Pathway to SES

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The Senior Executive Service (SES) is comprised of the ….

- Men and women charged with leading the continuing transformation of our government. This dedicated corps of executives shares a commitment to public service and a set of democratic values grounded in the fundamental ideals of the Constitution. As the leaders of our Federal civilian workforce, Senior Executives strive each day to create a more citizen centered, result oriented Federal Government.

- Candidates can apply directly to a Federal agency for a specific SES position, or they may apply for an SES Candidate Development Program, which can lead to eligibility for a career appointment to an SES position without further competition.

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SES Applicants

- Applicants to SES positions must demonstrate they possess **Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs)** when applying. The ECQs define the competencies needed to build a federal corporate culture that drives for results, serves customers, and builds successful teams and coalitions within and outside the organization.

- The **ECQs are required for entry to the SES** and are used by many departments and agencies in selection, performance management, and leadership development for executive positions.

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Which words describe you?

Results Driven

Responsive

TIMELY!

EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE RECORD

Technical Competence

Resilient

Mentor & Sponsor

Reputation

EDUCATION

Strong Writing Skills

Energy

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Which words describe you?

Undeveloped Writing Skills

Complainer

LATE WORK / MISSING SUSPENSE DATES

Doesn't accept responsibility for their own actions
- i.e., it wasn't my fault…

INSECURE & DISPLAYING JEALOUSY

Unfavorable Reputation

Technically challenged
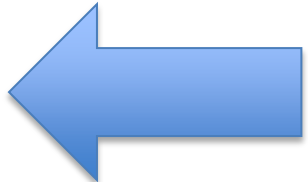
Unwilling to be Mentored

THINKS THAT EDUCATION REPLACES ABILITY TO DO THE JOB!

Gossiper

Defensive & Argumentative!

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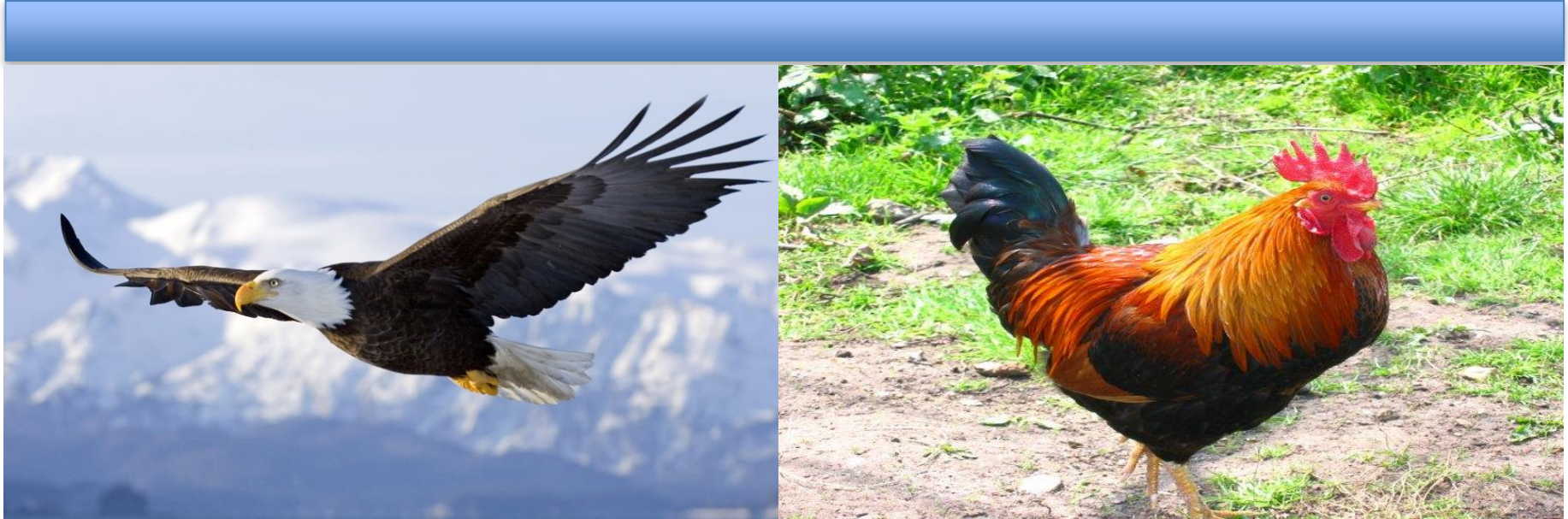U.S. Small Business Administration

You **reproduce** what you are....

- Does your Supervisor wish the team had more employees and leaders in the office just like you?

- Supervisors **promote people that they want more of**, because apples reproduce apples; oranges reproduce oranges; cats reproduce cats; and **YOU will reproduce what you are**.

- **You can't reproduce what you are not.**

- Again, **would your supervisor want 10 more people just like you**? If you don't know, ask the question.

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Eagles & Chicken

Eagles prefer to soar high as possible….and they stretch their wings wide…and soar!

Chickens prefer to be on the ground and are often found caged up with other chickens.

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Competencies

- Competencies are the personal and professional attributes that are critical to successful performance in the SES. They are based on extensive research of Government and private sector executives and input from agency Senior Executives and human resources managers.

- There are 28 competencies.

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Fundamental Competencies

These competencies are the foundation for success in each of the Executive Core Qualifications.

Interpersonal Skills – Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations.

Oral Communication – Makes clear and convincing oral presentations. Listens effectively; clarifies information as needed.

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Fundamental Competencies

- **Integrity/Honesty** – Behaves in an honest, fair, and ethical manner. Is consistent in words and actions. Models high standards of ethics.

- **Written Communication** – Writes in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience.

- **Continual Learning** – Assesses and recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; pursues self-development.

- **Public Service Motivation** – Shows a commitment to serve the public. Ensures that actions meet public needs; aligns organizational objectives and practices with public interests.

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ECQ Competencies

- Leading Change

- Leading People

- Results Driven

- Business Acumen

- Building Coalitions

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Leading Change

- Creativity and Innovation

- External Awareness

- Flexibility

- Strategic Thinking

- Vision

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Leading People

- Conflict Management

- Leveraging Diversity

- Developing Others

- Team Building

- Resilient

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Results Driven

- Accountability

- Customer Service

- Decisiveness

- Entrepreneurship

- Problem Solving

- Technical Credibility

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Business Acumen

- Financial Management

- Human Capital Management

- Technology Management

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Building Coalitions

- Partnering

- Political Savvy

- Influencing/Negotiating

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Writing your ECQs

- Write 2 examples for each ECQ

- Don't exceed 10 pages total

- Your ECQs represent your ability to write and communicate clearly

- Have a GS-15, a friend or spouse, and a couple of SES leaders proof-read your ECQs.

- Don't use a lot of acronyms

- Discuss what YOU did, use the word "I"

- Use 12' font and 1 inch margins

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Writing ECQs – Structure of Examples

- Start with the CHALLENGE

- Then add some CONTEXT

- Then include your ACTION

- Finish with RESULTS

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Let's do a skeleton outline….

Leading People

What's <u>wrong or missing</u> in this outline below?

"My team had to realign to another organization. My team developed the org charts. They were accepted by my supervisor."

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ECQ – Leading Change (Example)

- With over 20 years of progressively responsible leadership, I assumed leadership of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Small Business Program in the middle of fiscal year (FY) 2010. The Corps has over 33,000 employees and obligates over $20B each year. My challenge was to develop, manage, and achieve small business initiatives and s goals for the $8B Small Business Program. The Corps had failed to achieve Army assigned goals for the past four consecutive years. **(challenge)**

- My 60 subordinate Small Business Chiefs at the Divisions, Districts, and Centers were demoralized after years of failing to meet goals. The 1,200 contracting professionals were somewhat removed from the engagement and responsibility of meeting small business goals. The Army assigned annual small business goals to the Corps Commander, and the Commander further assigned the same exact goals to 60 subordinate Commanders (9 General Officers and 51 Colonels). My team lacked motivation and morale; goals seemed unattainable and prior efforts were to no avail . **(context)**

ECQ – Leading Change (Example continued)

- With just a few months to turn around the program, I sought to create a robust, accurate, and predictive strategy for success. To increase motivation and secure buy-in, I made phone calls across the country to Commanders, Contracting leaders, and Small Business leaders. My message was clear, persistent, and unwavering – small business goal achievement was the responsibility of every leader at every level in the Corps. I studied and analyzed the trends for each subordinate command. **(action)**

- Upon discovering that the goals were too high for some of the commands, I developed an enterprise wide plan to restructure goal setting and synchronize efforts. The plan included negotiating small business goals with each subordinate Commander instead of assigning the same arbitrary goal across the enterprise. In concert with the Public Affairs Office, I developed a vision and expectation for success for the entire workforce, and pushed to include the SB vision/message in the Commander's speeches and briefings. **(action)**

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ECQ – Leading Change (Example continued)

- I directed my subordinate command Small Business Leaders to engage their respective Contracting Chiefs, Program Managers, and Commanders at our 60 plus subordinate commands to develop a baseline goal that aligned with the historical mission and types of contracts awarded at each location. I assessed the goals, and negotiated with the Commanders to assign meaningful goals to each Command. Some Commands received a goal that was less than the Corps' goal, and others received higher goals. **(action)**

- There was push back from Commands that received higher goals, but I remained persistent and optimistic. **(context)** The innovative and participatory effort of assigning meaningful goals garnered significant attention across the Corps, and created a new level of excitement and motivation in the possibility of meeting goals. **(Results)**

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ECQ – Leading Change (Example Continued)

- Within months, the Corps caught the vision and turned it into action leading to significant success. The commitment to excellence and goal achievement was at the highest levels in the history of the Corps.

- As a result, the program has consistently exceeded expectations of the Department of Defense and the Office of the Secretary of the Army, breaking records every fiscal year (FY) under my leadership as follows: FY10 (the SB Goal was 33% and we exceeded the goal achieving 39.7%); FY11 (the SB Goal was 35% and we exceeded the goal achieving 42.4%); FY12 (the SB Goal was 42.3% and we exceeded the goal achieving 45.3%); and FY13 (the SB Goal was 41.5% and we exceeded the goal achieving 42.7%). **(Results)**

- My strategy for change resulted in breaking new records of achievement each year from FY10-FY13. **(Results)**

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Proof READING -- Leading Change

- ✓ Creativity and Innovation
- ✓ External Awareness
- ✓ Flexibility
- ✓ Strategic Thinking
- ✓ Vision

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Final Slide....

- You **<u>MUST</u>** have a mentor and a sponsor!!

- Your mentor and sponsor **MUST** be EAGLES!

- Read **<u>MUST</u>** read OPM's Guide:
  https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/senior-executive-service/reference-materials/guidetosesquals_2010.pdf