United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240

ADDRESS ONLY THE DIRECTOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

In Reply Refer To:
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Memorandum

To: All Employees

From: Director

Subject: Leadership Development Guidance

I am pleased to forward to all Fish and Wildlife Service employees the Leadership Development Guidance that has been adopted by the Directorate. This Guidance was designed to help employees identify the skills and attributes needed for advancement to leadership positions, in response to employee questions about what it takes to succeed in leadership positions in the Service. In addition to encouraging all employees to obtain appropriate leadership skills and experience to better address the mission of the Service, the Guidance reflects Directorate efforts to ensure that a pool of highly qualified leaders is available to fill senior leadership positions in the bureau.

Service leaders must be knowledgeable of the technical aspects of the mission they lead and also possess other non-technical attributes for leadership. Leaders must be willing and able to accept new challenges that address a variety of programs, places and levels of management. To help the Service meet the current and future needs for leaders, it is imperative to establish appropriate standards that define the qualities and characteristics required for promotion toward leadership positions. In addition, it is important to follow-up and evaluate developmental programs, guidelines, training and experiences in order to identify and remove any barriers to advancement and provide guidance and assistance to our employees in determining career options. The Leadership Development Guidance addresses those responsibilities, in concert with our Continuous Learning Policy and other Service efforts in regard to training, core competencies, and employee development.

This Guidance establishes official Service identification of Core Qualifications and Competencies for employee development and advancement. The identified characteristics are beneficial for assessing current capabilities and to enhance skills for excellence for an employee's chosen career path. The level and scope at which the leadership competencies are performed increase as grade and responsibilities increase. For those who aspire to senior positions the need to demonstrate skill and experience in the Core Qualifications and Competencies will increase.

The Core Qualifications and Competencies described in the Guidance provide a framework for individuals to assess their leadership skills and determine their developmental needs. In addition to these attributes the Service remains steadfast in our commitment to employee excellence in science and natural resource experiences that are critical to our mission.

The Core Qualifications and Competencies are already requirements for admission to the Senior Executive Service. Effective immediately, it is the policy of the Fish and Wildlife Service that applicants for Service positions at GS-15 will also be required to demonstrate these attributes. The Division of Personnel Management is assigned to review the Leadership Development Guidance and determine how best to implement this in the KSAs and crediting plans for GS-15 and above positions in the Service, as appropriate.

To further implement these guidelines, I have directed the National Conservation Training Center to identify the relationship of courses in the training curriculum to the Core Qualifications and Competencies. Also, NCTC will identify assessment tools for employees to evaluate their current level of competency in the attributes identified in the Guidance, with indicators of courses to address targeted development areas.

Because leadership development involves a broad base of experience and perspectives in addition to training, the Deputy Regional Directors and Deputy Assistant Directors are assigned to identify additional implementation opportunities and approaches, including design of developmental assignments or details to temporary positions in order to advance Core Qualifications and Competencies.

This Guidance is one of the first steps in a renewed focus on leadership development. I look forward to working with the Directorate in our continuing effort to help each employee develop the best qualities and skills in himself or herself, and to help the Service continue our heritage of natural resource leadership. If you have questions about this Guidance or would like to contribute toward the Service's implementation, please contact your Deputy Assistant or Regional Director.