



# FOSTERING FUTURE AGENCY LEADERSHIP

*The Senior Executive Service  
Federal Candidate  
Development Program*

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT



Kay Coles James, Director



## A MESSAGE *from the* DIRECTOR *of the* UNITED STATES OFFICE *of* PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

**O**n April 10, 2003, the Office of Personnel Management launched the Senior Executive Service Federal Candidate Development Program (Fed CDP), a governmentwide endeavor to train outstanding leaders of the future for the Federal Government who will guide us through the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century.

Our team has worked extensively with agencies and associations to develop this program. The Fed CDP will help Federal agencies meet their succession planning goals and contribute to the Government's efforts to create a high-quality Senior Executive Service leadership corps that draws upon the strength of America's diversity. We are confident the Fed CDP will attract the best and the brightest from both inside and outside the Federal Government.

Our recruitment starts **now** and will be consistent with our Merit System Principles and veterans' preference – which is the foundation upon which we have built a strong civil service. President Bush and I are committed to expanding leadership opportunities to build a diverse civil service that draws from the richness, strength, and diversity of our society and our way of life. The Fed CDP will help all qualified individuals bring their talents into leadership positions in the Federal Government.

The information contained in this brochure describes the educational model for this program which underscores a feedback-intensive experience through positive mentoring. The Fed CDP will expose the candidates to the best senior level executives in the Federal Government. Graduates of the Fed CDP will be submitted for certification by an SES Qualifications Review Board and, if they are so certified, may be selected for an SES position anywhere in the Federal Government without further competition.

Please join us in our journey to ensure we continue to have great leaders for great Government.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kay Coles James". The signature is fluid and cursive.

*Kay Coles James*

*Director, United States Office of Personnel Management*



## DEVELOPING LEADERS FOR THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE (SES)

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

The Fed CDP is based on the five Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) for SES entry and takes 14 months to complete. This governmentwide CDP trains and prepares graduates for immediate entry into the SES. This program complements Federal agency strategic human capital management and leadership development initiatives. As a benefit, participating agencies receive a temporary SES allocation slot, for up to three-years, for each sponsored candidate.

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

*"I support the goals of the Candidate Development Program to identify and develop individuals with great potential for the senior leadership cadre which reflects the rich diversity of America."*

— REP. DANNY K. DAVIS



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

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

## Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs)

ECQ 1	ECQ 2	ECQ 3	ECQ 4	ECQ 5
<i>Leading Change</i>	<i>Leading People</i>	<i>Results Driven</i>	<i>Business Acumen</i>	<i>Building Coalitions/ Communications</i>
Continual Learning Creativity/Innovation External Awareness Flexibility Resilience Service Motivation Strategic Thinking Vision	Conflict Management Leveraging Diversity Integrity/Honesty Team Building	Accountability Customer Service Decisiveness Entrepreneurship Problem Solving Technical Credibility	Financial Management Human Resources Management Technology Management	Influencing/Negotiating Interpersonal Skills Oral Communication Partnering Political Savvy Written Communication

### CANDIDATE SELECTION & RECRUITMENT

Merit will be the driving principle in the process. OPM is aggressively recruiting candidates from both inside and outside Government and working closely with agencies to identify and meet their specific needs with regard to succession planning and hard-to-fill positions. Nationwide recruitment will include efforts focused on groups traditionally underrepresented in the SES.

### SELECTION PROCESS

- OPM will announce the Fed CDP on [www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov).
- Eligible candidates – individuals must be able to show one year or more of leadership experience at the GS-14 level or above in the Federal service, or comparable experience, to be considered.

- Participating agencies will review, interview, and select candidates using OPM-approved guidelines.
- Candidates selected from within the Government who meet the applicable qualifications requirements, will serve in General Schedule grade GS-15 positions (temporary or permanent depending on their existing positions), for the duration of their participation in the program. Candidates from within the Government who do not meet the applicable qualifications for GS-15 will serve in GS-14 positions (temporary or permanent depending on their existing positions), for the duration of their participation in the program. Candidates from within the Government who are not serving under career appointments or under career-type appointments will be given a temporary Schedule B appointment. Candidates selected from

outside the Government will be appointed to temporary GS-15 positions (or temporary GS-14 where the applicable qualifications are not met), through Schedule B appointments, for the duration of their participation in the program. A Schedule B appointment is used for developmental purposes connected with an SES candidate development program.

- Agencies will certify their candidate selections to OPM.

### BALANCING WORK & TRAINING

The 14-month program allows candidates time to complete their training and development. Candidates receive three non-consecutive weeks of residential training. Additional one-day workshops and sessions will be held locally during the course of the training.

### PROGRAM FUNDING

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



*"...[N]ever take the honor of public service for granted.... [A]ll of us should dedicate ourselves to great goals. We are not here to mark time, but to make progress, to achieve results, and to leave a record of excellence."*

– PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

OCTOBER 15, 2001



## COMPREHENSIVE LEADERSHIP TRAINING

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

## PROGRAM CURRICULUM DETAILS

### *Classroom Learning*

#### PROGRAM ORIENTATION

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

#### EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT EXPERIENCE

Prior to attending the first week of residential classroom train-

ing, candidates will complete skills assessments and targeted readings on values-based leadership. The focus for this initial week will be five-fold:

1. Engaging participants in an active and supportive learning community, including a participant-led and managed Leadership Forums Committee (a Committee formed during the first week of training);
2. Preparing a personalized Executive Development Plan;
3. Establishing Executive Learning Teams (5-7 candidates plus a faculty executive coach);
4. Providing individual feedback on leadership skills through skills assessment instruments and exercises;
5. Building skills in the areas of values-based leadership, emotional intelligence, and team development.

#### MENTOR SELECTION AND TRAINING

Candidates will select an SES mentor from a pool established for the program. Each candidate will meet initially with her/his mentor to establish a mutual set of expectations and to receive assistance in finalizing the Executive

## *Program Highlights*

Personalized Executive Development Plans

Residential, Classroom, Field, and Web-based Training

Executive Learning Teams

Team Leadership Projects

Individual Coaching and Mentoring

Cabinet-level and White House Speakers

Developmental Assignments with Operational Responsibility

Policy Seminars and Leadership Visits

Field Experiences Outside Government

Reading Groups

## *Federal Executive Institute*

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



Development Plan and its activities. Candidates and mentors will continue to meet during the course of the program.

### **STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP SEMINAR**

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

### **FOCUSED SKILLS SEMINAR**

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

### **INDIVIDUAL LEARNING CLASSES**

Candidates also receive a small budget to acquire specific skills training. Based on their approved Executive Development Plan, candidates may use these funds to take formal classes or to participate in online learning programs.

### **ADMINISTRATION SPEAKERS AND POLICY LEADERS**

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

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

## *Work-based Learning*

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

### DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENTS

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

### TEAM LEADERSHIP PROJECT

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

### EXECUTIVE COACH

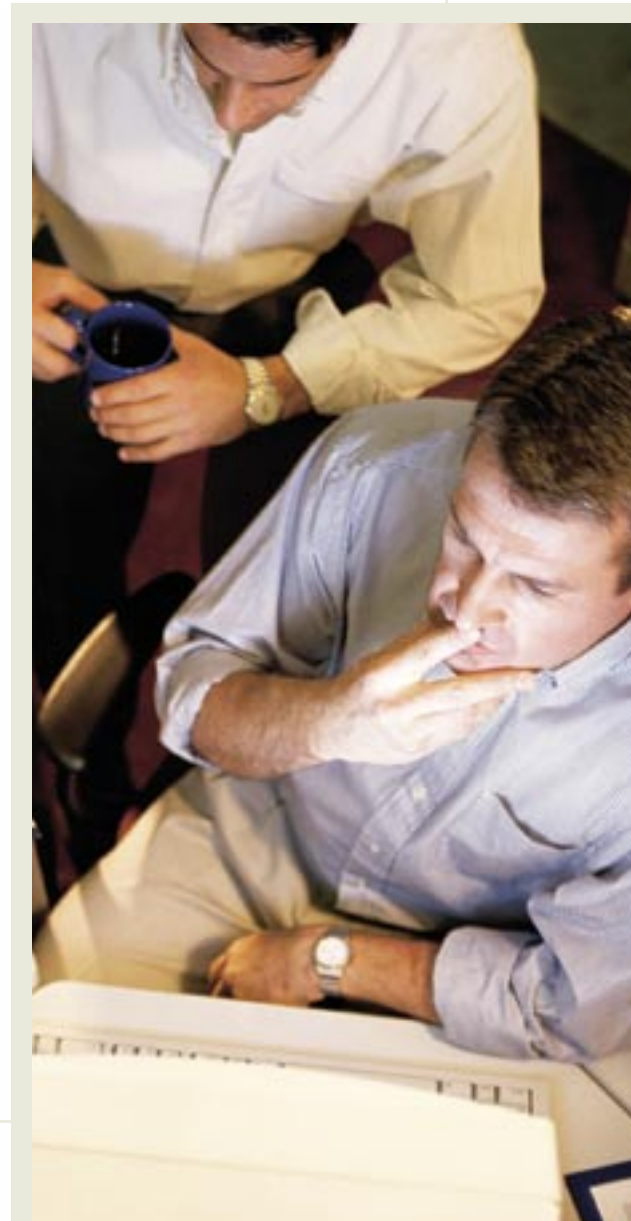
Each candidate will be on an Executive Learning Team that will have a faculty executive coach. The coach is responsible for helping form the team, enabling it to facilitate its own work, coaching the team during the program, and teaching the team members to coach each other. Also, the coach will meet privately with each candidate, on at least a quarterly basis, to help her/him form and reshape developmental goals, formulate strategies for current challenges, identify personal strengths and barriers, and assess progress on an ongoing basis.

### LEADERSHIP FORUMS COMMITTEE

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

### FIELD EXPERIENCES

A series of one-day offsite leadership programs will host candidates in settings normally unavailable to them. Such unique experiences might include leadership lessons that can be learned from: (1) a leadership tour of the Gettysburg battlefield; and (2) a tour of the Holocaust Museum and conversations with museum historians. Additional leadership experiences may include: (1) a day spent with the executive team of a non-profit organization; or (2) a day spent exploring succession planning at a major corporation.



## Program Timeline

### SELECTION PROCESS

Fed CDP Application Period Opens (remains open for 21 days) Week 1

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Fed CDP Application Period Closes Week 3

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Fed CDP Selection Weeks 8-11

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### FED CDP CONTENT

Fed CDP Orientation for Candidates and Supervisors Program Start

- Assessments Distributed
  - Mentor Matching Process Described
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Mentor Pool and Developmental Assignments Identified Month 2

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Initial Assessment Week (residential) Month 3

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Mentor Training/First Meeting with Mentors Month 4/5

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Second Core Training Week (residential) Month 7

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Third Core Training Week (residential) Month 11

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Program Graduation Month 14

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### READING GROUPS

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

### WEB-BASED LEARNING

The Fed CDP will have its own Web site to support candidate learning outside the classroom. The site will include: (1) all key program materials and guidelines, (2) profiles of all mentors and developmental assignment opportunities, (3) work rooms to support team projects and the Leadership Forums Committee, and (4) chat rooms for reading groups and other topical conversations. Program faculty and candidates will also be encouraged to post articles and other leadership learning resources.

### Program Completion

The program concludes when each candidate has:

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

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



Please contact us at:

[FEDCDP@OPM.GOV](mailto:FEDCDP@OPM.GOV)

[WWW.OPM.GOV/SES/FEDCDP](http://WWW.OPM.GOV/SES/FEDCDP)

