at the SES level should be assessed on both their demonstrated core competency and on their individual and organizational performance outcomes. The effectiveness of the SES "pay for performance" system should be included in the proposed OPM reexamination of the larger federal pay system.

Leadership development should include a blend of classroom training, performance feedback from managers and subordinates, developmental relationships (e.g., mentoring/coaching) and challenging job assignments. These activities should be conducted in concert with organizational processes such as workforce and succession planning. Too often, they are not.

Recommendation: OPM, in collaboration with the agencies, should undertake a government-wide assessment of leadership development activities. Agency candidate development programs (CDPs) should receive particular attention. OPM should work with agencies to develop government-wide metrics on the quality and effectiveness of CDPs. Agencies should also work with OPM to develop and implement leadership development strategies that integrate efforts focused on the individual with efforts focused on organizational processes, systems and structures.

Identifying and nurturing leadership potential—and accelerating development—should also occur at early career stages.

Sufficient funding should be provided specifically for training and development of current SES members, with a requirement that the funding is used solely for that purpose. Further, funds should be allocated annually for more general leadership training and development.

OPM, or some other central organization, should also provide ongoing development opportunities for senior executives that emphasize peer-to-peer executive networking. As one example, the Partnership plans to introduce an SES network that promotes peer learning among senior executives by facilitating dialogue around shared challenges and best practices.

Since Presidential Rank Award recipients are, by definition, senior executives who have demonstrated sustained accomplishments and/or leaders who have achieved extraordinary results, particular attention should be given to 1) supporting their continued development in a variety of ways, such as investing in individualized executive coaching or providing for a developmental detail outside of government, where that makes sense, and 2) tapping into the rank award recipients as a development resource for other current or potential executives (for example, as mentors to high potential candidates).

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE SES JOB POSTING FROM USAJOBS.GOV

Deputy Director of Operations, Interagency Action Group

Air Force Elements, U.S. Central Command

Salary Range: 141,400.00 - 162,900.00 USD /year

SES members are eligible for bonuses and/or Presidential rank awards and stipends in addition to annual salary.

Relocation/Recruitment Bonus may be offered.

Open Period: Wednesday, May 06, 2009 to Friday, June 05, 2009

Series & Grade: ES-0301-00/00

Position Information: Full-Time Permanent

Duty Locations: 1 vacancy - Tampa, FL

Who May Be Considered: Applications will be accepted from all groups of qualified individuals.

Job Summary:

The Deputy Director of Operations, Interagency Action Group, is the Command's principal advisor concerning coordination and integration of military operations with national and regional interagency activities. The IAG is a joint, interagency, and cross functional organization that is empowered, agile and capable of orchestrating persistent, coordinated and synchronized actions; and serves as the focal point for countering specified threat networks at the strategic and operational levels of conflict.

This is an **SES Career Reserved** position and is assigned a precedence priority code of **DV-6, Tier 1** (equivalent to a Brigadier General) for protocol purposes.

Key Requirements:

- You must complete your resume and all supplemental statements.
- You must meet all minimum qualifications to be considered eligible.
- You must address the Specialized Experience and Other Required Factors.

Duties

Major Duties:

BASIC DUTY SUMMARY: The Deputy Director of Operations, Interagency Action Group, is the Command's principal advisor concerning coordination and integration of military operations with national and regional interagency activities. The IAG is a joint, interagency, and cross functional organization that is empowered, agile and capable of orchestrating persistent, coordinated and synchronized actions; and serves as the focal point for countering specified threat networks at the strategic and operational levels of conflict. It is focused on integrating United States Government (USG) intelligence, operations and activities to rapidly counter, disrupt and degrade regional threat networks in the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR). The key operating principles within the IAG are: collaboration, connectivity, information exchange and focus on actions and results. To meet this mission the Deputy Director leads the IAG in two "Core Tasks": Combating Terrorism and USG Activities Synchronization. Within the IAG mission of Combating Terrorism, the Deputy Director ensures the coordination, synchronization, and integration of other USG agency activities with USCENCOM priorities and in actions against threat networks, including establish theater Counter Threat Finance priorities, objectives, and actions and respond rapidly to Component Command request for designation and non-kinetic actions against Threat Networks and HVIs. Within the IAG mission of USG Activities Synchronization, the Deputy Director coordinates and synchronizes IA and USCENCOM actions which promote governance and development that diminishes support for insurgents. To accomplish this mission the Deputy Director will: oversee management and execution of Counternarcotics Funding Program; coordinate, synchronize, and report DoD and IA efforts that support Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT)

and Agribusiness Development Teams (ADT); and support the integration of USCENTCOM operations, actions, and activities with Interagency partners in key strategic countries. Additionally, advises the USCENTCOM Commander and staff on interagency issues concerning USCENTCOM mission execution. Serves as the USCENTCOM focal point for interagency coordination to foster and shape relationships with non-DoD agencies and departments to facilitate unity of effort in combating terrorism and promoting governance and development that diminishes support for insurgents. Directs an interdisciplinary workforce of approximately 120 civilian, military, and interagency liaison personnel to maximize and synchronize IA support to the USCENTCOM campaign.

Qualifications and Evaluation

Qualifications:

Eligibility will be based upon a clear showing that the applicant has appropriate skills and has had training, education and experience of the scope and quality sufficient to effectively carry-out the assignments of the position. Candidates must exemplify the corporate perspective, leadership vision, broad experience and character needed in the SES corps not only to satisfy the immediate vacancy, but future vacancies which will occur in a variety of organizations, functions and locations. The following qualifications are essential for successful performance in the position and are mandatory unless otherwise specified:

A. MANDATORY TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS (10-page limit, anything beyond this limit WILL NOT be reviewed): A supplemental statement that separately addresses each of the Technical Qualifications; including specific examples of your experience, education and accomplishments that directly relate to the technical qualifications must be submitted. The following mandatory qualification requirements are essential for successful performance in the position:

- (1) Knowledge of, and experience in, the management of a large, complex organization. This should involve demonstrated leadership in the following areas:
 - (a) Joint, interagency, and/or cross functional organization experience in orchestrating persistent, coordinated, and synchronized effects to counter specified threat networks at the strategic level.
 - (b) Thorough understanding of the capabilities, limitations and missions of military and national agencies; and extensive experience dealing with relations between the military and interagency community.
 - (c) Thorough understanding with experience in: irregular warfare, asymmetric warfare, counterterrorism, and countering violent extremist terrorist networks.
 - (d) In-depth understanding of the Threat Finance operational environment in the USCENTCOM AOR and the complex asymmetrical methods required to counter threat finance.
 - (e) Extensive experience in coordinating, planning, preparing for and supporting interagency operations in a conventional and non-traditional operating environment.
 - (f) Extensive experience in coordinating, planning, preparing for and supporting interagency operations in a conventional and non-traditional operating environment.
 - (g) Experience in building strategic relationships with both DoD and non-DoD organizations.
- (2) Knowledge of business management environment including leadership in the following:
 - (a) Integrating activities/programs with Department of Defense or other federal agencies.
 - (b) Partnering with industry and academia.
 - (c) Demonstrated knowledge and experience working with the Joint Staff.

B. MANDATORY EXECUTIVE CORE QUALIFICATIONS (ECQs) (10-page limit, anything beyond this limit WILL NOT be reviewed): A supplemental statement addressing each of the executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) must be submitted. Please refer to the ECQ format (below). This statement must provide specific examples of your actual experience, education, and accomplishments that are applicable to each of the mandatory ECQs. A higher-level supervisor/manager of the applicants must indicate concurrence of the ECQ content. (ECQs are NOT REQUIRED of current or former Career SES Members; please provide a copy of your SF-50 showing SES status.)

The ECQs describe the leadership skills needed to succeed in the Senior Executive Service (SES); they also reinforce the concept of an “SES corporate culture”. This concept holds that the government needs executives who can provide strategic leadership and whose commitment to public policy and administration transcends their commitment to a specific agency mission or an individual profession. Executives with “corporate” view of Government share values that are grounded in the fundamental government ideals of the Constitution; they embrace the dynamics of American Democracy, an approach to governance that provides a continuing vehicle for change within the Federal Government. OPM has identified five executive core qualifications. The ECQs were designed to assess executive experience and potential--not technical expertise. They measure whether an individual has the broad executive

skills needed in a variety of SES positions--not whether they are the most superior candidates for a particular position. (This later determination is made by the employing agency) Successful performance in the SES requires competence in each ECQ.

The ECQs are interdependent; successful executives bring all five to bear when providing service to the Nation. ECQ-specific competencies, that reflect possession of the executive core qualification, supplement the basic definition of each ECQ. In addition to the ECQ-specific competencies, there are six **Fundamental Competencies** that serve as the foundation for each ECQ. Candidates do not need to have experience in each ECQ-specific or fundamental competency to demonstrate possession of the ECQ. Rather, the candidate's overall record (professional and volunteer experience, education and training, awards, accomplishments, and potential) should indicate that they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to succeed in the SES.

Fundamental Competencies: These competencies are the foundation for success in each of the Executive Core Qualifications. Because the Fundamental Competencies are cross-cutting, they should be addressed over the course of the ECQ narrative. It is not necessary to address them directly as long as the narrative, in its totality, shows mastery of these competencies on the whole.

- (a) **Interpersonal Skills:** Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations.
- (b) **Oral Communication:** Makes clear and convincing oral presentations. Listens effectively; clarifies information as needed.
- (c) **Integrity/Honesty:** Behaves in an honest, fair, and ethical manner. Shows consistency in words and actions. Models high standards of ethics.
- (d) **Written Communication:** Writes in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience.
- (e) **Continual Learning:** Assesses and recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; pursues self-development.
- (f) **Public Service Motivation:** Shows a commitment to serve the public. Ensures that actions meet public needs; aligns organizational objectives and practices with public interests.

Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs):

ECQ 1 - LEADING CHANGE. This core qualification 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.

Leadership Competencies:

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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.
- (c) Flexibility: Is open to change and new information; rapidly adapts to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.
- (d) Resilience: Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks.
- (e) 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.
- (f) 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.

ECQ 2 - LEADING PEOPLE. This core qualification 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.

Leadership Competencies:

- (a) 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.
- (b) Leveraging Diversity: Fosters an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the organization.
- (c) 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.
- (d) Team Building: Inspires and fosters team commitment, spirit, pride, and trust. Facilitates cooperation and motivates team members to accomplish group goals.

ECQ 3 - RESULTS DRIVEN. This core qualification involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks.

Leadership Competencies:

- (a) **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.
- (b) **Customer Service:** Anticipates and meets the needs of both internal and external customers. Delivers high-quality products and services; is committed to continuous improvement.
- (c) **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.
- (d) **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.
- (e) **Problem Solving:** Identifies and analyzes problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations.
- (f) **Technical Credibility:** Understands and appropriately applies principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise.

ECQ 4 - BUSINESS ACUMEN. This core qualification involves the ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.

Leadership Competencies:

- (a) **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.
- (b) **Human Capital Management:** Builds and manages the 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.
- (c) **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.

ECQ 5 - BUILDING COALITIONS: This core qualification 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.

Leadership Competencies:

- (a) **Partnering:** Develops networks and builds alliances; collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.
- (b) **Political Savvy:** Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Perceives organizational and political reality and acts accordingly.
- (c) **Influencing/Negotiating:** Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.

C. DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS (1-page limit): Please provide supplemental statements addressing the following. These statements will be used to help rate and rank eligible candidates:

- (1) A complementary assignment, regardless of governmental agency or department, in the law-enforcement, financial, diplomatic fields, operational or strategic planning, and logistics management is highly desirable.
- (2) Breadth of experience in multiple organizations and at multiple levels. A mix of experience at more than one base/operating location/installation **and** Headquarters level experience at the HAF/SAF level, Joint Staff or at Unified/Specified Command or equivalent academic/industry or other government organization for a minimum of two years is highly desirable.
- (3) Completion of senior professional military education and/or equivalent executive development program such as Federal Executive Institute, Harvard Senior Executive Fellows, National Security Management, Leadership Assessment and Feedback Seminar, or equivalent courses from other colleges, universities, or agencies.
- (4) An advanced degree in business, management, political science or related field.

See Desirable Qualifications.

You must be a U.S. citizen to qualify for this position.

How You Will Be Evaluated:

Applications will be evaluated against the foregoing qualification requirements. Failure to meet any one of the mandatory technical or executive core qualification standards will eliminate a candidate from further consideration. A screening panel will evaluate the candidates for this position composed of a diverse mix of senior executives selected for organizational and/or functional backgrounds relevant to this position. The panel members will individually review each of the applications in terms of the qualifications criteria contained in this announcement. **The qualifications stated are the minimum requirements of the position to be “Qualified,” a rating schedule will be applied by a screening panel to determine which candidates are considered to be “Best Qualified.”** Then, they will meet to discuss each application, and reach a consensus decision as to the best qualified, qualified or not qualified candidates. The panel will interview all of the best-qualified candidates based upon consistently applied criteria. The panel will then make a recommendation of those best-qualified candidates who should be referred to the selecting official, in priority order. Final selection of a candidate is contingent upon the Air Force Executive Resources Board, Secretary of the Air Force and the Office of Personnel Management approval.

Benefits and Other Information
Benefits:

You may participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program, with costs shared with your employer. More info: <http://www.usajobs.gov/jobextrainfo.asp#FEHB>.

Life insurance coverage is provided. More info: <http://www.usajobs.gov/jobextrainfo.asp#life>

Long-Term Care Insurance is offered and carries into your retirement. More info: <http://www.usajobs.gov/jobextrainfo.asp#ltci>

New employees are automatically covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). If you are transferring from another agency and covered by CSRS, you may continue in this program. More info: <http://www.usajobs.gov/jobextrainfo.asp#retr>

You will earn annual vacation leave. More info: <http://www.usajobs.gov/jobextrainfo.asp#VACA>

You will earn sick leave. More info: <http://www.usajobs.gov/jobextrainfo.asp#SKLV>

You will be paid for federal holidays that fall within your regularly scheduled tour of duty. More info: <http://www.usajobs.gov/jobextrainfo.asp#HOLI>

Opportunities are available in numerous locations and employees may transfer to new locations to further their career goals.

Other Information:**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

- (a) **U.S. CITIZENSHIP.** You must be a U.S. citizen to qualify for this position.
- (b) **MOBILITY.** Organizational and geographical mobility is highly desirable for SES and DISES members. The Department encourages a diverse portfolio of experiences as a matter of course. Position mobility is a key tenant in developing and managing Senior Executive Service leaders and generally a key to advancement. It can add breadth and depth to the experience of the member along with greater responsibilities and challenges. Therefore, there may be times in a member's career when a reassignment has advantages to both the member and the Air Force, and may be management directed. Appointed SES and DISES members will be required to sign a reassignment rights and obligations agreement.
- (c) **EXECUTIVE PERSONNEL FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REPORT (Standard Form 278).** Selected candidate must file this report in accordance with the Ethics in Government Act of 1978.
- (d) **TOP SECRET SECURITY CLEARANCE.** This position has been designated Critical-Sensitive and the selectee must have or be able to obtain a TOP-SECRET.
- (e) **DRUG TESTING POSITION.** Incumbents are subject to random urinalysis for drug use as a condition of employment.
- (f) **TRAVEL.** Position requires occasional travel, primarily within the United States.
- (g) **VETERAN PREFERENCE.** Veteran preference is not applicable to the DISES.
- (h) **PROBATIONARY PERIOD.** Selected candidate will be subject to a one-year probationary period in the SES, unless the required probationary period has been served or waived.
- (i) **AIR FORCE'S SENIOR LEADER ORIENTATION COURSE (SLOC).** Attendance is required for newly appointed SES members within 12 months of appointment.

- (j) **POST-GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS:** This position may be subject to the post-government employment restrictions of Sections 207(a) and (f) of Title 18, United States Code.
- (k) Applications submitted in postage paid government envelopes will not be accepted.
- (l) This position is designated a DV-6, Tier 1 position. By applying for this position and if selected, you will assume the DV-6, Tier 1 designation (equivalent to Brigadier General).

How To Apply

To receive full consideration, each applicant must submit the following: (Please provide information in the order below and do not use 2-sided copies. **All self-typed documents cannot exceed 1-inch margins and must have the following font size: 11 - Times New Roman**).

- (a) Resume or OF-612, Optional Application for Federal Employment (**4-page Limit**). A resume is the preferred format. OF-612 may be submitted but is not encouraged. If submitting a resume, please refer to the attached resume format. OF-612 Form is available at www.opm.gov.
- (b) Mandatory Technical Qualification Statement addressing each of the tech quals (**10-page Limit**).
- (c) ECQs Statement (not including supervisor/management concurrence) (**10-page Limit**) (ECQs are **NOT REQUIRED** of current or former Career SES Members, please provide a copy of your SF-50 showing SES status.)
- (d) Desirable Factor Statement briefly addressing each of the desirable quals (**1-page limit**).
- (e) References: Provide names, addresses and telephone numbers of three individuals who can comment on your qualifications for this position (not required if provided in resume).
- (f) Current Performance Appraisal (if current or former Government employee or otherwise available.)

Submit one copy of the following completed forms:

- (g) Most recent Notification of Personnel Action, SF-50 (if current or former civilian government employee, a copy noting your current position, grade level and salary level.)
- (h) Declaration of Federal Employment, OF-306 (Form available at www.opm.gov)
- (i) Race and National Origin Identification, SF-181 (optional) (Form available at www.opm.gov)
- (j) Self Identification of Handicap, SF-256 (optional) (Form available at www.opm.gov)

DO NOT SUBMIT ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Extraneous materials such as: copies of position descriptions, award certificates and transmittal letters will not be forwarded for review. **Reminder: All self-typed documents cannot exceed 1-inch margins and must have the following font size: 11 - Times New Roman**.

DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS:

- Applications will be accepted via electronic format only. Items must be submitted in a single Microsoft Word document. Items must be scanned into a single PDF. Email both files to [REDACTED] with subject line: **AF/DPS 09-15**
- Confirmation of receipt will be provided via reply email within one day. If you do not receive confirmation please contact this office.
- To be considered, applications must be received in this office by the closing date.
- If you are unable to deliver via e-mail, please contact our office at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

WHEN TO APPLY: E-mail completed application package (a through j under "How to Apply") so that it will be **RECEIVED IN THIS OFFICE BY THE CLOSING DATE** shown on the first page of this vacancy announcement. Questions regarding this announcement may be directed to [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]

RESUME FORMAT

(Limit 4 Pages)

APPLICATION: A resume in the following format is required and should be typewritten.

Job Information:

Announcement number (**AF/DPS 09-15**) and title of the job to which you are applying.

Personal Information:

Full name, mailing address (with Zip Code), day and evening phone numbers (with area code), and complete E-Mail address where you would like to receive correspondence regarding your application.

Social Security Number (SSN): We request your SSN under the authority of Executive Order 9397 in order to keep your records straight; other people may have the same name. As allowed by law or presidential directive, we use your SSN to seek information about you from employers, schools, banks, and others who know you. Your SSN may also be used in studies and computer matching with other Government files, for example, files on unpaid student loans. If you do not give us your SSN or any other information requested, we cannot process your application, which is the first step in getting a job.

Country of citizenship:

Salary: Please state your salary history.

Highest Federal civilian grade held: (Also give job series and dates held)

Education: Educational information, including the name, city and state of colleges or universities you attended, as well as the type and year of any degree received. Report only attendance and/or degrees from schools accredited by accrediting institutions recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. For more information, you may refer to the following U.S. Department of Education website: <http://www.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/index.html>

Work Experience: Give the following information for your paid and non paid work experience related to the job for which you are applying. (Do not send job descriptions.)

Starting and ending dates (month and year)

Job title (for government position, include civilian series and grade or military rank)

Employer's name and address Supervisor's name and phone number ***Indicate if we may contact your current supervisor**

Salary (current)

Hours per week

Number of employees supervised and/or scope of responsibility of employees led

Duties and accomplishments (summarized in one paragraph)

Other Qualifications:

Job-related training courses (title and year)

Job-related skills, for example, other languages and computer software/hardware

Job-related certificates and licenses APDP Certifications (current only)

Job-related honors, awards, and special accomplishments, for example, publications, memberships in professional or honor societies, leadership activities, public speaking, and performance awards (Give dates but do not send documents unless requested.)

Publications: Provide a list of publications that you have authored. Provide title, date, and any co-authors, clearly indicate if you are the first author and state the impact of any publication on the community.

EXECUTIVE CORE QUALIFICATIONS FORMAT

(Limit 10 pages)

An **Executive Qualifications Statement** addressing the **mandatory managerial** qualification requirements [PARA 2B (1-5)]. This must be included as a separate attachment, and endorsed (*with original signature and date*) by an executive in your supervisory and/or functional chain who is knowledgeable of your managerial qualifications. This narrative statement must be a “**stand alone document**” and is the primary basis for the evaluation of your managerial qualifications by the Qualifications Review Board (QRB) convened by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The QRB is comprised of senior executives representing a variety of agencies government-wide. It should **not** be assumed that the QRB membership has knowledge of the complexity or content of DoD or other specific organizations, missions or programs. Your responses to the five Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) must describe the context and the results of your achievements in lay terminology, free of jargon and excessive reliance on acronyms. EXECUTIVE CORE QUALIFICATIONS (ECQ) statement (should be no more than 10 total pages for ECQs). Type should not be smaller than 11 point. NOTE: Current/Former Career SESers, as well as SES Candidate Development graduates (with OPM QRB Certification) do not need to readdress their ECQs. Please provide documentation of your QRB approval. OPM suggests the following approach:

Start your Executive Qualifications Statement with a brief summary (approximately 1/2 page) of your managerial experience or potential before addressing the five ECQs. This gives the QRB an overview of your executive qualifications.

Then, for each of the five ECQs, provide at least two examples of your qualifications using four elements.

- (1) *Challenge*: Describe a specific problem or goal.
- (2) *Context*: Talk about the individuals and groups you worked with, and/or the environment in which you worked, to tackle a particular challenge (e.g., clients, co-workers, members of Congress, shrinking budget, low morale.)
- (3) *Action*: Discuss the specific actions you took to address a challenge.
- (4) *Result*: Give specific examples of the results of your actions. These accomplishments demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of your leadership skills.

NOTE: A narrative description of 1 to 1-1/2 pages (but no more than 2) per ECQ is normally sufficient.

Keep in mind that competence in executive core qualifications may be demonstrated in a variety of ways, including supervisory/managerial responsibilities; special assignments, such as task forces; or as a specialist responsible for much of the technical work on a plan, budget, or other project. It is also useful to cite relevant formal training, such as OPM's SES Candidate Development Quarterly Seminars that are designed to address one or more key characteristics listed in the five ECQs. Your statement should include evidence of most, if not all of the competencies identified in the five ECQs and contain enough representative examples to provide a sound basis for reviewers to assess the breadth and depth of your executive qualifications. You must show that you are competent to assume leadership responsibilities relative to the core qualifications. Executive Qualifications Statements, which do not clearly address the five ECQs (listed above) in the **challenge/context/action/result (C-C-A-R)** model format will not be considered adequate for evaluation. Examples of good qualifications statements and use of the C-C-A-R model is provided in OPM's Guide to SES Qualifications: http://www.opm.gov/ses/references/SES_Quals_Guide_2006.pdf

SELECTION WILL BE BASED SOLELY UPON MERIT AND QUALIFICATIONS WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF RACE, COLOR, CREED, RELIGION, SEX, MARITAL STATUS, PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HANDICAP, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE, POLITICAL AFFILIATION, OR ANY OTHER NON-MERIT FACTORS.

THE AIR FORCE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Contact Information:

[REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Or write:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

What To Expect Next:

The Air Force Senior Executive Management Office will notify candidates (normally within 30 to 45 days of the announcement closing date) with one of the following methods:

Telephone and/or email notification of scheduled interview if rated as Best Qualified and referred for selection—or—

Memo to advise not rated among the Best Qualified for the position if determined Qualified or Not Qualified.

EEO Policy Statement

The United States Government does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, membership in an employee organization, or other non-merit factor.

Reasonable Accommodation Policy Statement

Federal agencies must provide reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities where appropriate. Applicants requiring reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process should contact the hiring agency directly. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

APPENDIX B

METHODOLOGY AND CONTRIBUTORS

METHODOLOGY

The Partnership for Public Service, working with Booz Allen Hamilton, conducted this study from July 2008 through June 2009. This research project was designed to analyze the role of the Senior Executive Service, including the extent to which it has achieved the goals envisioned by the Congress when it was created in 1978. We reviewed how the federal government recruits, assesses and selects leaders for SES positions, including efforts and progress to diversify the SES workforce. We also focused on SES leadership development programs and practices.

To address these issues, and identify the path the federal government should chart in dealing with mounting national and workforce challenges, we gathered data from a variety of sources. We reviewed existing literature on leadership, both within and outside of the public sector; collected and analyzed available data; and surveyed development and training officials from across the federal government. We interviewed 32 key stakeholders, practitioners, policymakers, and academics from 21 organizations and agencies. We conducted focus groups with close to 50 individuals from more than 25 departments and agencies that included GS-14s and -15s, SES recruiting and hiring managers as well as members of the SES. In total, we spoke to nearly 80 individuals from 40 organizations.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS REPORT

Partnership for Public Service

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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEWEES

Senior Executives Association

Carol Bonosaro, President
Scott Derrick, Professional Development Director

Office of the Director of National Intelligence

Dr. Ron Sanders, Chief Human Capital Officer

American University's Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation

Bob Tobias, Director

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Nancy Randa, Assistant Director
Paul Thompson, Group Manager
Julie Brill, Group Manager

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Chris Mihm, Managing Director
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Yvonne Jones, Assistant Director
Janice Latimer, Senior Analyst

Korn/Ferry International Executive Search Firm

Scott Miner, Partner
Charles Ingersoll, Partner

Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government

Dr. Steve Kelman, Professor

Special Libraries Association

Janice Lachance, Executive Director (former OPM Director)

IBM Center for the Business of Government

Jonathan Breul, Executive Director

Deloitte Research

Bill Eggers, Global Director, Public Sector Industry

Indiana University

Dr. Jim Perry, Professor

FBI

Don Packham, Chief Human Capital Officer

American Federation of Government Employees

Jacqueline Simon, Public Policy Director

RAND Corp

David Chu (former Undersecretary of Defense for Readiness/CHCO at DOD)

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National Academy of Public Administration

Alethea Long-Green, Director of Human Capital Studies

Postal Regulatory Commission

Nanci Langley, Vice Chairman and Commissioner

Senate Subcommittee on Oversight on Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia

Jennifer Hemingway, Staff Director, Minority Staff



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