

SECOND EDITION
AUGUST 2004

Human Capital Management Series

Growing Leaders for Public Service



Ray Blunt

IBM Center for
**The Business
of Government**

HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT SERIES

Growing Leaders for Public Service

Ray Blunt

Second Edition
August 2004

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Foreword | 4 |
| Author’s Note to New Edition | 5 |
| Part I: Leaders Growing Leaders: Preparing the Next Generation of Public Service Executives | 7 |
| Executive Summary | 8 |
| Introduction | 10 |
| Understanding the Challenge..... | 10 |
| How Leadership Is Fostered: The Role of Leaders in Shaping Culture..... | 11 |
| How Leaders Are Grown: The Lessons of Example and Experience | 12 |
| Leaders Beget Leaders and Leave a Legacy | 12 |
| Lessons in How to Grow Public Service Leaders..... | 14 |
| Growing Leaders Through Personal Example: As an <i>Exemplar</i> | 14 |
| Growing Leaders Through Relationships: As a <i>Mentor</i> | 17 |
| Growing Leaders Through Experiences: As a <i>Coach</i> | 18 |
| Growing Leaders Through Development Programs: As a <i>Teacher</i> | 20 |
| Profiles of Three Exemplary Public Service Leaders..... | 23 |
| Growing the Next Generation of Leaders in the Veterans Benefits Administration | 23 |
| Growing the Next Generation of Leaders in the Social Security Administration..... | 24 |
| Growing the Next Generation of Leaders in the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research..... | 27 |
| Appendices | 29 |
| Appendix I: Approach and Methodology | 29 |
| Appendix II: Exemplary Leader Profiles..... | 30 |
| Leo Wurschmidt—Leadership Character and Capability | 30 |
| Paul Barnes—Leadership Character and Capability | 32 |
| Dr. Janet Woodcock—Leadership Character and Capability | 34 |
| Appendix III: Annotated Bibliography | 37 |
| Endnotes | 42 |

| | |
|--|--------|
| Part II: Organizations Growing Leaders: Best Practices and Principles in the Public Service | 43 |
| Executive Summary | 44 |
| Introduction | 47 |
| The “Quiet Crisis” | 47 |
| The Symptoms | 47 |
| Some Remedies | 48 |
| The Importance of Culture | 48 |
| Approach | 48 |
| Launching a Succession Initiative..... | 50 |
| Overcoming the Myths | 50 |
| Initiating Change: The Imperatives | 50 |
| Five Exemplary Organizations: Lessons Learned | 52 |
| Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation | 52 |
| U.S. Coast Guard..... | 55 |
| Western Area Power Administration..... | 58 |
| Veterans Benefits Administration..... | 62 |
| Social Security Administration | 66 |
| Making Sense of It All: Reaching Conclusions for Action | 69 |
| What Does It All Mean?..... | 69 |
| Key Principles and Best Practices in the Public Sector | 69 |
| Uniqueness..... | 71 |
| Key Principles and Best Practices in the Private Sector..... | 72 |
| Recommendations | 74 |
| Appendices | 78 |
| Appendix I: VBA Leader Competencies by Level..... | 78 |
| Appendix II: Leadership Myths and Truths | 80 |
| Endnotes | 83 |
| Bibliography..... | 84 |
| About the Author | 85 |
| Key Contact Information | 86 |

F O R E W O R D

August 2004

On behalf of The IBM Center for The Business of Government, we are pleased to republish two reports by Ray Blunt, “Leaders Growing Leaders: Preparing the Next Generation of Public Service Executives” and “Organizations Growing Leaders: Best Practices and Principles in the Public Service.” Both reports rank high among the most frequently requested Center reports. Like Mr. Blunt, we have been highly gratified by the positive responses that the two reports have received.

In both reports, Mr. Blunt addresses the crucial question of how well the federal government is developing its next generation of leaders. In his first report for the Center, “Leaders Growing Leaders,” he examined four ways—as exemplars, as mentors, as coaches, and as teachers—that individual senior executives can grow leaders within their organizations. In his second report for the Center, “Organizations Growing Leaders,” he examined how government organizations can take on the same important challenge: developing the next generation of government leaders.

In “Organizations Growing Leaders,” Blunt examined five organizations within the federal government—the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Western Area Power Administration, the Veterans Benefits Administration, and the Social Security Administration—that have created exemplary development programs for their future leaders. While each has undertaken the task in different ways, all have demonstrated a commitment to providing their future leaders with development assignments, training, self development, and other state-of-the-art leadership development practices.

The federal government depends on effective senior leadership. Mr. Blunt’s reports show clearly that the task of growing leaders may be as important a task as can be found today in public service—one which will determine whether government programs will be run efficiently and produce the performance and results citizens expect and deserve. We trust these two reports will continue to be useful to all government organizations preparing the next generation of leaders to replace those who will be leaving.

Paul Lawrence
Partner-in-Charge
IBM Center for The Business of Government
paul.lawrence@us.ibm.com

Nicole Gardner
Partner
IBM Business Consulting Services
nicole.gardner@us.ibm.com

Author's Note to New Edition

Since “Leaders Growing Leaders” and “Organizations Growing Leaders” were first published, I have been very gratified that the two reports have struck a responsive chord with many senior leaders in government, as well as with emerging leaders in public service. In reflecting on the interest that the reports have generated, I believe two factors play a role: the growing instability of our world over the last several years and the increased emphasis by the government on human capital and leadership succession.

I have been particularly pleased that the Federal Executive Institute has been distributing these two reports to their students in the Leadership for a Democratic Society programs. Both the Institute and the IBM Center for The Business of Government have been great informal partners in this leadership learning enterprise. The interest shown in these two reports, which has led to their being republished, is a tribute to all those who are seeking to grow the next generation of leaders within the public service.

I have now had many opportunities to present the material in these reports in courses at the Federal Executive Institute, through the Council for Excellence in Government forums, and in a variety of other settings in individual agencies. In all these experiences, I have continued to learn from my colleagues and to become even more convinced that growing leaders is a critical task for senior leaders today. If leadership development is not job number 1, it's certainly job number 1A.

I have also had an opportunity to work with a number of government organizations as they have planned for and implemented many of the ideas contained in these reports within their own unique organization cultures and challenges. In all these cases, I feel as much the student as I do the teacher or coach.

Based on my travels over the past several years, I am more convinced than ever that the following principles are key to growing the leaders of the future:

- We learn to lead far more from tacit rather than from cognitive knowledge—as apprentices of “masters” in the school of intentional and challenging experience.
- We learn to lead from significant relationships with senior leaders and others who take the time to serve as our coaches, mentors, teachers, and, above all, our examples. These are, indeed, servant leaders who have an “other” focus rather than a “me” focus. And they are still too few.
- We learn to lead from the very stuff of life—the hardships that may visit us all and that shape our character—particularly as we cultivate a “skill” at reflective learning and self awareness and have caring people to walk through the hard times with us.
- If leaders are people who have followers, they are followed more because of *who* they are, not because of the power they hold or their external credentials or rank—or even charisma.

Humility, moral courage, integrity, caring, and a clear-eyed focus on purpose emerge as far more critical factors for followers than any others.

- And, finally, as Lincoln observed, the true leadership crucible is power; it is the ultimate test of character—not adversity. Preparation for the test of power should begin early and honestly. Observers of the leadership scene as far back as Homer and the writers of the Bible have emphasized this central truth for us. It's seemingly the hardest of lessons to ever learn.

It is my hope that by publishing these two reports together, the continuity and practicality of these principles will become even more evident to those in government today who are taking on a task far more difficult than my simply writing about them. To know and not to act upon that knowledge is not to know at all.

Ray Blunt
August 2004

Part I

Leaders Growing Leaders: Preparing the Next Generation of Public Service Executives

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Above all, leadership is a position of servanthood. Leadership is also a posture of debt; a forfeiture of rights.”¹

How to grow the next generation of public service leaders may be the single most critical responsibility of senior public service leaders today. It is also among the most uneven efforts carried out by federal agencies and perhaps least understood of all leadership capabilities. This study seeks to help close that gap.

It draws upon the extensive research on how leaders grow as leaders, how the best organizations grow their future leaders, and then focuses particularly on the crucial role that senior leaders play in preparing the next generation for the leadership challenges that lie ahead in an era of great change.

As Peter Drucker cogently put it, leaders have followers. They have followers because they earn the mantle, if not the title, through the consistent demonstration of both leadership capability and character. Who leaders are and what they do, day after day, determines for those who observe them whether they indeed “walk the talk” and are willing to serve others as well.

In profiling three leaders who have been instrumental in producing significant change in their organizations over the years and in growing leaders, four

common qualities of character and capability are identified in the report that appear central:

- An abiding focus on the core purpose of public service
- A deep (and demonstrated) belief in the worth and capabilities of people
- Courage—a willingness to take personal and organizational risks
- Personal caring about people

A concise summary of how each of these leaders has grown others is included in this report. A detailed profile of their leadership character and the capabilities that allow them to grow others is contained in Appendix II.

What is known about how leaders grow—through the lessons of experience and documented in the research on the “best practices” of organizations—can be summarized as follows:

Public service leaders can best be grown through:

- The *examples* of character and capability in senior leaders’ lives;
- Deep and lasting relationships with exemplary senior leaders acting as *mentors*;

- A systematic and strategic combination of challenging and varied job experiences and *coaching* to learn leadership within these on-the-job experiences; and
- Well-crafted and systematic development programs that are grounded in practical reality, where leadership is learned through action and through deeply involved senior leaders as *teachers*.

The “how to’s” of becoming more self aware of your own example of leadership, and being an effective mentor, coach, and teacher are discussed with practical applications. Also, there is inclusion of how to implement an effective leadership development program based on how leaders learn—through experience and action and active involvement of senior leaders.

For those desiring to explore this topic further, an Annotated Bibliography is contained in Appendix III.

While the thrust of this report is on the practical—how senior leaders can grow the next generation of leaders—the implications for the public service are profound. Today’s senior leaders have an opportunity to leave a legacy, to help to instill public service values and essential leadership capabilities in others who will in turn grow the next generation of public service leaders.

Introduction²

“When organizations in every sector of society begin asking the same question at the same time, something is up. The question—raised with increasing frequency by leading public, private and non-profit organizations—is, How do we develop the leaders our organizations require for an uncertain future?”³

Frances Hesselbein

The transformation of the business of government is in progress. It is both a response to the extreme urgency of the changing times in public service and a groundswell in the world of work in general. To navigate these times, and to respond to the forces of transformation, and, above all, to attract and retain the next generation of public servants will require, paradoxically perhaps, today’s senior leaders to look far more intentionally to serve the future careers of others.

The legacy of today’s senior public service leaders can be to leave behind the people, the culture, the systems, and above all the leadership at all levels—servant leadership—rooted in character and capability, that will ensure that public service truly serves the American people in the next generation. It is the task, likely the predominant task, of senior career leaders, primarily members of the Senior Executive Service (SES), to take the lion’s share of the responsibility for building this legacy of future leaders from the ranks of the people with whom they work. There may be no more urgent or important task, but it is one that has gone largely begging for a solution.

This brief examination of the critical issue of the future of public service leadership focuses on how this task can best be accomplished. It points clearly to the following conclusion:

Public service leaders can best be grown through:

- The *examples* of character and capability set by senior leaders’ lives;
- Deep and lasting relationships with exemplary senior leaders acting as *mentors*;
- A systematic and strategic combination of challenging and varied job experiences and *coaching* to learn leadership within these on-the-job experiences; and
- Well-crafted and systematic training and development programs that are grounded in practical reality, where leadership is learned through action and through deeply involved senior leaders as their *teachers*.

Understanding the Challenge

“Unlike the possibility of plague or nuclear holocaust, the leadership crisis will probably not become the basis for a best-seller or a blockbuster movie, but in many ways it is the most urgent and dangerous of the threats we face today, if only because it is insufficiently recognized and little understood.”⁴

Warren Bennis

Leadership and the development of effective leaders is neither easy nor is it well understood. Growing or developing excellent leaders is not the same thing as producing excellent managers, and it does not occur in the same way. We look to each—managers and leaders—to produce certain outcomes that are essential to their times and to their circumstances.

Good managers produce outcomes that exemplify the very best bureaucracies—predictability, order, efficiency, and consistency. Change comes through gradual improvements. Managers accomplish such consistency through expertise in the functions of planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling, and problem solving.

Effective leaders produce an outcome of change, often dramatic and highly useful. They take people and organizations through significant change by exercising three important capabilities:

- setting a clear sense of direction with a compelling vision and crafting strategies to reach the vision,
- aligning people around that vision through clear and extensive communication, widespread involvement, and personal example, and
- motivating and inspiring others through satisfying important human needs that builds the energy to overcome barriers they will face.⁵

In a November 1999 study, Mark Huddleston interviewed 21 Distinguished Executive Rank Award winners from the 1997 senior executive class of recipients. He concluded that the current system for developing the next generation of leaders was “largely serendipitous.” He cites both complacency and the lack of a coherent approach to developing true leaders (rather than functional experts) as at the heart of the problem.⁶

Also in 1999, the Ford Foundation, IBM, and the University of Colorado sponsored a national survey of over 600 thought leaders, practitioners, and leadership educators to address the question of future leadership in the public service. The findings were consistent with what other researchers have found in private sector studies—that there is a gap

of leadership talent in the public service and that it will almost certainly grow in the next 20 years.

Further, both superior capability and sound character will be essential leadership abilities for public service leaders of the future, but that the latter—the development of character in leaders—is even more important than the former.⁷ Their recommendations on how to grow these needed leaders are consistent with the central message of this report.

How Leadership Is Fostered: The Role of Leaders in Shaping Culture

John Kotter’s studies of leadership reveal one penetrating finding that can be applied directly to public service. Those organizations that have an earned reputation for attracting and keeping the best talent and for developing a coterie of strong leaders all share something in common—they have a strong culture where *there are consistent shared norms and values concerning the importance of leadership.*

Character and Capability in Leaders Who Grow Leaders

Mark Huddleston set forth four qualities that senior executives themselves identify as important for leadership success: to have a clear strategic vision, the ability to animate others, an ethic of hard work, and personal integrity.⁸

However, in drilling deeper, the consistent qualities that emerge in the leaders who are not only successful but also grow other leaders would specifically include (in addition to personal integrity):

- An abiding focus on the core purpose of public service
- A deep (and demonstrated) belief in the worth and capabilities of people
- Courage—a willingness to take personal and organizational risks
- Personal caring about people

What Kotter concludes is essentially what Edgar Schein concluded nearly a decade before in his classic work *Organizational Culture and Leadership*: The capacity to shape cultural conditions that lead to learning and to the development of leaders that can produce change is the central task of the leader. Kotter's conclusion: "institutionalizing a leadership-centered culture is the ultimate task of leadership."⁹

How Leaders Are Grown: The Lessons of Example and Experience

If growing public service leaders is imperative for tomorrow's changing world, if there is a surfeit of managers and a dearth of public service leaders, if systematic approaches to developing future leaders are rare, and if the task of a leader is to help shape the culture within which leaders develop, what is the best course to take?

By now, it is better understood that, for the most part, leaders are not born—they are made; they are grown. The capabilities that are needed by leaders—the behaviors, skills, mindsets, and attitudes—can be learned; the character qualities of leaders can be shaped within an organization's culture. This puts to rest the most common myth that leaders are born. Both the excellent capabilities and the proven character needed in public service leaders can be "grown" within the organization itself.

These conclusions emerge from probably the best longitudinal body of research on growing leadership available today: the years of study and gathering of data on leaders by the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) in Greensboro, North Carolina. In studies of leaders in the private sector, the nonprofit world, and the public sector, the findings are highly consistent. Successful leaders grow through particular sets of experiences.¹⁰ CCL's findings place leader learning into four broad categories:

- Challenging job assignments—42%
- Learning from others' examples—22%
- Hardships and setbacks—20%
- Other events—16% (including training and education)

Challenging job assignments are those that stretch the individual. CCL has identified the types of job experiences that produce leadership learning:

- a change in the scope of a job;
- a job that requires a "fix it" opportunity;
- a job that needs to be started from scratch;
- line to staff or staff to line switches (including headquarters to field); and
- projects and task forces that require new skills or learning but where the individual remains on the job.

All of these job-based experiences challenge, stretch, and grow the individual—and produce leader learning. For the leader who wishes to grow leaders, such an understanding is critical. This is, however, a notion that runs counter to the way that government managers typically develop—within their functional, organizational, and geographic "stovepipes," and through training programs attended by individuals—"largely serendipitously."

Leaders Beget Leaders and Leave a Legacy

We see clearly that the task of growing leaders may be as important a task as can be found today in public service and as important a "result." That there are more leaders needed, particularly leaders with new capabilities and solid character, is perhaps intuitively obvious. That leaders develop within a leader-centered culture—one best shaped by leaders themselves—and that leaders develop over time primarily through challenging and diverse experiences is also clear. But, more importantly, what also emerges is that the central role in this drama is not played by leadership training programs alone, though they are important; nor by replicating "best practices," though they are certainly instructive.

The critical players in growing future public service leaders are the senior leaders.

Noel Tichy, University of Michigan professor, former head of executive development for General Electric (GE), and long-time consultant to GE and numerous other top organizations, benchmarked many of the best organizations in the world in growing excellent leaders. These included Hewlett-Packard, the U.S. Special Operations Command, Tenneco, AlliedSignal, ServiceMaster, Shell Oil, and the exemplary nonprofit Focus: HOPE, among others. What he found in the very best organizations was highly consistent:

Winning companies win because they have good leaders that nurture the development of other leaders at all levels of the organization. *The key ability of winning organizations and winning leaders is creating leaders.*¹¹ (emphasis added)

He saw certain fundamentals demonstrated over and over again despite wide disparity in the types of organizations (including public sector), the leaders, and the cultures. The leaders with a proven track record of successfully growing leaders:

- Assume personal responsibility for developing other leaders.
- Have a “teachable point of view” that they can articulate and show others how to make the organization work effectively, how to grow others, what behaviors are needed, and what values are essential.
- Embody their teachable point of view in “stories” about the past and stories about a visionary future.
- Generate positive energy and encourage other leaders while making tough decisions.
- Devote considerable time to developing other leaders and have approaches that normally involve vulnerability, openness, and a willingness to admit mistakes, thus serving as effective role models.

We now turn to an examination of how these principles can be employed by senior leaders to help grow the next generation of public service leaders—leaders with capability and character who will serve the American people. Then we will take a look at how these principles have been embodied in the lives of three outstanding public service leaders in their roles as exemplar, mentor, coach, and teacher.

Lessons in How to Grow Public Service Leaders

“The ultimate test for a leader is not whether he or she makes smart decisions and takes decisive action, but whether he or she teaches others to be leaders and builds an organization that can sustain its success even when he or she is not around.”¹²

Noel Tichy

We are accustomed now to the notion of a leader being a lifelong learner and someone who helps build a learning organization. “Teaching,” as a generic term, is simply the transmission of personal learning and wisdom from a leader to others. Exemplary leaders see it as their responsibility and their legacy to grow the next generation. At the end of the day, that is the only way that successful change is sustained.

In that respect, leaders not only learn to be leaders, they learn to be effective “growers”—developers of other leaders able to translate the lessons of their experience into helping others to become leaders. Leaders beget leaders. So where do you begin if this is your objective as a senior leader?

This section focuses on four roles—four areas of action where you can focus your efforts in growing the next generation of public service leaders:

- Growing leaders through personal example—as an *exemplar*
- Growing leaders through significant relationships—as a *mentor*
- Growing leaders through varied experiences—as a *coach*

- Growing leaders through development programs—as a *teacher*

Following this section, three outstanding leaders are profiled. These are public service leaders who have produced significant results and have made a priority of successfully growing other leaders.

Growing Leaders Through Personal Example: As an *Exemplar*

Leadership by example is not a new concept. As Peter Drucker cogently points out, leaders are defined by having followers. Leaders are followed more for who they are as observed by their behavior than for what title they have or how expert they are. In essence, followers choose their leaders. What may be new, however, is the perspective that people learn leadership from you *whether you intend for them to or not*; whether you are an excellent leader or not. Simply think about the leaders who have had the greatest influence on you—the ones you want to emulate and the ones you never wanted to be like. Both have helped to shape you. Now think about the people who have worked for you and with you over the years. If they were interviewed about your leadership story, what would they have learned?

The Center for Creative Leadership found that some of the most telling leadership lessons came from simply observing leaders in action. Ironically, the lessons learned came from both good and bad leaders. That knowledge alone should spur leaders to be more aware of the congruency between their talk and action—walk the talk—and to be more

Getting Started

Making It a Priority: Take Stock of Your Time, Then Make the Time

*It is quite simply impossible to conceive of a change in any direction, minor or major, that is not preceded by—and then sustained by—major changes, noticeable to all, in the way you spend your time.*¹³

Tichy observes that leaders who grow leaders start by setting an example, blocking time for this important task. Perhaps the greatest message you can give as a leader that you are making it your priority to serve the needs of the next generation is how you use your time.

To start, go back over your calendar for the past 30 days and see how you have spent your time. How much of it was spent on what was most urgent: your “in box,” interrupting phone calls or visits, extended meetings about budget issues, correspondence, etc.? How much of your time was spent with your peers or with top executives, Congress, or OMB? If you are like most senior leaders, you will find that, as St. Augustine observed, “the urgent will drive out the important.”

It is those very things that are important but not urgent where senior leaders need to focus time—*intentionally* devoting more time to what Stephen Covey refers to as Quadrant II activities.

It may be somewhat shocking to see that there is actually little time spent in intentionally or even unintentionally developing other leaders—mentoring, coaching, teaching, informally interacting. Unless you spend some initial time reflecting honestly on what it is you do with your time, it is unlikely you will make the necessary changes to reorder your time and have it show up on your calendar. That self-awareness is the first step in taking better control over building a leadership legacy.

Finding and Preparing Your Leadership Stories

Effective leaders convey their own learning through stories—the lessons of their experience. In the extensive Center for Creative Leadership research and from Kotter’s findings on leaders vs. managers, this is the heart of extending leader learning—teachable experience. Stories wrap the two central facets of leader learning into a package—experience and example—and make it a memorable and practical package.

While there is much that is emerging in research on how the brain works—cognitive science—suffice it to say that we learn and remember information and even plan strategically by ingesting knowledge and storing it in the form of stories. So storytelling should be an integral part of your leadership coaching, mentoring, and teaching. But where do the stories themselves come from? Perhaps you think that you don’t have any. Then a first step might be to see what were your own leader learning points.

To start, get a large spiral notebook to use as a journal for notes about what you have learned and want to pass on. On the first page of the journal, draw a horizontal line across the middle. At the top of the upper section write “Highs” in the center. Near the bottom of the page in the lower section, in the center, write “Lows.” The horizontal line represents your career or perhaps even your life. The upper portion, the relative “Highs,” represents significant challenge, excitement, high achievement, recognition, a great event, or a satisfying accomplishment—personally or professionally. The lower portion, the relative “Lows,” represents failure, disappointment, tragedy, a setback, a bad boss, a bad relationship, a dead-end job, boredom, getting fired or demoted, etc.

Once you have identified these key events across the span of your career and personal life, reflect on each one. For each high and each low, begin to draw out the lessons from it that may have informed or reshaped the way you now lead. If it is true that the emotionally impacting events of our lives lead to leader learning—even career setbacks and bad bosses, as CCL has found—then these lessons are critical and constitute the learned wisdom that we each possess about leadership.

Each of these events is a story that can be told to others as an illustration of a key learning in your life. It is a story that links ideas and experiences together with a “moral” or a central learning for others. Not only does this give you insight about how you learned leadership—lessons to pass on—but it gives you ideas about how you might challenge others to learn as well and apply these lessons to their lives.

Writing down these stories does not need to be accomplished at one sitting. Instead, periodically take time to use your Highs-Lows chart to recall what spurred you to learn about leadership. It is a good beginning for developing your own content for ways in which you can help grow other leaders.

conscious of involving younger leaders in their sphere of action. But that can often produce a need to project perfection. Actually the contrary is true.

As Tichy discovered, the best role models were also the ones who were personally vulnerable, open, and honest about their mistakes. As we will see in the lives of the three exemplary leaders identified for this report, it is primarily the personal and character qualities that stand out in people's minds when they discuss leaders they have known. It is those aspects of personal character they exemplify that win them the "right," if you will, to serve others through mentoring, coaching, and teaching. Character and capability in a leader cannot be separated.

While this may be the most important aspect of leaders growing leaders—by their example of character and capability—it is certainly the most elusive to "learn." How can you know if you are setting an example that others want to follow, and how can you become a more effective example?

Many, if not most, who benchmark leadership programs use a method that is designed to get at this issue—360-degree feedback. It is a common best practice to help leaders identify their strengths and weakness; examine the consistency between what they believe about themselves and what others see; and analyze the relationship between "walk" and "talk." Why? Simply because most senior leaders receive less and less feedback the further up the ladder they go. Often their view of their own strengths goes back several years, and those so-called strengths now may be weaknesses.

For example, the self-starting, highly reliable independent thinker may find herself in a situation that calls for significant collaborative relationships and team building. What worked and was valued has now become a hindrance, and a factor that separates her from her colleagues and subordinates. For reasons such as this, many top-flight organizations have identified not only their corporate culture values, but the behaviors that they want to embed in the culture by the example of their leaders. Such feedback from peers and subordinates as well as from superiors—360-degree feedback—combines to provide self awareness and the opportunity to make changes.

Not only is the solicitation of such feedback an opportunity to learn and to change, but it also exhibits an openness and a vulnerability that are important components of exemplary leadership.

Another important place to begin setting an example is in serving rather than seeking to be served.

If our ... organizations are going to live up to their potential, we must find, develop, and encourage more people to lead in the service of others. Without leadership, [organizations] cannot adapt to a fast moving world. But if leaders do not have the hearts of servants, there is only the potential for tyranny.¹⁴

It was Robert Greenleaf, former head of Management Research for AT&T, who brought the notion of servant leadership into board rooms and executive suites. In his book *Servant Leadership*, he lays out the long known principles and precepts that those who seek to lead must first seek to serve others—to live out a selfless attitude. A motivation of serving others first is one that is particularly appropriate for leaders in the public service, but it goes beyond customer or public service. It includes the sense that a leader is willing to devote his time, attention, and energies to the development of the careers of others—not simply his own. The political culture often subtly affects the already inherent bent that we all have toward self-promotion. Counterintuitively, it is in seeking to serve the development needs of others and their careers that leaders can best set an example that others will emulate and follow.

When the agenda is all about "my needs, my demands, my schedule, my priorities, and my 'face time' with superiors," then it is unlikely that any initiatives to coach, mentor, or teach others will have any more credibility than a formal speech. To get at this, 360-degree feedback may be extremely helpful, but this is also an area that can use some self-reflection. Most of us rarely stop to seriously consider what we are doing with our lives and our time in relationships at work (or outside work, for that matter). The 30-day calendar exercise may be one way to get at this and to begin a systematic plan of serving the next generation of leaders.

Being congruent in action and speech and seeking to serve others before self are two character qualities that distinguish a leader who grows other leaders through example. These qualities also are essential for growing others through mentoring relationships.

Growing Leaders Through Relationships: As a Mentor

When Odysseus went off to war, he placed his young son, Telemachus, in the care of an older, wiser man who would advise the young boy and help him to mature should his father not return. By the time Odysseus returned after the war and his long journey home, Telemachus was a man. He had matured not only physically, but in character and wisdom and in war-fighting skill: He was all that his father had dreamed of. Odysseus owed much to the man who helped raise his son. That man's name? Mentor.

To clarify some things about this role, a mentor is not a supervisor, although supervisors can be mentors. A mentor is not a "coach," although coaches can be mentors as well; coaches typically focus on certain skills, not the whole person's potential. (We will discuss the role of leader as coach in the next section.) And a mentor is not a teacher in the strictest sense. While there are clearly aspects of formal teaching in being a mentor, teachers usually work with groups, not individuals. Even within the context of this report, a leader is not necessarily a mentor, but *all leaders should become mentors who help a few others learn to lead*. That is one lesson that Noel Tichy learned from looking at great organizations. And that is a lesson today's public service leaders must heed if the next generation of leaders is to be grown effectively.

*Ideally, mentoring is a lifelong relationship in which a mentor helps a protégé reach her or his God-given potential.*¹⁵

Bobb Biehl

Being a mentor is not complex, does not require extensive training, and is not a full-time job. In the best organizations where mentoring occurs, mentoring is not even a formal program, although it can be. All that said, a senior leader can easily become a mentor by keeping a couple of things in mind and then doing just a few key things.

We have already discussed the importance of blocking time on your calendar and reflecting on some of your "stories," which form the basis for others to learn from your experience.

Remember, it's not about you. It is about the people you are mentoring. This is not a power trip or recognition that you know best what is right for another or that you want this person to champion your cause in the organization. At its best, this leader/mentor role is simply servant leadership. Your role is to serve the learning needs of another by building and sustaining a long-term relationship whose objective is to help the other person grow, learn, and reach their potential. To do this you give up some of yourself, including your time, for building toward the future.

You must also keep in mind that the coin of the realm in mentoring is trust, earned trust. Above all, this is a trusting relationship, normally between an older and a younger person. Before you begin mentoring, understand that to effectively build trust there needs to be both mutual honesty and mutual vulnerability laced with deep respect for confidences. A mentor is not to feel like she needs to be a heroine with no visible flaws. Openness to mistakes of the past and learning from them is one of the best "stories" that can be shared. Honesty about fear, doubt, nervousness, and uncertainty are lessons of life that help protégés understand that a leader doesn't always feel inside what is seen from the outside.

So what do you do? First, find a protégé. Look around you at the people who have potential. This is harder than you think. Most of us want to mentor someone just like us—people we are the most comfortable with. But if your interest is in the future of the person and of the organization, you may want to step back and ask yourself if the person you might want as your protégé is really

the person with the most potential. You might also want to consider individuals with whom you already have some connection other than a strictly boss to employee situation. Are there people who already ask your advice from time to time? This is a good place to start. Now, what do you do?

In a way, it's like being a good parent—you simply spend some time together in a variety of settings: breakfast, lunch, taking a walk, sitting in your office, at your home, playing racquetball, taking a bike ride—you get the point.

What is the content? Bobb Biehl recommends that you start by asking a couple of questions, and using this simple framework as a point of departure. The questions are: What are your priorities? How can I help you?¹⁶ The easiest topics will likely surround work issues—a problem employee, to stay or not to stay in public service, when to look for a new position elsewhere, how to deal with a pushy congressional staffer, what to do about a boss who won't make a decision.

The key skill you will need is listening—really listening to the words and the tone of voice, and observing the body language. Most leaders find it far easier to simply solve the problem for a person or to tell them what to do. Mentors need to be about helping people make their own way while sharing their experiences and perhaps some options to think about. Similar situations help serve as illustrations, particularly if it is something you struggled with and didn't have a slam-dunk success.

Mentoring, in the sense discussed here, has as its objective not simply helping people to learn, but to learn to become better leaders. That can often mean encouragement to take risks, to break cultural “rules,” to get outside the comfort zone or to get out of a career stovepipe. Sometimes it can be helping a person get his or her life into balance when it has become overloaded with work, with no time for “saw sharpening” or decompression, or being with the family, or just having fun. Sometimes it's helping with parenting advice when the burden has become too heavy. So while listening is key, if the objective is leadership, some judicious and caring encouragement (gentle pushing) is often called for as well.

Finally, a good mentor understands the organization culture and the external stakeholders' worlds as well. Introducing your protégés to people and helping them to become exposed to a level of the organization that they will be part of in the future is also an important part of helping them to grow. It's not playing politics; exposure and an opportunity to observe are critical. Let them see you in action if that is not a part of their normal routine and let them give you input. Part of what is learned is “caught” from simply “hanging out” in a work setting with a more experienced person and observing what occurs.

One additional note: If senior leaders take responsibility to mentor two or three others, much like the example of Paul Barnes, at the Social Security Administration (his profile begins on page 20), this relationship does not depend entirely upon being in a formal position. Certainly experience is the critical commodity, but it is not one that diminishes significantly over time. A mentoring relationship is one that can extend into formal retirement from public service and is a role that more senior leaders should consider establishing—even after they retire. Public service has lost many good senior leaders over the past several years, many to early retirement. They are a scarce resource who still have something to contribute.

Growing Leaders Through Experiences: As a Coach

Any senior leader potentially can be a mentor of another whether they are in the same organization or even whether the mentor is actively employed or retired, because the essence of mentoring lies in the relationship. However, being a coach typically requires some form of a leadership role in the organization because here the focus is experiential.

Returning to how leaders are grown, the most significant factors that grow leaders are challenging job-based experiences. A good leadership coach will make it a matter of utmost priority not only to have strong relationships with future leaders at all levels, but also to invest in their growth through intentionally ensuring they get the necessary experiences to become future leaders.

At its best, “coaching is the process of equipping people with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities they need to develop themselves and become more effective” [leaders].¹⁷

Senior leaders do not “manufacture” other leaders. What you can do, however, is to create the conditions and shape the culture under which people with potential learn and acquire the leadership attributes needed by the organization and public service. You help them to grow in the capabilities and the character which enlarge their capacity to produce change and significant results through others. How would this work? What are some of the things you might do?

Take a look at some of the examples of the three leaders profiled. (The profiles section begins on page 19). Leo Wurschmidt of the Veterans Benefits Administration would take many casual, informal opportunities to talk to people, encouraging them to take new assignments, to take a risk and move to a different type of job or to a different location. Paul Barnes did the same both informally and by reassigning people to work for him in ways that would stretch them. Dr. Janet Woodcock at the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research would spend time with small groups of future leaders, listening to their experiences and offering options. They each made it a point to get younger managers into programs that would allow for developmental assignments and likely job changes.

Each of these individuals created and encouraged developmental opportunities, spent time with both groups and individuals, and had a hand in shaping the infrastructure that supported such leader growth. These examples suggest three actions, that senior leaders in their role as coach can take to help grow other leaders.

Forming individual coaching relationships

Coaching, by its nature, has many elements of individual relationship. In that sense, it is like mentoring. However, the intent of coaching is to create

job-based conditions where people learn leadership. This involves:

- challenging others to take initiatives to get out of their comfort zone;
- creating specific opportunities for such stretch work through job changes, job rotation, reassignments, team projects;
- advocating for them to others for such changes; and
- being a “noodge”—helping others to reflect on what they are learning, being a sounding board for problems, and encouraging and even prodding at times to make sure that stagnancy and discouragement don’t set in.

Such learning isn’t always comfortable. There are organizational cultures where coaching is expected, and cultures where it never occurs. The military, sports, and performing arts are examples of where active coaching for the development of individuals and groups is the norm. Those may be environments that are worthwhile benchmarking for lessons to be applied to certain public service cultures where development is often more passive and individualistic.

“Teaching” how to learn leadership

Here is one place where reflecting on your own leadership and life stories can pay dividends. Many people you will coach do not take the time to reflect on what they are learning or even have a framework for doing so. Typically, early in one’s career the habit of simply “churning” at the work for the day is about all that can be managed. By telling others your stories of how you learned from situations similar to the ones they are experiencing, you give them a framework into which their experiences can be fit. You don’t have to give them answers; in fact, that doesn’t promote learning. Rather, let them use your metaphors and experiences as a means for encouraging their own reflection and learning.

You can also ask questions—a central coaching technique—which helps others learn by reflecting on what is occurring or may occur at work. No lesser light than Socrates pioneered this technique and it remains a good method. Simply asking your

protégés questions that cause them to think about what they are seeing or what actions they might take or what they may have missed can be very helpful in leader learning without micromanaging—a deadly leadership sin that takes energy right out of a person.

You can also do periodic organizational “post mortems” after key stages of projects. Putting the entire team in the room and engaging in an honest self critique—senior leaders included—does much to make the point that we are all able to learn from our experiences.

The Army uses such an approach in “after action” debriefings of exercises, where all of the members of a team are quizzed on what happened in a particular scenario, what was going through their minds, why certain decisions were made or certain actions taken, why hesitancy occurred—from colonel on down to second lieutenant. Candid feedback among everyone, without regard to rank, is strongly encouraged as a means to build more openness and enhance the synergy of a team. It is a more active and vulnerable approach to coaching, but one that demonstrates that everyone can learn and profit from each other. You might want to try it out as a coaching technique and as a means of setting an example of openness to constructive criticism.

Active involvement

There are many opportunities for more active involvement—some of which are suggested in the approaches of the three exemplary leaders. These can range from reassigning a promising person to your staff, rotating a high-potential person into a temporary executive assistant or special assistant role, selecting a person to head a special projects team, or intervening with one of your colleagues to transfer a key member of your organization to their area for developmental purposes.

Growing Leaders Through Development Programs: As a Teacher

While the culture of public service and the lack of role models are often seen as barriers to growing excellent leaders, so too is the lack of sufficient resources to grow leaders. Translated this means

that with the wholesale and often random downsizing that has been occurring in the last decade, there simply are not the financial resources available for leadership programs.

The options for many organizations are seen as cutting even more people or cutting the margins. The margins are quite often identified as training, travel, and equipment or supplies. Hence, there is a tacit assumption that little can be done to develop leaders if resources are short. While this assumption can easily be challenged on its merits (if people are our top priority, why do we cut people programs first?), among the very best practices for growing leaders are those that are in-house, leader-led, and experiential.

Typically, the role of trainer or facilitator in a leadership development program is considered to be the domain of expert consultants, in-house trainers, or the HR development staff. But, as Tichy found, the very best companies and the very best leaders are themselves the leadership program trainers. This does not mean the token appearance of the “boss” to give the opening remarks in a program or to drop by to see how things are going. Leaders have learned practical lessons, most likely grounded in good theory as well, that only they can pass on in a way that others will want to learn. A “classroom” setting is a good place for such wisdom to be transferred.

Adult learning is centered on what is practical, not simply what is factually true. That is why even the best, most entertaining speakers, trainers, and consultants rarely have a long-term impact. The stories that a leader can tell—often about hard-won experiences, sometimes about failure—are stories that stick and can be applied. (Another good reason to develop your stories.)

GE’s Jack Welch, one of the most respected leaders in business today, prides himself on having taught every two weeks at their leadership course in Crotonville, New York, for over 15 years. He actively teaches, passes on his stories of change, helps embed the corporate values and “no boundaries” mindset, and serves as a coach to participants in these programs. Over the years, he has influenced thousands of today’s leaders at GE—many that now run the company. But perhaps what

GE may be best known for its use of action learning as a means of developing future leaders. We turn now to what is perhaps one of the best approaches that a leader-teacher can use to grow other leaders.

The effectiveness of action learning and its use in the best organizations¹⁸ builds on the basic understanding of how leaders are grown that was outlined earlier, aspects of which can be seen in the approaches of the three exemplary leaders.

Perhaps the best way of describing action learning is as a parallel universe.... Accomplishments that might take months or even years to happen ... occur in a matter of weeks. Learning and action are compressed.¹⁹

How would it work in your organization? There are seven key elements—each of which can occur as part of a leadership development program without significant expenditure of resources. Such initiatives depend strongly on the direct involvement of senior leaders in the process to produce two things every organization covets: real results and the growth (and testing) of future leaders.

A sponsor

It is important that a senior person sponsor the commissioning of an important project that is essential to the organization—a strategic imperative—and which will take a team to do it successfully. Typically it should be a project that will require out-of-the-box thought, benchmarking of private sector and public sector organizations, and the learning of some new skills. The sponsor both gives the charge to the team and is the person who holds the team accountable for final, well-documented recommendations. The sponsor should also be in a position to make a decision or to get a decision promptly.

A process

This is a leadership learning process. As such, some idea of the approach to be taken needs development. While not complex, it will need to be explained to the team that is formed. Typically it consists of a selected strategic issue; a timeframe for work and bringing recommendations back for decision; the use of experienced coaches who are currently leaders in the organization; and the provision of some form of “just in time” training on team skills, benchmarking, or any technical expertise that will be needed. The key point is to have an approach firmly fixed, and the senior “faculty” and staff identified and briefed.

A team(s)

The team is often composed of individuals from various parts of the organization, selected because of leadership potential for participation in this project. There could also be more than one team to look at various aspects of a problem or vision challenge or to tackle the same project with competing approaches. It is similar to what Dr. Janet Woodcock has done at CDER in using the Council for Excellence in Government Fellows to spearhead special projects and to build their vision and mission. Keep in mind the purpose is twofold: learning leadership through challenging experience and producing a significant change initiative or problem solution.

A project

The sponsor or the senior team identifies the nature of the project. The project team then proceeds to gather data, conduct analyses, and frame findings, conclusions and recommendations for presentation for decision. The primary basis of the learning is in the doing.

A learning of new approaches and applications

Here is where periodic forums such as short skill workshops can be interjected. Other useful resources might include a speaker from an organization that has done something similar, a benchmarking visit to such an organization, bringing in someone from the staff or elsewhere in government with expertise in an area needed, an excellent video presentation, or outside workshop. There might also be time set aside for coaches to tell their leadership stories or for interim check-ins to explore problems or issues.

A presentation

At the point allotted in the project, a formal presentation, often accompanied by a written report, is delivered to the sponsor or the senior team. It is a decision-making forum where tough questions are asked and where professional quality work is expected. A thorough airing of what was done and how and why the recommendations are being made is expected. A decision within a short period of time by the sponsor or the senior team is also part of the agreement. Team members can also be selected for implementing the decision.

A debrief and reflection

The key to embedding the learning is to learn from the experiences of the project. Here is where senior coaching is critical—to help individuals ask themselves the tough questions, to share candid observations about each individual's contributions and areas for learning, to provide opportunity for team feedback to each other. Areas for further individual development and for organizational process improvement are typically identified as a result of this reflection.

Profiles of Three Exemplary Public Service Leaders

To better understand how leaders actually grow leaders, three case studies were developed which show how the following senior executives have worked to develop the next generation of leaders in their organization:

- Leo Wurschmidt, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs
- Paul Barnes, Social Security Administration
- Janet Woodcock, Food and Drug Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Growing the Next Generation of Leaders in the Veterans Benefits Administration

The legacy of exemplary senior leaders is not found in plaques or awards, but in the people they have invested time and effort in developing. This is a trait to look for in identifying true servant leaders. In this, Leo Wurschmidt apparently excelled, particularly in the example he set and in the many informal ways in which he coached and encouraged others.

As an Exemplar

Perhaps the outstanding characteristic that people noticed and now seek to emulate was Wurschmidt's abiding belief in the importance of the people of the organization. In a thousand ways he demonstrated this by investing his time and energy in others. He knew the names of hundreds of people who worked for him—their families as well. He took

enormous amounts of time to personally write thank you notes, even for the smallest actions. He was a ubiquitous presence in the office, talking to people informally, and encouraging, questioning, and praising. Everyone interviewed about Wurschmidt mentioned how they make a practice of taking time for others as a result of Leo's example. In his conversations with employees, he often shared his experiences in many different positions and encouraged others to seek new assignments that would allow them to grow.

As a Mentor

He also was known as a willing and open mentor of individuals in the departmental SES Candidate Development Program, sharing an extensive amount of time with these individuals.

What came up most frequently in interviews, however, was not his more formal roles, but the daily time that he took to sit down and talk with people about their future plans and career aspirations. Perhaps because of his own varied career experiences, Wurschmidt was often known to encourage people to seek new experiences in other parts of the organization and outside the organization, and to get into training. He put them on details to widen their knowledge and experience.

He also promoted his people behind the scenes to senior leaders, championing their careers, often in a way that people only found out about much later. It was this selfless use of his time informally mentoring and encouraging people to think about their future that may be his most important legacy.



Leo Wurschmidt

Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Leo Wurschmidt had a long and distinguished career in the VA, holding significant positions of responsibility in all three operational administrations within the VA: those overseeing health care and hospitals; cemeteries and memorials; and the provision of financial and other benefits. He served as an operational field director in San Francisco and Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and he also served in the headquarters as executive assistant to the deputy secretary and as a senior staff official for planning, management, and policy studies.

He served as the southern area director for veterans benefits with responsibility for one of four national regions of the country before health reasons forced him to step down to assume the position of director of the Jackson VA regional office.

Wurschmidt attended Columbia and George Washington Universities and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in political science. He served four years in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1968 to 1972.

In 1999 he was named a Meritorious Executive and was also the recipient of the 1999 Leadership VA Alumni Award for superior career leadership. Mr. Wurschmidt passed away in 2001.

As a Coach

Wurschmidt made diversity a priority and took action to develop people. He forged a partnership with a historic black university (Jackson State), giving young interns their first experience in public service.

He also was a key person on the Executive Appraisal Team, which established a balanced scorecard combining results and peer assessments of teamwork as a means of developmental feedback for senior executives.

As a Teacher

Wurschmidt was one of the key senior people instrumental in beginning the first Leadership Enhancement and Development Program (LEAD), which was established to identify minorities and women in mid-career at the VA who possess leadership potential and to offer them training and experience. Despite his position as a high-level executive with heavy responsibilities, he also took time to teach at the VBA Development Academy for up and coming employees.

Growing the Next Generation of Leaders in the Social Security Administration

The comments consistently made about Paul Barnes give a clue to one of his most noteworthy qualities—he truly believes that it is critical to invest the time, thought, and effort in bringing forward the next generation of SSA leaders. But the evidence also shows that he deeply understands how to grow leaders, particularly by the example of his life and the quality of his caring investment of time in the lives of others.

As an Exemplar

Barnes's deep commitment to public service and to the people served is perhaps best embodied in the admonition that several people mentioned—"Treat people the way you would want your mother or father to be treated." When he said caring, commitment, and compassion were what public service was about and when he said that the "security" in Social Security is the heart of the mission, those lessons stuck. And they stuck because he walked the talk, which others now emulate. The simple

SSA's Leadership Development Strategy

SSA is one of the few agencies in government that has a clearly developed strategic plan that links their long-term strategy with the development of future leaders. This is a "best practice" of the best in business. The more common approach in government is to see leadership development as a program for individuals—with responsibility for it in the HR shop—and as an ad hoc process.

While the key operational thrusts of the agency's strategic plan are:

- To deliver customer-responsive world-class service, and
- To promote valued, strong and responsive programs and conduct effective policy development and research,

the key goal for the people who deliver the service and the programs is:

- To be an employer that values and invests in each employee.

With a potential retirement-eligible population of 82% of the current SES rank leaders, 91% of the GS-15 senior managers, and 93% of the GS-14 senior managers, SSA faces a wave of change in its leadership ranks.

Their strategy to grow the next generation of leaders has been ongoing for some time. Paul Barnes has been one of the key line managers and advocates and is now the overall leader of the HR programs that undergird

the strategy. In essence, it is a strategy that includes programs for leaders at all levels:

- SES Candidate Development Program (SESCDP)
- Advanced Leadership Program (ALP)
- Leadership Development Program (LDP)
- Presidential Management Intern Program (PMI) for initial accession

These national-level programs are primarily two years in duration. They involve, in each case, an orientation and some core training; the use of developmental experiences where individuals are taken off their job and placed into challenging assignments for on-the-job leadership learning; and the use of senior mentors for coaching and advice.

By all accounts it is a highly successful model and parallels the "best practices."

The factors that contribute to the success of this approach include:

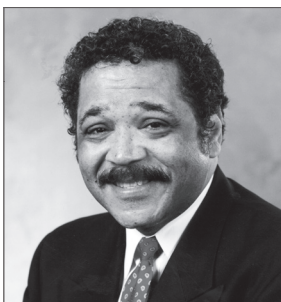
- Making a business case for leader development that would communicate to decision-makers and supervisors;
- Getting clear executive buy-in and deep involvement; and
- Using the National Academy of Public Administration "best practices" study as a foundation (See Appendix III under Growing Leaders—"Best Practices" in Organizations).

image of older people being someone's mother or father is one that others now use and model in their relationships.

As a Mentor

Over the years, Barnes was a mentor to countless individuals at SSA who are now, themselves, moving into key positions.

He reached out to many younger persons over the years and remains in contact with them, serving as a source of advice by phone from anywhere in the country. One of his mentoring practices that was cited was the way he exposed his protégés to other senior people. Barnes would take them on trips to the headquarters office or to other regions and championed their careers or their selection into



Paul D. Barnes

Social Security Administration (SSA)

Paul Barnes has served in SSA in a number of highly responsible and visible capacities around the country at all levels for the past 32 years. Currently, Barnes is the deputy commissioner for human resources, a position he has held since March 1997. He is responsible for SSA's people programs for all 65,000 employees, and chairs the National Partnership Council as well.

He has held key leadership roles as director of the Southeastern Program Service Center in Birmingham, Alabama; deputy regional commissioner of the Atlanta region; regional commissioner of the Chicago region; and the assistant deputy commissioner for Social Security operations.

Barnes is the recipient of three Presidential Rank Awards for public service leadership excellence and two "Hammer" awards for significant reinvention initiatives to improve government service for the American people. He has twice received the SSA Commissioner's Citation (the highest award in the Social Security Administration) and has appeared in Outstanding Young Men in America and Who's Who in Black America. In 1997, the Federal Executive Institute Alumni Association selected him as the Federal Executive of the Year.

He is a magna cum laude graduate of Lane College and holds a master's in public administration from the University of Southern California.

key leader development programs, even though it meant losing these key people for periods of up to two years.

People that he has mentored say that they now practice the same techniques in their leadership roles. They cite such skills as having learned to really listen to both sides. They also try to mimic Barnes's calm practice when dealing with tough issues and people issues. And they are developing others by encouraging them to stretch and grow through new assignments, national leadership programs, and serving as mentors themselves.

As a Coach

Barnes gave people the opportunity to learn and develop as leaders everywhere he went. Consider these comments:

Paul was always interested in bringing along new leaders—he challenged us to try new things outside of our comfort zone.

He appointed me to a new position that challenged and stretched me. He used it as a development opportunity to give a bigger picture of the organization.

Job-based challenges was one practice he used consistently and intentionally. A good example was the "open door coordinator"—a position reporting directly to him as regional commissioner and a communication channel to him with the people of the organization. It was a job that required the utmost of understanding and wisdom in listening to any employee who had a concern with management decisions. The person had to develop a broad understanding of the wider Social Security operations, an exposure to multiple offices, and a range of managerial approaches. Negotiating and listening skills were also central.

The coordinator was able to discuss differing approaches to solutions with Barnes and to draw upon his years of experience. The coordinator also accompanied him on visits to local offices and got to watch firsthand how Barnes worked with local managers and interacted with front-line people, often taking a turn himself interviewing clients or answering phones. Almost without knowing it, the coordinator was getting a crash course in leader-

ship on the front lines through involvement and observation. In retrospect, each person who held that position realized that.

In some cases, Barnes would spot a potential leader in a local office and select that person despite an apparent lack of all the credentials. That confidence made a big difference in the way the people perceived themselves.

Barnes also challenged people to be mobile. Perhaps it was his own experiences throughout his career, but he preached the importance of gaining a broader perspective that can only be learned through a variety of situations.

As a Teacher

Paul's own response to the question of the legacy he hoped he would leave behind is most telling about his role as teacher. He immediately said that it was investing in people's lives and helping others understand why that is so important. He felt that the career and leadership development programs in SSA that he helped to launch (see the separate sidebar on the SSA strategy) would live on. Paul Barnes is clearly meeting the central test of leadership; his greatest legacy may be, in the words of one person he has mentored over the years, "written in the lives of the people he has touched."

Growing the Next Generation of Leaders in the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research

At the heart of Dr. Janet Woodcock's long-term strategy to change the culture at CDER to one that is outward focused on citizens' needs has been a commitment to developing an entirely new generation of leaders. And at the heart of that strategy has been the use of a leadership development program for the highest potential individuals at the GS-14 and GS-15 levels, primarily through the year-long Council for Excellence in Government Fellows Program. As the director of a very large and publicly visible organization, Dr. Woodcock nonetheless has taken the time to develop others around her and to leave a legacy of a changed culture for the next generation.



Dr. Janet Woodcock **Center for Drug Evaluation and Research** **Food and Drug Administration**

Janet Woodcock, M.D., has served as the director of the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research since 1994. Prior to this she was the director of the Office of Therapeutics Research and Review in the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER), also part of the FDA. Dr. Woodcock, an internist/rheumatologist with prior research experience in immunology, joined the FDA in 1985.

She also served as the director of the Division of Biological Investigational New Drugs in CBER from 1988 to 1992 and was acting deputy director of the Center from 1991 to 1992.

Dr. Woodcock received her M.D. from Northwestern University Medical School and completed further training and held faculty appointments at Pennsylvania State University and the University of California in San Francisco prior to her public service career.

As an Exemplar

Courage is an often-overlooked trait in the leader of a non-military organization. Yet to take the people of a large organization through significant cultural change, many of whom are in opposition, requires not only persistence but courage. And courage is as contagious as cowardice. One of the things that Dr. Woodcock seems to have imparted by her

example has been the courage of younger managers to become engaged in the Fellows leadership development program and to take on extra results projects that might well cause difficulty with other managers. The very association with such programs was not seen early on in the change process as career enhancing. Dr. Woodcock's own example and willingness to meet often with Fellows and to talk privately in her office despite all of the pressures on her spoke volumes and allowed other managers to emulate her.

As a Mentor

Dr. Woodcock spends enormous amounts of her personal time at lunch with individuals and groups, engaging in small meetings, and having a very open door—particularly to any fellow.

As a Coach

Dr. Woodcock also demonstrates, according to many observers, a sensitivity to coaching—asking questions, drawing out people's thinking, and encouraging people to keep moving forward.

She has placed people into stretch positions and moved people around into new areas of responsibility as a means of both getting new perspectives into different places in the organization and developing individuals with greater breadth and insight.

As a major part of that program, an individual project is identified up front that will produce significant results and serve as a seedbed for developing leadership. These initiatives are discussed at monthly meetings—at which Dr. Woodcock is often present—between all of the fellows and senior leaders. Her approach is to ask questions, to identify issues and barriers, and to keep encouraging individuals in their efforts at change.

Another part of the leader development strategy was to use the Fellows from the first group as a team to initiate a total rethinking of the vision for CDER, its mission, and its values. In the process, the team conducted extensive interviews with all stakeholders. As a result, the real grist for change emerged—saving lives of people by getting drugs to market faster. As might be expected, signifi-

cant opposition to changes in the status quo were encountered and significant lessons in leadership emerged from real experience—not from textbooks or lectures.

Many of the individuals who have come through this program are now being placed in key leadership positions. They have the vision and values as well as the leadership capabilities and the supporting network to gradually change the nature of the culture at CDER. This is a classic example of a long-term strategic change initiative that has future leader development at its core.

As a Teacher

A key part of that program in the last four years has been the selection of over 70 Fellows for the Council for Excellence in Government year-long leadership development program, and then using these individuals to spearhead change projects and placing them in leadership positions.

In this regard, CDER senior managers have been selecting the best and the brightest potential leaders for this one-year program as a strategic initiative (not an ad hoc effort aimed solely at the individual). They also commissioned a separate leadership program cohort devoted solely to the office and Division director levels. All selections are competitive internally and at the Council, so that those who emerge are recognized as potential future leaders.

Not surprisingly, the most consistent answer given to the question of Dr. Woodcock's legacy was her commitment to growing leaders at all levels of the organization and actually doing it.

Appendix I:

Approach and Methodology

The approach of this report has been to set forth in a cogent way what is known about how to grow public service leaders in an era of great change. The conclusions are drawn from the documented results of research, from the “best practices” of organizations that grow leaders effectively, and from the examples of public service leaders themselves. Many of the insights came from developing a benchmarking report for the National Academy of Public Administration on the subjects of succession management and leadership development. The “filter” however, has been my own, from personal observations from almost 40 years in public service, and from working with the next generation of leaders through the Council for Excellence in Government Fellows and the Leadership Development Academy—the Executive Potential Program and the Women’s Executive Leadership Program (WEL).

The need for leadership in the public service is clear; the best practices for growing leaders is evident, if not completely intuitive; and the role of senior leaders in this development process is a well-established approach in the very best organizations—public and private. It is from this foundation that comparative conclusions can be drawn for the public service. But seeing it lived out in the lives of three successful public service leaders and framing it in practical terms gives these findings life and practical application.

In identifying the three leaders profiled, the methodology began, first, with a premise—that where significant change has occurred in a government organization, transformational leadership is behind it. All three organizations in

which these individuals are or were leaders—the Veterans Benefits Administration, the Social Security Administration, and the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research—have undergone significant, positive change within the last few years.

Second, it was assumed that there would be some consensus within the organization (and without) that individual leaders, certainly not alone, have been among the key individuals driving change. In that sense, conversations with individuals working in and outside these organizations, many of them future leaders themselves, were conducted.

Third, a more in-depth look at the character and capability of these leaders as examples, coaches, mentors, and teachers was accomplished by interviewing several individuals who have worked for them or are currently working for them, much like a 360-degree feedback process. The primary focus was to identify the practices that selected superior leaders in public service are using in growing the next generation. As should be clear, each leader practiced the four basic roles in a somewhat different, but highly effective, fashion.

However, in the course of these interviews, a profile of leadership emerged which places in context why these three servant leaders are able to grow other leaders. At the heart of this lie not only certain practices and examples, but also a wider foundation of leadership character and capability. The expanded profiles contained in Appendix II give a more complete picture of the synergy of skills, character, results, and experience that distinguish these leaders.

Appendix II:

Exemplary Leader Profiles

Leo Wurschmidt—Leadership Character and Capability

Leo Wurschmidt's leadership character and capability attributes coalesced around six prominent features that were consistently identified by those interviewed:

- Unquestioned integrity of commitment to live out values
- An abiding focus on the core purpose of public service
- A deep belief in the worth and capabilities of people
- Courage—a willingness to take personal and organizational risks
- Personal caring about people
- A builder of partnerships among all stakeholders—a service family team

Unquestioned integrity of commitment to live out values

Often this is seen as an important trait, but difficult to pin down. In Wurschmidt's case, this attribute was described in vivid terms. For example, one person said that if Wurschmidt ever said something was going to be done for an employee or a stakeholder, he meant it, whether it took long hours to get it done or extraordinary initiative. He lived this way and expected others to carry out their word as well. The central theme of many was that "Leo was a man of his word, and every employee knew it."

Another facet was that he would speak up with great courage about issues and initiatives in the face of opposition, unpopularity, or the views of senior officials. Others mentioned that he would not bow to political pressure in making decisions. He was known to make the right decisions based on the facts and would back up employees who did so even when pressured to reverse a ruling.

An abiding focus on the core purpose of public service

For many people, what seemingly fueled Wurschmidt's life was a deep commitment to serving VA's "customers"—the nation's veterans. Perhaps it was his own service during the Vietnam War, but his motivation was public service to those that served when called.

One person said, "Leo's legacy is to the veterans, which comes from his dedication to the mission and to his personal relations with veterans and those that serve them daily. For those that worked with Leo, it is difficult not to focus on getting the job done and done well."

A deep belief in the worth and capabilities of people

It appears that out of a core value of caring about each person, Wurschmidt also had a bone-deep belief that the best way to bring about change and to accomplish the mission is to leverage the capabilities of all people. A consistent comment was that he trusted people to do the job and valued both their effort and even their disagreements.

Listening and, perhaps more importantly, taking the time to listen were also mentioned as characteristic of how he led in a way that made employees feel they had a real voice in the things that affected their work lives. Appreciative employees said particularly that he was not a micromanager—an attribute greatly appreciated by those on the front lines.

One top manager also observed that one of the major leadership qualities was how Wurschmidt drove out longstanding fear that had existed before his arrival as the top director. This led to a different spirit among the people and laid the groundwork for innovation and real change. Mistakes were not punished but used as points of learning—as long as learning occurred. The other side of it was a high standard of service excellence that he practiced and expected others to follow. In other words, he created the culture and conditions where people could thrive.

One “result” consistently mentioned was that wherever Wurschmidt came in as a leader, it became a better place to work. He created a culture that facilitated change and personal growth. He drove out fear. He promoted openness. He exuded encouragement in person and in countless notes. He set an example of extraordinarily hard work and very high standards. People were expected to keep their word—Wurschmidt, first of all. The veterans who were served were placed at the top of the list of priorities—not the needs of the organization. A wide range of supportive partners was created. Fun and a family sense were injected. Mistakes were allowed in the pursuit of better service and innovation.

Courage—a willingness to take personal and organizational risks

Another quality that stands out is Wurschmidt’s willingness to undertake tests or pilot projects as the seedbed for change within the national change efforts. He was instrumental in testing and developing the notion of satellite benefits offices—an effort to bring services closer to people. The satellite initiative is now a base part of the national change initiatives.

He also pioneered the development of VA benefits services being provided right at the Military Separation Center, again a standard approach now

used throughout the country. This initiative has chopped the waiting time for disability claims for separating service members to one quarter of what it was previously.

Personal caring about people

Many of the people interviewed mentioned how Wurschmidt knew everyone’s name. A photographic memory, perhaps, but indications are it was clearly something he worked at because he felt it was important. This was not a gimmick, but the first step in being able to relate to each person that worked with him and for him on a personal basis.

One indication of this was that he was known to hand-write thank you notes—literally hundreds of them—to people for a job well done, often putting in long hours to recognize what people had done, even the small things.

While MBWA (management by walking around) has been part of the vernacular for some time now, Wurschmidt was apparently one who religiously practiced it. As one employee said, he spent time “in the trenches with the troops,” talking about what was really happening and constantly encouraging and thanking people verbally. The result was obvious—the deep loyalty among people that have worked with him was unfeigned and the admiration genuine.

In addition, he always took time to stop what he was doing to talk to people, to encourage them to grow, to challenge them. No matter how busy he was, people came first, and he was not annoyed by the tremendous amount of time it took. A case in point: One person who came to work for Wurschmidt did so because even he was impressed by the way this director of a large office took the time to meet with him—then just a young analyst visiting the organization on business. This person is now a senior leader in VA and attributes part of the reason to Leo’s example that day.

Wurschmidt was always quick to turn a compliment or an achievement from himself to others in his organization. His self-effacing manner and modesty were seen as rare among senior executives in the experience of the interviewees, but a clear demonstration of his belief that it was the people on the front line that matter most.

A story is told that illustrates his ability to relax and be natural with people while maintaining their respect. This occurred at an employee picnic where the director—the leader of 300 employees—was suddenly the object of attention as he mounted a children’s hobbyhorse in the local park and proceeded to ride for all he was worth. That resulted in several memorable photos of employees who wanted to be photographed with the “boss.”

A builder of coalitions and partnerships as members of a service-family team

Senior leaders must form partnerships and think strategically about collaborating with a wide array of stakeholders. In several comments, it was clear that Wurschmidt excelled at this but with a twist. The consistency of his character and values mandated that all stakeholders be made a part of what one person termed “a community of service.” He built this sense of community in each leadership position he held, reaching out to organizations that are often known for fractious relations. These included veterans’ service organizations, whose advocacy for veteran’s benefits in their lobbying role is often seen by some as at odds with the VA mission. Wurschmidt made them part of the team and part of the solution, and gave their representatives respect, personal time, and a listening ear—much the way he treated anyone who worked with him.

Congressional staffs, who are also known by some as partisan advocates, were also accorded the same courtesy and sense of inclusion in the community of service. Wurschmidt built a strong sense of partnership that did two things. First, it set an example to all of the employees that these external stakeholders were not “the enemy” but people to be regarded with a sense of worth. Second, it allowed both the support for change that would be needed and the capacity to say “no” and to be trusted and respected through it all. This is an often-overlooked leadership quality when opposition to change occurs among external stakeholders.

Within the organization, Wurschmidt was similarly consistent, as new approaches to partnering with the labor unions came into being. He was known as a fair and trusted manager and leader

and worked very hard, personally, to make it a success—not turning it over to the HR staff to do themselves. As a result, he was a natural choice for the first VA National Partnership Council formed in 1994, where he was instrumental in developing the “Rules of Interaction.” These became the policies and procedures that formed the basis for how partnerships were to operate fairly among the almost quarter million VA employees and their representatives at the local level.

Paul Barnes—Leadership Character and Capability

In several interviews with colleagues and former employees, a picture of Paul Barnes as a leader emerges that is both compelling and worthy of emulation. He has made an impact on people wherever he has been a leader and continues to do so as he helps lead SSA through significant periods of change and establish it as a benchmark public service organization. The key attributes of Barnes that emerge from the impressions of those interviewed are:

- Unquestioned integrity of commitment to live out values
- An abiding focus on the core purpose of public service
- A deep belief in the worth and capabilities of people
- Courage—a willingness to take personal and organizational risks
- Personal caring about people
- A sense of balance in life expressed in optimism and enjoyment

Barnes attributes much of his own bent toward developing younger leaders to others who mentored and helped him along the way. As a young intern, he had a boss who encouraged him in self-development and reading, and who started a local leader development program that Barnes was part of. He was also encouraged to work outside of his own job familiarity and to be as mobile as possible in order to learn and to grow. Another key person was someone whom Barnes worked for and whom he sought to emulate in his approach to leadership and management. It

is clear that Barnes has continued to pass on the lessons others taught him, instilling the same in those he mentors.

Unquestioned integrity of commitment to live out values

One senior official perhaps put it best: “He has a strong sense of personal values and he lives them out every day.” A common observation was that Barnes “walks the talk.” As mentioned earlier, genuineness and congruity, of behavior and words is key to a leader’s capacity to take an organization through change and to fostering others to become leaders in the same mold.

Barnes’s public service values were summed up by one person who observed that Paul stressed “three Cs:” caring, courtesy, and commitment. Those themes would be played out in his own behavior.

He also was someone who was not after leadership as an end for his own ego. One interviewee said this is not someone who was “power happy.” He blended humility with a strong sense of earned authority.

That apparently came across as genuine to a wide range of people, whether it was in personal encounters or hearing him speak before groups. One person said that it was quite common for Paul to receive standing ovations from employees after speaking to a group of them. This person had never seen a senior executive get such a reception and believed that the heartfelt reaction was yet another indication of his connection to people and his genuineness.

Barnes himself attributes his values to his parents who were sharecroppers while he was growing up. What he learned from them, he recalls, was a daily example of what is important in life, hard work and high expectations for yourself and for others.

An abiding focus on the core purpose of public service

In the interviews conducted, the story that was mentioned by almost every person was how Barnes would often say, “Treat people the way you would want your mother or father to be treated.” He would observe that most of the people served by

the Social Security Administration were someone’s mother or father. This image seemed to stick with people long after Barnes had moved on.

One interviewee noted particularly that Barnes had “a vision for SSA and what it could become.” This strategic perspective included a deep understanding of the importance of Social Security to the public, which for him was embodied in the term “security.” He saw their role as providing not only support, but support with dignity, giving individuals a sense of ease about the future and removing anxiety. It was this bigger picture and the public service potential that he called people to think about and act on.

Another said that what stayed with him was that Barnes’s true devotion to public service and to the mission of SSA was unfeigned. His focus on the core purpose was what he felt helped Barnes ride out many of the ups and downs and the tensions inherent in the transformation of SSA during the last 10 to 15 years.

A deep belief in the worth and capabilities of people

His respect for each person as a unique individual often came across in his ability to work easily with people of differing personalities and diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. One person said that his “belief in the goodness of people is bedrock.”

As a day-to-day manager, Barnes focuses on the “what,” not the “how.” A frequent comment was that he was not a micromanager. He conveyed a great sense of confidence in people and while he set high standards of excellence, he did not punish mistakes made in taking a risk or learning something new. He trusted people to get the job done with excellence. While he left people with the impression that they could call on him at any time, he also was clear that he was not there to manage the day-to-day details of their work. It was a trust that apparently bred trust.

Courage—a willingness to take personal and organizational risks

One of the risks that Paul Barnes was known to take was on people. Two interviewees stressed that Barnes had taken a risk on them by placing them

in positions of wide responsibility and setting high expectations for their performance. In part, this was a strategy for their development, but a failure could have backfired on him. This willingness to take a risk on people set a tone that resonated with others. He also challenged others to take risks on their own to try new things and to work outside their comfort zone.

Personal caring about people

One aspect of Paul's demeanor in the workplace was that he was approachable. He apparently could convey a sense of openness to listening to people that they felt comfortable sitting down to raise problems or issues or to get career advice. One person talked about his ability to listen and summed it up by saying, "He *actually* hears." Whereas some leaders would seem to listen because it was expected, Barnes was known to take the time and to respond with action, indicating he was paying attention to the individual.

Another theme was that Paul was both straightforward with people and honest. This built a foundation of trust by the people of the organization, not just in one place, but in each organization he headed. Trust is an essential component of the ability to lead others in change and of personal leadership development.

A sense of balance in life expressed in optimism and enjoyment

While a balanced life is often mentioned as crucial in the best leaders, it is not typical for humor and enjoyment to surface. Yet, the people interviewed for this report, time and again, cited Barnes's sense of humor, hearty laugh, and ability to keep a balanced perspective in the midst of tension. One person said, "you could always tell when Paul was visiting the building because his laughter could be heard up and down the halls." Others noted that while he had very high standards, he also made work fun, even in difficult times.

Another example of Barnes's sense of balance: No one could ever recall seeing him angry. A story is told of how Paul was in a meeting involving an EEO complaint lodged against a manager with some questionable management practices. This manager was creating great difficulties among peo-

ple in the organization, yet had recently received high performance marks. Barnes was confounded that such a manager would be rated highly, making correction very difficult. But while he was obviously upset, he simply left the room, walked around the building and smoked a cigar, leaving the staff to talk over some alternatives. When he returned, he calmly dealt with the situation, never showing his obvious anger.

Barnes placed a great importance on family, often observing that his job was easy compared to the rigors of raising a family. A couple of interviewees also noted that at the time of the death of his first wife, he talked about true priorities in life and how important they should be for everyone.

Dr. Janet Woodcock—Leadership Character and Capability

Dr. Janet Woodcock is somewhat of a different type of leader than the previous two profiled in her own developmental experiences and her level (not necessarily scope) of impact. First, she has occupied for some time now the most senior position in the most visible part of the Food and Drug Administration—the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), with all of the external responsibilities as well as access to resources that such a position implies. Second, she is a scientist and an M.D. and has thus traveled a somewhat different road in her own development as a leader. And, third, her public service career is not one of an entire career lifetime but of the last 14 years.

Despite these apparent differences, there are more similarities in the leadership attributes she has displayed in helping followers navigate change and produce results and in providing for the growth of the next generation of leaders at CDER. Dr. Woodcock heads an organization that has been widely recognized for producing significant change under difficult circumstances. Nevertheless, part of her agenda for change has been to develop the kind of leaders that CDER will need to sustain change, many of whom have been through an innovative partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government Fellows Program. In interviews with many people who have worked with her, the following attributes emerge as the most prominent:

- Unquestioned integrity of commitment to live out values
- An abiding focus on the core purpose of public service
- A deep belief in the worth and capabilities of people
- Courage—a willingness to take personal and organizational risks
- Perseverance toward a vision

Unquestioned integrity of commitment to live out values

Those interviewed about Dr. Woodcock consistently mentioned her commitment to identify and draw out leaders, often new leaders, at all levels. Here she was not only looking to the future of CDER, but also using this approach as a means to reshape the culture. It is a strategy that recognizes that some individuals in key positions will not be able to change, and that by raising up new leaders who share the new vision, a more gradual process of transformation will occur over the long term. This, of course, has its risks as well as its potential rewards. Despite a crushing workload and uncompromising external pressures, Dr. Woodcock has been able to maintain her commitment to and demonstrate her faith in growing new leaders by giving her time and energy.

An abiding focus on the core purpose of public service

The driving need for change seems to be a bone-deep belief in Dr. Woodcock. Many of the interviewees said that she strongly believed that the nation's citizens demanded and deserved the best in terms of early access to new medications and that the safety of such medications should not be compromised in the process. One expression of this belief was that people were dying because new drugs were not getting to the market. This was a message that stirred hearts as well as minds.

A deep belief in the worth and capabilities of people

One of Dr. Woodcock's first official acts that has remained in the minds of the people in CDER is she personally visited every single office and attempted to talk to every single person as a way

to introduce herself. As visible evidence of her caring about people, this could not be surpassed, but the fact that it also was completely counter to the reigning hierarchical culture was perhaps just as important. And she continues to impress others with her phenomenal memory for names.

Her introductory visits were not a one-time symbolic act. She continues to solicit the input of people at all levels of the organization and takes a personal interest in them, despite her demanding and highly visible position. She also has widened the participation of people in key meetings, drawing individuals not necessarily from the senior levels and soliciting their input at meetings. This was unheard of prior to her arrival.

One mid-level manager commented that what makes Dr. Woodcock stand out is how she makes people feel valuable and good about themselves. She asks about the issues they are passionate about and is able to identify valuable skills and abilities that the individuals themselves often don't see. Simply by asking questions and listening she is able to draw out people.

There is also a clear sense that although she is highly intelligent and quickly grasps the essence of a complex issue, she is not lofty or inaccessible. There is an openness that she conveys beyond her "open door" to people—even when she disagrees, there is respect for the person.

A key aspect that several mentioned was that Dr. Woodcock has created the conditions that allow greater input, innovation, and change—a more permissive and open atmosphere that draws out people at all levels. Her leadership influence on the culture is one that will continue to take a time and energy to realize. Like other aspects, it is still apparently a work in progress.

She also believes strongly that successful change is a team outcome and is extremely self-effacing, deflecting recognition and praise to others.

Courage—a willingness to take personal and organizational risks

One of the capabilities of leading change is the courage of conviction and the ability to instill

courage in others. Many of the early Fellows and other leaders were placed into situations—thinking outside of the box and being engaged in a new leadership program that focused on changing CDER—which were not seen as career enhancing. Even the early classes of Fellows experienced a lack of volunteers because of the perceived “danger” of being associated with such efforts.

Some mentioned that her visible role also included a willingness to tackle some of the political opposition to the changes, which demonstrated her own courage and gave heart to others who were experiencing opposition internally.

Perseverance toward a vision

The primary challenge that CDER was faced with was turning around a slow-paced drug review process that increasingly left none of the stakeholders satisfied with the results: consumers, politicians, drug companies, or patients. Dr. Woodcock’s vision was that there needed to be a serious change in the way CDER did business, or it would become irrelevant in a world that demands better, faster, cheaper. But, initially, and even now in the eyes of some, the resistance to change was fierce.

Some interviewees mentioned that Dr. Woodcock is not charismatic in the traditional sense and that it is even possible to underestimate her. What was noted was how her personal character of deeply held beliefs, passion around those beliefs, and consistent enthusiasm and energy toward innovation came through loud and clear when she began to speak to groups or in one-on-one conversations.

This attribute of personal character is one seen in many of the so-called “built to last” leaders of organizations—a sense that “good enough” never is and that making things better must be a daily part of organization life. Dr. Woodcock seemed to be constantly questioning why innovation could not apply to drug review and why new ways of doing things could not be found. She apparently preached that the status quo simply was not acceptable and that she would not defend it. For those who had become comfortable with established procedures, even justifying them against public criticism, this was a hard path to take. But what stands out is how she persevered and continues to do so, challenging the established

approach and encouraging others to do so, but without a “take no prisoners” attitude. That likely has allowed change to occur slower than some would like, but without the human turmoil that sometimes accompanies driving change from the top and the bottom of the organization as she has.

Appendix III:

Annotated Bibliography

The references in the endnotes contain the primary written sources for the published research behind this report. However, for senior leaders or others wishing to explore this topic in more depth, the following references provide a wealth of information about how to grow public service leaders at all levels. These individuals will become the leaders with the character and capability needed to transform the service of government to its citizens for the 21st century.

Leadership—The Overall Perspective

Burns, James McGregor. *Leadership*. New York: Harper, 1978.

The “classic” treatment of transformational leadership, done in a scholarly but readable way. Looks at leadership in every sector and from many angles, contrasting transactional and transformational leadership. Develops a general theory of leadership, which set the stage for later developments. Not nearly as practical, but good on the early theory behind most of what is discussed in this report.

Kotter, John. *Leading Change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996.

The single best book to date on the link between leadership and change—the biggest challenge for today’s leaders—written by the preeminent thinker and researcher on the subject. It is readable, cogent, and eminently practical. His model, based

on eight principles, comes out of extensive work with organizations that have failed to produce significant change. His concluding ideas on organizations of the future and how future leaders can grow to enable them to navigate through times of great change are highly insightful.

Kotter, John. *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management*. New York: The Free Press, 1990.

John Kotter has examined leadership and management in more practical detail than perhaps any thought leader. His understanding of how they differ in execution and in their results is well worth reading. It elucidates better than any source I have found the way in which public service leaders have gone down a management path that is no longer useful in an era of transformation of government.

Kouzes, James M., and Barry Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.

Another excellent framework for identifying the capabilities needed in exemplary leaders. The authors use a framework of challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. Their view is that leaders can and do make a difference in producing results through people and can learn to do so. They also include the highly regarded Leadership Practices Inventory for a self-assessment or outside assessment of capabilities.

Rosen, Robert. *Leading People*. New York: Penguin Books, 1996.

Pioneer of the “healthy company” initiative Rosen sets forth a model for leadership based upon eight capabilities or principles: vision, trust, participation, learning, diversity, creativity, integrity, and community. An excellent source that is readable and practical, with great illustrations.

Ulrich, Dave, Jack Zenger, and Norm Smallwood. *Results-based Leadership: How Leaders Build the Business and Improve the Bottom Line*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999.

Written somewhat as a corrective to the notion that leadership is only about attributes or competencies of leaders. The authors focus on a balanced scorecard of results—people, organization, customers, investors—and how to become more results-focused as a leader. They ultimately conclude that to sustain results, leaders must build leaders.

Leadership—The Leader’s Perspective

DePree, Max. *Leadership is an Art*. New York: Doubleday, 1989.

DePree, Max. *Leadership Jazz*. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Max DePree, former CEO of the highly successful Herman Miller Furniture design company in Zeeland, Michigan, reflects on his views of leadership and on the legacy of leadership he observed and implemented from his father and brother. Perhaps two of the more cogent treatments of leadership from the perspective of an individual who has thought long and hard about the subject and has been there.

Hesselbein, Frances, Marshall Goldsmith, and Richard Beckhard, eds. *The Leader of the Future*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.

These essays frame almost every aspect of leadership with an eye toward the qualities leaders of the future will need in all types of organizations—private sector, public sector, and social sector. Experienced academicians, consultants, and practitioners write on every aspect of leadership. A rich

resource with a variety of useful perspectives from the Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management.

Pollard, William. *The Soul of the Firm*. Grand Rapids: Harper Collins Publishers, 1996.

Pollard, CEO of the top service company in the world, explains his approach to leadership, which centers on a value system that is rooted in the dignity of the individual and a focus on the core purpose of work and the business.

Sullivan, Gordon R., and Michael V. Harper. *Hope is Not a Method: What Business Leaders Can Learn from America’s Army*. New York: Random House, 1996.

Sullivan, former chief of staff of the Army, explains how he helped lead the U.S. Army through a time of great change after the Vietnam War and the Gulf War and prepare it for its role in a changing world. A highly useful perspective from a public service leader.

Leadership—Character

Greenleaf, Robert. *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. New York: Paulist Press, 1977.

Greenleaf is the godfather of the recent move toward an understanding of the importance of character and values in times of change. It is a study in the paradox of how power is best exercised and received. From the story of Hesse’s *Journey to the East*, Greenleaf draws upon the metaphor of the self-effacing Leo. A servant on the journey, Leo proved to be central to its success, yet was himself a great leader of a monastic movement. A somewhat mystical treatment of leadership, but a philosophy that has endured as a way of leading and serving. An exemplary metaphor for public service leadership.

Guinness, Os, ed. *Character Counts: Leadership Qualities in Washington, Wilberforce, Lincoln and Solzhenitsyn*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.

Character in leaders is often caught as much as taught. It is learned through observation and interaction. Guinness profiles four leaders—three from public service—and highlights how they developed

character as leaders and how they lived it under the most trying of circumstances. This is not a “how to” but rather a call source of inspiration for those in public service.

O’Toole, James. *Leading Change: Overcoming the Ideology of Comfort and the Tyranny of Custom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995.

This is a somewhat unorthodox treatment of the subject of leadership and change that draws upon history, moral and political philosophy, and practical experience. O’Toole served as the head of the Aspen Institute Executive Seminar and used his work with senior leaders over the years to diagnose the reasons for failure to produce significant change. He identifies the aspect of character, the moral foundation, as being where trust is built or erodes by profiling five “Rushmorean” leaders who have demonstrated the critical role of values-centered leadership. An excellent companion to Kotter’s eight change principles.

Thrall, Bill, Bruce McNicol, and Ken McElrath. *The Ascent of a Leader: How Ordinary Relationships Develop Extraordinary Character and Influence*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

One of the few books that tackles the notion that character in leaders can be developed within organizations that foster a culture of principles and values within senior leaders. The authors use the metaphor of “ladders”—leaders growing as they face ascending challenges related to both character and capability. They show how the two “ladders” must be combined to produce leaders for the future whom others can trust and follow. Through mentoring and coaching relationships, they contend, character is grown in the right culture.

Growing Leaders—The Practical Research Behind “Best Practices”

McCall, Morgan. *High Flyers: Developing the Next Generation of Leaders*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1998.

Morgan McCall, now head of the Executive Leadership Program at the University of Southern California, distills the best knowledge of how leaders grow from his days as head of research for the

Center for Creative Leadership and from his experience in developing senior executives. A highly readable and practical primer on how to grow leaders.

McCauley, Cynthia D., Russ S. Moxley, and Ellen Van Velsor, eds.. *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998.

Perhaps the best single reference source for organizations seeking to grow leaders. Contains excellent, research-based sections on the experiences that grow leaders (360-degree feedback, skill-based training, challenging job assignments, developmental relationships, and hardships). Also included is an excellent review of a systematic process to grow leaders and some of the key issues organizations are likely to face—race, gender, and cross-cultural concerns.

Growing Leaders—“Best Practices” in Organizations

Collins, James C., and Jerry I. Porras. *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*. New York: Harper Collins, 1994.

This contains perhaps the best work done to date on benchmark companies, which are also excellent for comparison to the public sector. These are all companies that have endured over time, experiencing both short-term failure and long-term success. Rooted in core purpose and core values, they build organizations that home-grow leaders with the values and cultural orientation that will ensure long-term stability and continuous, even dramatic, change. For those who think that the private sector has nothing of value for public sector situations—particularly the cultural foundations for growing leaders of character and capability and for a clear-eyed focus on *results*.

Conger, Jay A., and Beth Benjamin. *Building Leaders: How Successful Companies Develop the Next Generation*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1999.

An excellent and up-to-date benchmarking of how the best develop leaders. Contains excellent cases of current best practices and an examination of how leaders are developed on the job including the use of action learning. A good discussion of the capabilities needed by future leaders is also included.

Managing Succession and Developing Leadership: Growing the Next Generation of Public Service Leaders. Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Public Administration, 1997.

This is a benchmarking study of the best practices of both excellent public sector and private sector organizations and the systems that are most appropriate for public sector use. It also contains a practical guide to organizations wanting to take a strategic approach to leader development and succession management and has many excellent references including an annotated bibliography and a list of leader programs aimed at the public sector.

Tichy, Noel. *The Leadership Engine: How Winning Companies Build Leaders at Every Level.* New York: Harper Collins, 1997.

This is perhaps the best inside look at how companies that have a reputation for growing leaders do it. The insights of Tichy, a long-time consultant to Jack Welch at GE, offer practical applications to the theories of leader development and root it not in systems, but in the leaders themselves. An added bonus is an excellent practical application for senior leaders who want to identify their teachable points of view and shape them into stories to grow other leaders in their organization.

Vicere, Albert A., and Robert M. Fulmer. *Leadership by Design: How Benchmark Companies Sustain Success Through Investment in Continuous Learning.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996.

Very good on the strategic use of leader development as a means to drive the organization forward. Not as useful from the individual leader development perspective.

Growing Leaders—Mentoring

Bell, Chip R. *Managers as Mentors: Building Partnerships for Learning.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1996.

Oriented almost exclusively toward techniques that a leader or manager who wants to become an effective mentor can use. It is cogent and practical.

Biehl, Bobb. *Mentoring: Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One.* Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996.

Written for both potential and current mentors and for mentees as well. An excellent basic guide to finding mentors and mentees and what to do once the relationship begins.

Hendricks, Howard, and William Hendricks. *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship.* Chicago: Moody Press, 1995.

As the title implies, this looks at mentoring as a lifelong relationship that helps shape character in another. Written from a spiritual perspective, it is still down to earth, practical, and aimed at both mentors and mentees, with a good discussion of the notion of legacy.

Stanley, Paul D., and Robert J. Clinton. *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life.* Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1992.

Built solidly on the importance of shaping relationships, the authors do a better job of making distinctions among the various mentoring roles—the intensive, occasional, and even passive role. They dig deeply into the nature of these different relationships and draw upon historical situations and cases to illustrate their findings. A thorough and unique treatment of the nature of developmental relationships over a lifetime rather than a specific career.

Growing Leaders—Coaching

Cotlich, David, and Peter Cairo. *Action Coaching: How to Leverage Individual Performance for Company Success.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

An application of the action learning approach to growing leaders, this focuses on the coaching practices that leaders can use to help grow leaders within their organizations. It is based on using real life experiences in organizations and on the development of a few tools and skills that will help develop others and move the organization forward at the same time.

Hendricks, William, ed. *Coaching Mentoring and Managing*. Franklin Lakes, NJ: National Press Publications, 1996.

Covering the gamut of leader roles in relation to growing leaders, this book includes several case studies, analyses of specific situations, and tools to be used. Can be used as a text for a course for leaders or as a reference for particular issues or skill development.

Peterson, David B., and Mary Dee Hicks. *Leader as Coach: Strategies for Coaching and Developing Others*. Minneapolis: Personnel Decisions International, 1996.

Practical and highly readable approaches for leaders with coaching aspirations but who need a place to start. The authors identify ways in which good leaders can build trust and understanding partnerships with people, inspire commitment and motivation, grow the skills of others, and promote persistence undergirded by a supportive culture.

Endnotes

1. Max DePree, "Attributes of Leadership," in *Leadership in a New Era: Visionary Approaches to the Biggest Crisis in our Time* (San Francisco: Sterling and Stone, 1994), p. 264.
2. I would particularly acknowledge all those who were interviewed for this effort from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Social Security Administration, and the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, as well as others who were interviewed for this project. Their candid observations regarding their leaders, colleagues, and former colleagues offered keen insight into the nature of servant leadership in the public service.
3. Frances Hesselbein, "The One Big Question," *Leader to Leader*, Fall 1998, pp. 7-9.
4. Warren Bennis, *Managing People is Like Herding Cats* (Provo: Executive Excellence Publishing, 1997), p. 21.
5. John Kotter, *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), p. 139.
6. Mark W. Huddleston, *Profiles in Excellence: Conversations with the Best of America's Career Executive Service* (Washington, D.C.: IBM Center for The Business of Government, November 1999), pp. 14-16.
7. *The National Survey on Public Leadership: Abridged Results* (Boulder: The Leadership Development and Education Institute, 1999).
8. Huddleston, p. 9.
9. Kotter, p. 138.
10. For a more detailed discussion of these findings see Morgan W. McCall, Jr., Michael M. Lombardo, and Ann M. Morrison, *The Lessons of Experience: How Successful Executives Develop on the Job* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988).
11. Noel Tichy, *The Leadership Engine: How Winning Companies Build Leaders at Every Level* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), p. 3.
12. Tichy, p. 3.
13. Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, *Thriving on Chaos* (New York: Harper Collins, 1987), p. 498.
14. John P. Kotter and James L. Heskett, *Corporate Culture and Performance* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), p. 150.
15. Bobb Biehl, *Mentoring: Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), p. 46.
16. Biehl, p. 46.
17. David B. Peterson and Mary Dee Hicks, *The Leader as Coach: Strategies for Coaching and Developing Others* (Minneapolis: Personnel Decisions, International, 1996), p. 14.
18. In a 1999 study of best practices in developing leadership, the major findings were that action learning followed by cross-functional rotations, 360-degree feedback, and exposure to senior executives through mentoring were the top methods used. More importantly, the top organizations took a systemic approach and formed what might be called leadership learning communities where "graduates" and senior leaders were the coaches and instructors. See *Best Practices in Leadership Development Handbook*, Linkage, Inc, 1999.
19. David Dotlich and James L. Noel, *Action Learning: How the World's Top Companies Are Re-Creating Their Leaders and Themselves* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), p. 16.

Part II

Organizations Growing Leaders: Best Practices and Principles in the Public Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a “quiet crisis” in government that involves people serving in the public service. It is real, it has the potential to seriously compromise mission performance, and it is upon us.

This report focuses on providing practical help to organizations seeking to solve one aspect of this people crisis—perhaps the key aspect—growing the next generation of public service leaders. The problems of succession loom large. Large waves of members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) are expected to retire in the next five years. Brand-new challenges requiring new leadership competencies and greater emphasis on leadership versus management are now being recognized. So far the response across government has not been adequate. But there are many pockets of great promise where agencies can learn what has been working. This research seeks to capture two things.

First, how do excellent organizations launch significant change initiatives to develop their leaders in the face of daunting cultural and practical barriers?

Second, what practices and underlying principles have been successfully used that can serve as lessons for organizations in the early stages of putting together a leadership development initiative or for those seeking to resurrect a moribund effort?

The findings are both striking and highly applicable. The organizations profiled here were able to launch a succession program because they tapped into a sense of importance that then became

urgency for action. The “imperatives” represent the ways that the different organizations sought to capulize the change urgency they faced and to create their own success story. These include:

- **The Succession Imperative**—The recognition that large numbers of senior leaders would need to be groomed to replace those retiring.
- **The Strategic Imperative**—The existence of major strategic mission challenges that call for new kinds of leaders to bring about significant change.
- **The Performance Imperative**—The failure—often very public—to significantly improve performance, which can only be addressed by growing far better leaders.
- **The Competency Imperative**—Related to the previous two imperatives, the articulation of new competencies for senior leaders, often broader and more oriented to leading people and leading change.
- **The Organization Champion Imperative**—The drive and energy of a single champion who early on identified at least one of the above imperatives and helped serve as a catalyst for other senior leaders.

The five exemplary organizations studied—Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, U.S. Coast Guard, Western Area Power Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, and Social Security Administration—vary in size, mission challenges,

scope of responsibility, type of mission, and location. Each took different approaches to meeting the challenge of growing leaders. Some focused on one component of leaders—the successor cadre at the GS 13-15 (General Schedule) levels. Some focused on growing leaders at all levels including in their initial recruitment and orientation strategy. Individual cases bear a closer look. But the basic lessons and subsequent conclusions that emerged from each of these can be summarized as follows:

- Excellent organizations base their practices consistently on the proven principles for growing leaders.
- Excellent organizations make a business case for succession and leader development.
- Excellent organizations hold themselves accountable for results in growing leaders.

The findings also reveal some highly consistent practices used by the profiled organizations in growing leaders. These include:

- The use of senior mentors,
- The identification of behavioral leader competencies for development (in some cases, behaviors are graduated according to level of responsibility),
- The use of well-targeted internal training courses,
- Self-development study or reading,
- Exposure to the strategic agenda and to senior officials of the organization, and
- The use of individualized development plans.

In contrast to the better private sector organizations and to the research on how leaders develop over time, there are areas, even in the best public sector organizations, where stronger emphasis on growing leaders could bring even better results in the next two or three years. What has differed most between the two sectors has been the level of commitment to the strategic importance of people, in general, and of succession and leader development, specifically.

While it is a clear top priority for the private sector, for the federal government succession remains a work in progress as a practice *aligned to drive strategic intent*. For example, initial recruitment is one area where thoughtful targeting of future leaders can be affected. Another is the widespread use of and support for rotational assignments to develop for future leaders.

These principles and practices are critical for any organization launching a succession program. This report contains recommendations for individual organizations, as well as government-wide recommendations that emerge from this study that cannot be taken by any one organization alone. The President's Management Council would be a good place to provide overall direction for leadership development and accountability for action on the following:

Recommendations

For individual government organizations:

- (1) Each organization should base their succession and leader development practices consistently on the proven principles for growing leaders:
 - Challenging, job-based experiences selected by senior leaders as a development strategy;
 - The involvement of future leaders in a substantial way with senior leaders in the organization strategic agenda, as mentors and through real action learning team projects;
 - The use of Executive Core Qualification leader competencies as a template for development—those that are the same competencies by which senior leaders are selected and held accountable for (alignment).
- (2) Make a business case for succession and leader development and ground it in a real imperative that will urge action by senior leaders.
- (3) Each organization and their senior leaders must hold themselves accountable for results in growing leaders. This begins by involving key senior leaders right from the beginning, but it cannot end there.

For government-wide action:**For the President's Management Council:**

- (4) Provide a clear mandate to career Senior Executives to take the lead in growing their successors and incorporate this human capital initiative into a government-wide business case spearheaded by the President's Management Council.

For the Office of Personnel Management:

- (5) Make mid-level manager, senior leader, and executive mobility a requirement for assumption of future SES leadership responsibility.
- (6) Form a volunteer cadre of retiring Senior Executives and those who have already retired to consult back on a part-time basis to government organizations as coaches, teachers, and mentors of the successor generations.

It takes committed organizations to grow leaders and to respond to one of the most critical crises in government. And it takes leaders within those organizations and at the most senior levels in government to lead the effort. The outcome can certainly be a significant improvement in the public service and tangible results for the American people. The way has been outlined by the five excellent organizations profiled in this study; others need to follow their path.

Introduction

The “Quiet Crisis”

The crisis of human capital may appear to have stealthily crept in by the side door. Some may consider it the latest government fad or flavor of the month. Despite appearances, the human capital crisis is an old stalwart of long vintage. The unfortunate thing is that, “quiet” or not, it is real.

This report addresses one key aspect of the quiet crisis—providing for the succession needs of federal organizations. Or, to put it another way, what will it take for the public service to grow the leaders of the future it needs over the next five years?

This is in many ways a sequel to the report *Leaders Growing Leaders*,¹ which also spoke directly to the critical need to grow the next generation of public service leaders but as a central responsibility of *leaders themselves*. In light of extensive departures expected in the senior ranks in the next five years, the first report sought to show how some senior leaders had taken a leadership role to serve the next generation by acting as mentors, coaches, teachers, and exemplars. They were people who understood that leadership growth is best learned from and initiated by senior leaders. They sought to leave a legacy for others by the choices they made.

The key finding of the first report remains the key finding of this report: Leaders beget leaders. Or, as one person said, “To be a leader you must see a leader.”

This report builds on this initial finding and addresses two new questions: What are the excel-

lent organizations in the public sector doing to grow the next generation of leaders? And, what can we all learn from them? The five organizations profiled are ones that have not simply recognized the need for leadership; they are organizations that have acted.

The Symptoms

The General Accounting Office (GAO) recently referred to government-wide human capital practices as a “high risk” area of concern. This highlights the gravity of the threat to the mission of government agencies if future leader development is not addressed.² The neglect of the people side of government has a long genesis, and the culture changes that are needed to resolve this crisis will not yield to short-term commitments.

Take just one cogent example that is indicative of a far wider problem. The Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness in the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recently released its findings on perhaps the most critical part of leader development in any organization, that of first-level supervisors. The results were termed “a wake-up call.”

Only four of the 20 agencies surveyed by OPM had formal leadership development initiatives for their beginning supervisors. A relative handful of these individuals received leadership development or supervisory preparation prior to assuming these positions.³

Of even more concern, almost half of the selectees for these initial leadership positions were not given

these leadership responsibilities because they possessed nascent leadership competencies but because they were the best technical experts.

Currently, leaders at all levels of government are often selected using criteria that are completely at odds with the new leader competencies needed today and in the future—flexibility/adaptability, accountability, strategic thinking/vision, and customer service.⁴

Some Remedies

It is not the purpose of this report to lay blame on any one source for the relative inaction of the public service in developing future leaders. Rather, the aim is to highlight the instructive lessons of some selected government organizations that have persevered with foresight and innovation, often out of the limelight, to begin preparing the next generation of leaders.

The purpose is also to again underscore that the strategic response is one that can only be led by senior leaders—leaders who grow leaders—and that it is well within the grasp of a concerted leadership effort by any federal agency given commitment and application of best practices. The exemplary organizations and their leaders examined here have shown the way for the rest of us.

The best practices (or, more precisely, lessons learned or excellent practices) offer learning opportunities for agencies that are beginning to engage the issues surrounding growing future leaders or seeking to revive a flagging effort. These lessons can be both a starting point and a roadmap of ideas and principles from which succession and leader development efforts can greatly profit—the lessons of practical experience.

But first a warning: Simply imitating these practices is not a complete blueprint for healthy leadership growth. Long-term cultural barriers must be identified and overcome.

The Importance of Culture

Change is the central task of the leader.⁵ Changing the culture of an organization, even in small ways, is highly difficult. Yet it is the culture of an organization that fundamentally shapes the nature and

intensity of such “soft” factors as effective recruitment of excellent young graduates, the climate (non-bureaucratic) for high-energy motivation, and the commitment to service that encourages retention of the top performers. It is such a culture that fundamentally produces consistent and superior results for the American people. This type of culture is shaped primarily by its leaders.⁶

As we will see, the excellent organizations in the private sector have recognized this central truth for many years now; however, it is still an insight not yet widely shared by the public sector. For government, far more reliance is placed on new forms of control systems, enhanced oversight, and the creation of job titles when dealing with organization performance problems. While this report will focus on practices and principles, the deeper implications of culture change are also implicit throughout and are briefly discussed in the next section. The importance to success should not be underestimated.

Approach

The following findings on five exemplary organizations have been drawn from interviews with senior organization leaders, succession program managers, and program participants themselves. In each case, I made site visits to the organizations and reviewed existing documentation.

The next section, “Launching a Succession Initiative,” is designed as a starting point for organizations considering launching a leader development initiative. Through studying the five organizations, it became clear that for most agencies, succession and leader development is not so much launching a new program as it is transforming an organization culture and its long-held assumptions—managing large-scale change. One of the toughest challenges organizations face is getting off the launch pad. The lessons from their experiences make the case for change: Why they took the first steps they did; why they were able to overcome organizational inertia; why they were able to overcome the current leadership myths embedded in so much of government culture.

“Lessons Learned” is a discussion in some depth of the “what” and the “how”—what each organization is doing and how they are doing it as they seek to

provide for the succession of senior leaders. This is a summary of the lessons to be learned from their experiences. It is intended to be practical in nature for use by any organization. It is also consistent with the principles contained in the latest and best research on leader development.

“Making Sense of It All” is a summary containing a comparison of the practices of the five public sector organizations as well as a brief contrast with the practices of the best businesses in America. This is another way to uncover the key success factors and the underlying principles for growing leaders. This analysis results in three key conclusions for action by individual public sector organizations.

The final section, “Recommendations,” closes the discussion with broader recommendations for government-wide change to resolve the leadership and succession aspects of the human capital crisis in the next five years.

Launching a Succession Initiative

This section examines two important factors in initiating the programs and practices to be discussed. First, there are barriers to change that exist in almost every federal agency, but most of them are seen here more as myths that the five exemplary organizations have overcome. Second, the reasons are examined regarding why a succession initiative could be successfully launched in these agencies by capitalizing on unique factors of urgency and/or importance.

Overcoming the Myths

For the past several years a number of sources of analysis, thinking, and experience have documented the tepid response of the public sector to the importance of growing leaders for the future. The impact that failure is having on the ability to continue to accomplish the public service mission is now a matter of record. What is not known is the response this knowledge will engender in the next two to three years. But if the past is prologue to the future, there may be unfortunately little reaction. How and why did these five organizations take a different and more successful course?

Past studies by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) and others have identified the reasons behind such levels of inaction. The most frequent response to a 1996 NAPA survey as well as to other inquiries since then can be summarized: "It's the culture."

In his research on world-class organizations, Harvard Business School's John Kotter has identified what he refers to as a "leader-centered culture," an environment supportive of the time and effort to

grow leaders. He has concluded from his research that this is the key distinguishing factor in organizations that do an excellent job of leader development.

It would appear from both formal study and my own experience in teaching and coaching young leaders from across government the past five years that there is a strong consensus that an opposite type of culture may be a major—if not the major—impediment within the federal sector. While lack of funding, small rewards, and lack of political priority are also cited as factors, culture seems to be where it all returns. Is this just an all-purpose cop-out? I don't think so.

Where there are serious gaps between what is said and what is actually done (e.g., "people are our most valued asset," but when the budget knife appears training is cut first), we find clues to the existing people culture in government. These clues are what I refer to here as "myths." These myths are underlying barriers that the five exemplary organizations have had to overcome to engender the organizational energy and the funding for growing leaders as a change initiative. They are widely (and wrongly) accepted arguments that stand against the need for leader development, the need to base it on the factors that really grow leaders, and the possibility that such an investment in developing people will generate real results. These myths are explored in Appendix II.

Initiating Change: The Imperatives

If there are deeply held cultural myths about growing leaders, why were these five exemplary

organizations able to overcome these entrenched assumptions? And, why did their agencies make decisions to take such relatively bold steps to initiate an organization-wide response to developing future leaders? The answers are that they tapped into a real, immediate sense of urgency.

In brief, these are the factors—the change-urgent imperatives—which were discovered (either in combination or separately) when examining the launching of leader development initiatives by the five agencies.

1. **The Succession Imperative.** In almost all cases, the strongest imperative for action was the glaring visibility of the number of senior leaders who would likely depart within the next five years and an understanding of the implications that this held.
2. **The Strategic Imperative.** Each organization, in one way or another, made leader development a strategic decision that was reflected in official strategic plans submitted with the annual budget. While not all decisions reflected line-item funding, the substantive presence in the strategic plans did indicate that senior leaders made an intentional decision, which served as a “blocking back” when contrary voices were later raised.
3. **The Performance Imperative.** Environmental factors (e.g., competitive challenges, changing agency roles, industry changes) and current dissatisfaction with organizational performance from external sources (e.g., GAO, Congress, Office of Management and Budget, interest groups) led to a positive response to focus on developing leaders as part of the strategy.
4. **The Competency Imperative.** Closely aligned with the Performance Imperative was the recognition that the changing landscape for performance also required a change in the type of leader being developed. This was consistently seen as a leader with the competencies of the new Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs)—leading change, leading people, results driven, business acumen, and building coalitions. In short, a broader based type of leader with more sophisticated “soft” skills and less emphasis on technical expertise.

5. **The Organization Champion Imperative.** Finally, in almost all instances, there was a clear initiative taken by a senior leader who stood behind the initial impetus for change and allowed leader development to be on the strategic agenda and to be associated with needed strategic change. That key leader also had a strong strategic partnership that developed either with a staff organization or with a specially convened group that developed the initiative for implementation.

Taken together, these offer organizations a beginning point for launching change. It is often the lack of urgency, the absence of what some like to call a “burning platform,” that often dooms good ideas for change from getting airborne. Having launched such a change initiative, what practices and underlying principles do these organizations have to pass on to others who are in the early stages of change?

Five Exemplary Organizations: Lessons Learned

Regarding the five organizations discussed in this section, I offer the following framework to give context and meaning to the the “lessons learned.”

- An overview of the *Mission Challenge* that each organization faces.
- The *Approach* taken (or strategy for change) once the change imperatives had driven an organizational launch.
- A *Description* of the succession and leader development programs.
- A more detailed look at the *Lessons* that can be learned from the particular efforts of the individual organizations.

Their practices are offered not so much for complete emulation, but to understand that they are based on sound principles that contain certain truths and that they have been adapted to the particular challenges, culture, and realities (e.g., resources) of each of the organizations.

These organizations range in size from large to small. Some are highly technical or engineering organizations, some in the human services business, and some are in the business of law enforcement and national defense. It is likely that there are instructive lessons for almost any government organization, and that, of course, is the purpose. We begin with one of the smaller organizations.

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC)

Mission Challenge

PBGC has the mission of protecting participants’ pension benefits and supporting a healthy retirement plan system. It employs just over 700 employees and several hundred contract workers, primarily actuaries, accountants, auditors, pension law specialists, and general attorneys. These individuals have highly technical backgrounds and tend to remain within their functional areas for the duration of their careers with PBGC. The corporation falls under the aegis of a board of directors chaired by the secretary of labor, but functions day-to-day as a relatively independent agency.

Early in 1999, the PBGC strategic plan set four corporate strategic goals. While the first three reflected operational, service, and financial long-term priorities, a fourth identified the importance of improving internal management, which included a decision to launch a succession management initiative to respond to projected widespread retirements:

Working with senior staff, begin to implement a well-regarded Succession Management Program.

It would be more than two years before the pilot program was officially launched.

During interviews, many of the senior leaders articulated the importance not only of replacing so many potentially departing leaders but also of developing new leaders with new leadership skills. These new competencies would include strategic thinking, team skills, customer service focus, and interpersonal competencies.

Approach

Chief Management Officer John Seal assigned the succession management corporation objective to the human resources department under the leadership of Sharon Barbee-Fletcher. She tasked the Training Institute (Karen Lunn, project director, and Dr. Ellen Roderick, institute director), with designing and implementing the succession program. John Seal then championed this initiative for the executive director as the project went from design to implementation.

In turn, a seasoned group of cross-organizational managers served as a work group to develop a succession program based on principles that would best apply to the culture of PBGC. They also used an outside consultant for technical assistance, conducted extensive research, and benchmarked the Social Security Administration (discussed later in this section).

The work group members made several presentations to a wider circle of the senior leadership and to potential candidates regarding the succession program's design and scope. That collaborative process took more than one year from inception to the launch of the pilot and included an open invitation to eligible applicants.

The initial response of the eligible pool of managers was quite limited and, in retrospect, reflected that the limitation of eligibility to one component of the organization as a pilot sent a confusing signal. In addition, skepticism about the extent of senior managers' support and the extra work that would ensue for participants were other factors contributing to the initial tepid response. This resulted in a cancellation of the original pilot and some rethinking of strategy before the pilot was reinitiated on a wider scale.

Description

The Leaders Growing Leaders (LGL) succession program is a systematic approach to develop a pool of future leaders that begins with selection of a few participants from a pool of voluntary applicants (over two dozen applied in the first phase). The initial pilot was open to all individuals in the GS 13-15 grades in non-bargaining union positions. A Senior Leader Review Board (SLRB) which represented a broad range of operational and staff disciplines accomplished selection of the seven LGL program candidates.

Once selection was made, each participant selected a senior advisor who would work with the participant to develop an individualized plan for development over the course of the next two years. The individual plans themselves were expected to be based on the candidates' 360-degree Leadership Assessment and reflect six components that the PBGC work group and the SLRB agreed were all essential to future leader development:

- *Action learning.* The team of candidates is expected to work on a "hot" strategic issue as a team and to work with senior leaders to provide a solution for a corporate decision and implementation. The issue is selected by the SLRB from actual strategic issues of the corporation.
- *Challenging work or job assignments.* Short and longer-term assignments outside the candidate's organization experience are used during the two years to broaden learning and are made in conjunction with the SLRB, the supervisors, the participants, and their mentors.
- *Regular interaction with the senior advisor.* Acting as both coach and mentor for the duration of the program, these individuals play a key developmental role. They are selected for being able to provide exposure to the senior-level strategic agendas and decision forums.
- *Leadership training.* Individuals are to identify online, on-site, and external training opportunities as their developmental needs dictate. Funding may be by the sponsoring organization or through the Training Institute or some combination.

- *External programs.* The Council for Excellence in Government (CEG) Fellows Program comprises much of the first developmental year for the candidates. This includes a team action learning results initiative, extensive organizational benchmarking, and exposure to other Fellows and senior leaders across government.
- *Self development.* Consistent with much recent learning about leader development, a strong emphasis has been placed by PBGC on individuals taking responsibility for their own development through, for example, professional reading programs, involvement as a community leader in church or nonprofit organizations, and attendance at professional seminars.

Lessons

There are a few factors that stand out in the approach PBGC has taken that are important for other agencies to consider.

1. *Involve senior leaders in leading the initiative.* What particularly stands out in the PBGC example is perhaps the central principle of any excellent succession and leader development initiative—the active involvement of senior leaders in the effort.

That lesson of the importance of the senior leader role came from the less than successful experience in the application process for the initial pilot. Enthusiasm and commitment had not spread beyond the line and staff members of the work group and the chief management officer, and a few others in the Training Institute. With the relaunch of the program under the rubric of Leaders Growing Leaders, a determined effort was made by several senior leaders to encourage the potential candidates. That effort and the widening of the succession program to all non-bargaining unit employees at the GS 13, 14, and 15 levels produced a far wider pool of potential candidates. Then with the successful relaunch, the SLRB was constituted, comprised of six committed senior line leaders, and a group of senior advisors was recruited—one mentor for each candidate.

The PBGC training director then ensured that the board itself received training in its role and in the ideas behind the concepts of the program, and did the same for the senior advisors in separate and joint

sessions. This has produced a strong cadre of senior leaders who are already demonstrating that they are in this for the long haul, and not deferring the selection process, candidate assessments, or individual development plan (IDP) development process to a staff. The deep engagement of these senior leaders is a good indicator of longer-term success.

2. *Build on existing success.* A second key aspect, perhaps in retrospect, is that PBGC already had some important components in place that had paved the widening of an effort to grow leaders. Rather than jettisoning these, they were incorporated.

For three years, PBGC has had a strong mentoring program pairing several senior leaders with employees who express a desire for mentoring. The corporation has also been using a form of action learning in the composition of what is called a REACH program, using cross-functional teams to solve problems and to learn from their wider involvement in the life of the organization. Another component in place was the existence of a leadership competency model designed for PBGC leaders along with a 360-degree Leadership Assessment linked to the competencies and customized to PBGC leadership situations. All of these were incorporated as key parts of the LGL Program.

3. *Make it part of the strategic plan.* It has been vitally important to have the organization's commitment to developing people and to a succession initiative as a strategic plan initiative—particularly when the initial impetus stalled.

That visibility and the alignment of these as strategies that will help drive the mission have given the work group and the organizational champions leverage to make things happen despite initial disappointing results.

4. *Emphasize leader learning from challenging experiences.* The commitment to a design that emphasizes challenging, cross-organizational job-based experiences and action learning as the central learning factors is also extremely important as a principle for emulation.

What PBGC anticipates (beginning in this first year and accelerating in the second year of the program) is that candidates will have an opportunity for cross-

organizational assignments. That will allow them to do substantive work in other areas of the organization. It will also allow others to step into their shoes for a time and to be similarly stretched—an unanticipated developmental product.

Participants will also be included in task forces, in teams for strategic learning, and in senior forums such as strategic planning meetings and budget reviews. There may be temporary assignments to other agencies, such as the Department of Labor, for wider learning.

The CEG Fellows program is also an opportunity for a team action learning project and for exposure to real experiences in private and public sector organizations through benchmarking and working with a larger team of 25 or so Fellows from different government agencies.

We turn now from an excellent example of an individual succession program to examine a strategic response to leadership at all levels in the Coast Guard.

U.S. Coast Guard

Mission Challenge

The U.S. Coast Guard has been charged with a complex mission—lifesaving and helping to make the coasts both safe and secure. This includes boating safety and search and rescue, aids to navigation, maritime safety, inland bridges, and even lighthouses. The Coast Guard also has responsibility for coastal security and national defense, including the growing need to interdict drugs, monitor for illegal immigration and counteract terrorism. Its domain consists of 95,000 miles of coastline and 3.4 million square miles of ocean and all inland waterways, ports, and harbors. It provides coastal and waterway defense in the event of an attack on the homeland. Finally, its complex portfolio embraces pollution enforcement and prevention as well as inspection of ships for potentially harmful contents and seaworthiness.

Unique within the armed forces, the Coast Guard is located within the Department of Transportation during peacetime but falls under Department of Defense during a declared war. In an otherwise

civilian department, the Coast Guard competes for resources and priorities within a different milieu than the other armed services—both an advantage and a disadvantage. Also somewhat unique to the Coast Guard is the presence of an enormous cadre of volunteers, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, with over 35,000 members who primarily reinforce the boating safety mission. The Coast Guard has approximately 35,000 uniformed people and 6,000 civilians augmented by 8,000 Reservists, for a total of nearly 85,000 people.

The Coast Guard has recently received plaudits for its exceptional efforts at defining and achieving results under the Government Performance and Results Act requirements and is generally considered one of the best managed and led organizations in government today. We turn now to the challenges that have impacted its approach to growing leaders for tomorrow.

Approach

The increasing complexity of its mission (and competing resource decisions) was probably the key impetus for a reinvigorated leader development approach. The Workforce Cultural Audit, conducted from 1995 to 1997, was a catalyst for identifying a number of changes that were needed in the arena of human capital and leadership development. In addition, a Training Infrastructure Study pointed out how the gaps identified could be closed through a range of improvements and changes.

These factors led to the creation of the Leadership Development Center and, on a broader scale, to an emphasis on people as a top strategic priority for the Coast Guard as expressed in its strategic plan and associated budget. Development of the competencies of all of its people to needed levels, recruiting for a full strength force, and retaining the right levels of knowledge and experience are expressed as priorities second to none.

The Commandant, Admiral James Loy, has also been clear that the Coast Guard can no longer take on all additive missions and that an honest calculation of workload versus resources needs to be a part of the thinking for the future if results are to be retained at current levels. How did this vision for change impact the Coast Guard leader development strategies?

In late 1997, the Coast Guard announced a decision to consolidate all leadership development training into one location as a center for excellence—what was to be called the Leadership Development Center (LDC)—on the grounds of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut. The decision to integrate all leadership development activities and to encourage synergy among leader program planning arose out of the goal to provide leadership and a working environment that enables all people to maximize their full potential and the Coast Guard to maximize mission success.

This strategic decision led to a number of subsequent actions that are now playing out in what the private sector would refer to as a “corporate university” environment—even though a good deal of training is provided off site. The co-location of leader program planning with a good portion of the leader training for officers, civilians, enlisted, cadets, and other officer candidates on site provides an opportunity for generational and experiential cross-fertilization that is rare in government.

Description

The mission at the LDC, currently under the command of Captain Margaret Riley, is threefold:

- Prepare Team Coast Guard (all components of the Coast Guard) to demonstrate leadership competencies and live the Coast Guard core values;
- Support Coast Guard units through service-wide leadership and quality development efforts; and
- Identify future organizational needs and requirements through ongoing research and assessment.

The core values of honor, respect, and devotion to duty and the 21 leadership competencies have been aligned with the new Coast Guard strategic direction as well as to its historical mission of service. This is the central organizing principle that allows integration of each of the programs and courses run at the New London LDC and in leadership courses given on site at various locations around the country. It also allows the LDC to serve as a clearinghouse for information on leadership

for the entire Coast Guard and to be a valued research center on new approaches to leader development.

The various leadership programs under the LDC have been designed to be just-in-time, at key transition points in people’s careers, when new command challenges lie ahead or when new operational and leadership challenges are anticipated. This is in addition to programs of accession into the Coast Guard such as the Academy.

Thus the leadership programs offered at and through the LDC include separate preparatory courses for rising chief petty officers and chief warrant officers, initial leadership development for mid-grade civilians (GS 12-14), a one-week Leadership and Management School for civilians and military (currently offered 48 times each year at the unit level in the field), and two-week leadership schools for prospective commanding officers and other leaders.⁷

The LDC also provides resources to leaders for growing leaders in the field through an online source of leadership lesson outlines in what is referred to as a “cookbook” approach offering 10 leadership modules. The design is aimed at simplicity so that material is easily taught through a Socratic or coaching approach, discussed among the participants, and integrated with work in real-life applications.

A sample of these modules includes: Followership, Teamwork, Personal Ethics, and Leadership Competencies. For example, a module is included that integrates a viewing of the film *Apollo 13* with a series of questions about how leadership is demonstrated from this real-life historical dramatization.

Another example is an online learning module entitled “So You Want to Be a Mentor (Or Find a Mentor)” —which includes methods of learning for beginning an eight-step mentoring program locally and training for being a mentor or a mentee.

In short, what the Coast Guard has done is to mount both an integrated and a strategic approach to leadership development that is concerned with its cultural distinctives (core values) and essential leader competencies at all levels of the organization.

Lessons

The Coast Guard has distinguished itself among federal organizations in the results it has accomplished and in the overall excellence of its management. But despite good results, the initiative to focus more acutely on the people side of the Coast Guard—and more particularly on growing its leaders—has brought about a number of changes in the last four years that are still being integrated and widened in reshaping not only methods but culture. Lessons learned from the Coast Guard's experience include:

1. *Make people and their development a top priority in the strategic plan.* Coast Guard's strategic plan and budget make it very clear that people are the top priority. This starts with Admiral Loy, himself. Despite resource constraints that affect all government organizations, this choice of people (not technology or capital expenditures) has been central over the past several years and continues to be revalidated by the USCG Leadership Council (a high-level committee that supports the Commandant on leadership initiatives).

The groundwork was laid for this in the mid-1990s with the initiative of the Workforce Cultural Audit under the direction of Admiral Loy, who was then the assistant commandant for human resources. The Coast Guard has consistently made people a top priority in a visible way, backing it up with action plans, resources and specific steps over the past five years, including establishing the LDC.

2. *Focus on organization socialization as well as individual development.* The establishment of a corporate university approach to leader development offers the potential for what some organizations refer to as "socialization"—an emphasis not entirely on leadership as a skill set, but on leadership as an embodiment of core values in behavior and as a set of aligned competencies that are common and expected for leaders at all levels.

Leader and organizational socialization is about an emphasis on reshaping the organization milieu toward a leader-centered culture. A corporate university also capitalizes on a synergy of effort what the Coast Guard calls "leadership across the curriculum" in all Coast Guard training courses.

In contrast, the dominant form of leadership development in the federal government today is an ad hoc approach that relies upon serendipity for success and on the assumption that leader development consists of attending leadership courses. By consolidating leader development program planning and many of its leader courses under a single organization at one location, the potential exists for the Coast Guard to achieve what they have begun namely, to bring together leaders at all levels, to share a common philosophy (centered on the USCG core values and 21 leadership competencies) of leadership and public service, and to have ongoing involvement of line managers as teachers and contributors to the curriculum.

The Coast Guard also has established a unique opportunity for young people in the process of becoming members of Team Coast Guard to learn from those with experience in an interactive setting. That opportunity for interaction among cadets, officer candidates and line managers is still a work in progress, but it is far beyond what even the best private sector companies are able to offer through such programs as summer internships.

The use of a corporate university model also has allowed the Coast Guard to develop online materials for empowering leaders to grow leaders throughout the Coast Guard.

3. *Provide senior leaders tools and the incentives to grow leaders.* The presence of user-friendly online leader development programs provides a means for senior leaders to grow other leaders in the field and on board ships. Similarly, the opportunity to establish formal and informal mentoring programs throughout the Coast Guard has a great potential for shaping a leader-centered culture and is a powerful means of leadership development. The establishment of the Commandant's Leadership Advisory Council (LAC) has been instrumental in spearheading some of these initiatives and in demonstrating the importance and expectations for other leaders.

What is excellent here is the practicality of the leadership development program—conducted by leaders themselves (not trainers or consultants)—for units in the field. Another plus is the way in which the Coast Guard solicits real involvement and input in the evolution of the curriculum by establishing what

amounts to a budding community of practice. They have established a web-based compilation of leadership development practices that are currently being used (hence field-tested) and have been placed online for use by others across the Coast Guard. Currently, 27 such “Proven Initiatives” are available under the categories of Leadership, Professional Development, Training, Education, and Other.

The underscoring of expectations for line manager ownership of leader development is an outcome of the formation of the LAC. This group, representing all levels of the USCG, has been charged by the Commandant with gathering leadership development concerns, evaluating the Coast Guard leadership development programs, and disseminating information back to the field. The Proven Initiatives project is one of the innovations under the auspices of the Leadership Development Center.

4. *Make self-development a key part of leader development.* The emphasis on self development as a responsibility for all leaders in the Coast Guard has been enhanced by support of the LDC.

The generation of extensive leadership reading lists available to all people online is one tool that has been developed through the LDC. Another leadership self-development activity includes encouraging mentoring and giving practical advice on selecting a mentor. The LDC also sponsors a leadership essay program for individuals to share their practical leadership insights and to reward the sharing of earned wisdom.

The point here is not so much the tools and programs themselves, but the principle that self development is more and more expected of leaders and is not solely an organization or programmatic effort.

The Coast Guard provides an excellent example of a corporate and strategic approach to the challenges of leader development. Organizations with neither the size nor the resources that the Coast Guard possesses nevertheless have ample means at their disposal to tackle this critical need. The Western Area Power Administration is just such an exemplary organization.

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA)

Mission Challenge

The Western Area Power Administration is a business-type organization under the aegis of the Department of Energy. Michael Hacsckaylo is the administrator and initiator of the recent emphasis on succession and leader development. WAPA's responsibility is to deliver power for commercial use from federal hydro-generation dams and the 56 power plants of the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the International Boundary Water Commission. As such they own and operate the third largest high-voltage transmission system in the United States. The 17,000 miles of transmission lines span the upper Midwest to the Southwest and out to California in the West (15 states total), delivering electricity to over 600 transmission wholesale customers, primarily for use during peak-hour needs of their millions of customers. They have almost 1,300 employees and 250 contract workers and generate gross operating revenues of almost \$900 million.

The mission of WAPA is to market and deliver cost-based hydroelectric power and related services. It has a vision of becoming a premier marketing and transmission organization (their core business functions). Their core values are stated as:

- Treat each other with respect
- Live up to your commitments
- Take pride in what you do
- Work as a team

In an era of reemerging focus on energy and low cost measures, WAPA stands at a strategic point.

Approach

Two factors provided the urgency for and the shape of a change strategy. First was a 26 percent employment downsizing in 1995. This produced not only anxiety but also the realization that an incredible amount of knowledge would be lost. In the process of holding focus groups with employees, the issues of developing the people who remained became more acute.

But WAPA also had a cultural barrier to overcome—assumptions about a past management development program that was viewed as less than successful. With the downsizing and reengineering in 1995 came the elimination of the management development program, which had been seen by many employees as for the “anointed” few as well as simply a career “ticket punch.”

Second, there was a change in the nature of the business environment. Energy markets became both more complex and more competitive. WAPA had to become leaner in costs and more mature in their customer service skills. As a result, the strategic plan reflects three major goals around products and services, people, and industry. The people goal is to:

Recruit, develop and retain a safety-focused, highly productive customer-oriented and diverse workforce.

Curiously, even though the succession program is now in its second year, it is mentioned only tangentially in the Strategic Plan and Performance Plan for 2001. The explicit way in which growing leaders is an aligned strategy is not clear yet.

Description

In the wake of downsizing and a competitive business climate for energy, WAPA felt it needed to better understand the organization climate. An organization-wide employee survey and a series of focus groups began to identify the need for leader development, but employees also identified the cultural barrier of anointing the chosen few, as discussed earlier. The insights gleaned from extensive interaction with employees at all levels began to give shape to the succession program design.

The administrator also held a number of sessions with the senior leadership team on the importance of their support for a succession initiative, especially in making available opportunities for details and job rotations for developmental purposes. He made a strong *business case* that would be key to the rationale for this new initiative. This was a critical insight because in a cost-competitive atmosphere, unnecessary overhead costs directly impact customers and WAPA's competitive position.

In October 1999, WAPA publicly launched its Management Succession Program (MSP), identifying a different set of competencies needed in future leaders—skills well beyond the technical qualifications that had previously been considered central. The focus on customer service, and the need to create an organizational climate that would be felicitous for recruiting and retaining the employees needed within a competitive labor market, began to shape the nature of the program design. Included were the Executive Core Qualifications (Leading Change, Leading People, Results Driven, Business Acumen, and Building Coalitions/Communication). In addition, WAPA developed what are referred to as Western-Specific Competencies—Financial/Management Systems, Power Marketing and Operation, Utility Industry, Maintenance, and Safety. It also benchmarked other organizations and did extensive research to understand how best to put a succession program in place for its unique culture.

The Department of Energy was also taking initiative to begin a department-wide succession program, and WAPA staff members participated in these plans and discussions. However, when it became apparent that the department-level initiative was bogging down, WAPA made a decision to move ahead rather than wait for a comprehensive plan to emerge. This was a factor in beginning with a fairly streamlined approach that fit not only the WAPA culture, but also the exigencies of the staffing situation and the need to move ahead with alacrity.

The MSP emerged as a three-year voluntary, primarily self-directed program open to *all* employees who hold a permanent management, supervisory, or team leader position within WAPA. Funding for development and training comes from the individual offices of participants, except for group-wide training that is prorated among all organizations and funded centrally.

Now in its second year, it began with 37 participants from offices around the region with six participants dropping out of the program in the first six months. Since the initiative did not include a selection process, it was able to begin rather quickly after the announcement and application cycle.

While the general thrust is for self development and direction, the program office in the Lakewood, Colorado, headquarters does provide some support as well as overall management of the program. For example, the initial identification of strengths and developmental needs began with a 360-degree feedback process, soliciting feedback from supervisors, peers, and subordinates relevant to the 10 leader competencies. Also, there are group training opportunities approximately once each year for all MSP participants. However, it is the responsibility of individuals to search out advisors, coaches, and mentors on their own.

The development for each individual is set forth in an Individual Progression Plan (IPP) for the three years of the program. Activities are tied to the development of the leader competencies and are subject to supervisory approval. Development activities and challenging job-based experiences are stressed over training, which is viewed as only a supplement, and are focused on gaining new experiences and demonstrating results. In essence this is a “trial by fire,” but one that the individual develops. The type of activities that are expected in a good IPP (as outlined in the MSP guidance) would include:

- Details to other parts of the organization
- Temporary assignments and lateral job changes
- Serving as team lead or chair of teams or committees
- Participating on special projects
- Volunteering to act in vacant managerial positions
- Volunteering for leadership in community or church organizations
- Attending off-duty classes
- Professional reading
- Use of videos, CDs, etc.

In addition, the importance of geographic mobility for developmental experiences is stressed and expected.

There are four training courses that are mandatory for each participant, covering diversity, sexual

harassment, hiring, and other personnel practices. There is also a mandatory reading list of documents pertaining to WAPA (e.g., the strategic plan).

WAPA also has used a limited team project focused on improving effective project management as an action learning component.

A semi-annual self-evaluation provides accountability for progress against the IPP and is submitted to the supervisor and to the senior manager. Corporate Training Director Ann Capps reviews the accomplishments and progress in development. The WAPA administrator also maintains a review of the development activities of the participants to ensure that senior leaders are supporting mobility and challenging assignments.

Lack of progress by the individual is one criterion for removal from the MSP as is removal from a managerial position. Completion occurs when all of the developmental activities in the IPP are accomplished within a three-year window.

Lessons

While relatively young, WAPA’s program has incorporated some unique factors into its MSP design and into its own culture that are noteworthy for a smaller organization considering how best to begin.

1. *Initiative by the senior leaders of sub-organizations is important in a large, complex organization.* The initiative and support of the administrator for a succession initiative has been key, as has the decision to proceed ahead of the slower moving initiative of the Department of Energy.

This is a common thread for all excellent succession efforts. For administrations, bureaus, or other types of sub-cabinet organizations, the politics, complexity, and accompanying inertia of a department-wide effort may likely call for initiative such as this when a need clearly exists. Large organizations also should resist the temptation to centralize succession programs where unique cultural factors exist and where individual initiative is moving ahead effectively.

The administrator not only took the lead in launching the leader MSP development and succession

initiative, but also has continued to do so. He frequently encourages his senior leaders, ensuring they are fully supportive of cross-functional assignments and engaged in monitoring individual progress. He also conducts conference calls with the program participants during the year and teaches courses in law and congressional relations. Moreover he and many of the senior leaders act as mentors for the participants.

2. *Voluntary “selection” can be effective in succession if done wisely.* The voluntary nature of the MSP is a fairly unique approach that offers both strengths and potential weaknesses.

For organizations contemplating launching a succession effort, a “whoever will come” approach makes such a launch occur more quickly and produces a larger talent pool.

In comparison, the PBGC launch of its succession program took longer to get to the starting line because of the time needed to agree on a central program design and because of the concern over any possible perception of favoritism for a particular office. In addition, managing the selection process required time for scheduling, executing, and counseling non-selectees.

The better programs in the private sector take the approach of focusing on the so-called “hi-pos”—high potential candidates—only. Simply because of the effort needed to manage such a program, most for-profit organizations make the practical and cost-beneficial decision to limit the pool being developed to the likely top candidates for future leadership.

The downside of the WAPA approach is that 15 percent of the voluntary participants have already dropped out, which may point to a number of factors that a more rigorous selection would have identified. Even in this streamlined approach to program design, managing over 30 individuals through some of the developmental and assessment activities is time-consuming for a small office and may not pay off for all participants or for the organization. However, the dropouts from the program that WAPA has experienced may be a less painful way to eliminate those lacking the necessary qualities.

3. *Self-development is an important component of any succession effort.* The predominance of self-development in the WAPA MSP design offers great benefits; however, it does have some risks as well.

By relying on individuals to develop their own program of leader development, WAPA has tapped into the initiative of future leaders. This is one method of sorting out those who are truly potential future leaders and willing to pay a price, from those who may realize that leadership is simply not their calling and at a low organizational cost. This may also prove to be a greater factor in self-motivation than a designed program would produce.

It should also be noted that the WAPA program for succession and leader development is not completely random nor is it subject to whim, but is firmly anchored in challenging job-based experiences and the 10 leader competencies. In short, it employs the research findings on how leaders are best grown.

The approach, however, places greater emphasis on the review process by supervisors and senior managers to understand the gaps in the individual's development and the kinds of experiences best suited to close those gaps. Some senior leaders understand this well; others likely do not, and in those cases the corporate training director is the one tapped to play this role.

4. *Accountability is needed for assessing progress.* WAPA has a system of accountability that is reasonably strong and is an important factor in identifying individual progress. Too often, leadership development is simply seen as completion of a program.

The system of accountability is a strong incentive for individuals to make the time to attend to their “important” development agenda in the face of sometimes “urgent” time demands on the job. It also invests supervisors and senior managers in supporting the development of their MSP participants and gives visibility to individual outcomes. While this may somewhat beg the question of the wider organization performance outcomes it nevertheless, has teeth and is an important factor in ensuring success.

The administrator related that he can already see results, with individuals taking on far broader responsibilities, seeking on their own to develop a strategic sense of the business, and working effectively with many stakeholders, including Congress.

5. *Job-based challenges must be supported by organizational mobility opportunity.* The emphasis on the importance of job-based experiences and the support for mobility in effecting these developmental experiences is a key WAPA insight and one that borrows from the research and best practices of outstanding organizations.

The Center for Creative Leadership has had a strong influence on the design of most of the better leader development programs in the country. The use of varied, challenging job experiences is the single most important method of developing leaders. This addresses one of the particular needs of WAPA that other organizations may have—a relatively constrained budget for more formal, albeit less effective training.

The fact that real work (challenging, outside the normal experience) is the foundation for leadership learning makes such measures very cost-effective. It does place greater emphasis on the “learning” aspect of such activities by requiring that participants discuss them with experienced leaders or observers to ensure that strengths and weaknesses are identified and that the lessons learned are raised up for future application in future assignments.

We turn now to a larger social service organization—one with a more traditional government role in the processing of claims, counseling clients, and providing financial entitlements—the Veterans Benefits Administration.

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

Mission Challenge

The Veterans Benefits Administration is one of three lines of business (health care, and burial and memorial service being the other two) in the Department of Veterans Affairs. This cabinet department is the second largest department in number of employees. The VBA is responsible for

the administration of services in the areas of disability payments to former servicepersons and their families as well as pensions to impoverished former military and their survivors, the guaranty of home loans, the provision of educational assistance, and the management of insurance programs and vocational rehabilitation for those disabled in service. It has approximately 12,000 employees located in 57 regional offices in every state, the headquarters office, and at a dozen military discharge centers. VBA is responsible for a benefits budget of over \$30 billion, most of it entitlements. It serves over 3 million former military members and their families (out of a total living veteran population of approximately 24 million).

In recent years, VBA has been the target of several critical congressional hearings fueled by veterans and service organization complaints and by external, independent reports from GAO and the National Academy of Public Administration. These criticisms have targeted VBA's continuing poor levels of service, the slowness of its benefits claims processing, the mounting backlogs of disability claims that have frustrated claimants' needs, and the mismanagement of its automation projects.

All of these sources of concern implied that leadership was in need of significant change. One report found that new automation and reengineering efforts were still likely to fail without significant human capital improvements and far stronger leadership. It was in that climate that five years ago, a well respected career Senior Executive, Joe Thompson, was elevated to the under secretary position from which he has sought to transform VBA.

The transformation of VBA has been centered on a grounding in its historic core values, of which VBA had lost sight. A central theme has been rekindling an awareness of the long history of assisting the men and women who fought for this country going back to the Revolutionary War. The leadership development strategy falls within that recommitment.

Approach

The approach to transformation, referred to by Under Secretary Thompson as “The Roadmap to Excellence,” has been an emphasis on service to people, streamlining and improving old-line

processes with a strong team component, shaping the culture to embed different attitudes and, particularly for our interest, new leadership and technical competencies that will help drive these changes. Thus, succession is one of the key components of the roadmap.

These improvements are characterized most clearly in the vision core values for VBA established three years ago:

Our **vision** is that the veterans whom we serve will feel that our Nation has kept its commitment to them; employees will feel that they are both recognized for their contribution and are part of something larger than themselves; and taxpayers will feel that we've met the responsibilities they've entrusted to us. Courage, honesty, trust, respect, open communication, and accountability will be reflected in our day-to-day behavior.

VBA used a highly collaborative process in developing a set of 10 core values that would characterize employees interactions with veterans and with each other and which are expected to be modeled by leaders. Four of the **core values** are especially relevant for a discussion of what VBA has taken as a new tack in its leader development and succession initiatives:

- We foster an environment that promotes personal and corporate initiative risk-taking and teamwork.
- We are open to change and flexible in our attitudes.
- Respect, integrity, trust, and fairness are hallmarks of all our interactions.
- We value a culture where everyone is involved, accountable, respected, and appreciated.

The establishment of a function dedicated to the development of people—technical training, general managerial, and leadership development—was a key element of this change. The formation of the Office of Employee Development and Training (ED&T) and the selection of Dr. George Wolohojian as its first director were the first initiatives taken in response to the needs expressed.

VBA also established the Veterans Benefits Academy in Baltimore, which focuses on non-technical and leadership/management training and development, and the Technical Training and Evaluation Staff Office, located in Orlando, which focuses more on technical and computer-based training.

Description

The general thrust of the development efforts by VBA has been toward building a learning organization in response to the climate of change—embedding the notion of continuous learning throughout one's career as a central feature.

The more formal leadership development approach is centered on a competency-based model to meet VBA's leadership succession planning requirements with a consistent set of competencies for both development and assessment of leaders. While the same generic competencies attend at each level of leadership, their expression in leader behaviors is progressive over time. VBA has used the five Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) as a basic foundation, but added two of their own that apply to their change requirements—Professional and Personal Growth, and Customer Service. (See Appendix I for further discussion.)

The VBA leadership succession program is presently comprised of four (and ultimately five) levels or phases of leadership development, from initial high-potential management candidates to SES development. This approach underscores the importance of continuous and progressive leadership learning. ED&T has developed these programs under the broad direction of the VBA Leadership Steering Group, comprised of senior executives and managers.

Each of the four current leadership development programs features some basic leadership learning principles and methods:

- individual and team action learning projects
- formal classroom training
- cross-functional and shadowing assignments
- mentoring
- stress on self-development actions

The VBA Succession Pyramid

Challenge 2001—While not entirely a leader development program (this would be closer to an organizational socialization initiative), this is intended for the hundreds of recently hired employees as well as others. It aims to foster a deeper awareness of VBA's historical/cultural mission in serving veterans, start to build communities of practice and learning, and begin the practice of continuous learning.

The five leadership development programs are:

- **Leadership Enhancement and Development (LEAD)**—for selected high-potential employees at the GS 9-12 level, providing exposure to the major strategic issues of the organization and using action learning team projects as a centerpiece of leader learning. The 25 selectees meet for a week at a time, three times during the nine-month program.
- **Introduction to Leadership**—includes a basic understanding of human resources policies and practices and a labor relations component for new or potential supervisors.
- **Division Level Management Training Program (DLMT)**—for mid-level employees ready for division supervisory responsibilities.
- **Assistant Director**—(planning stages)
- **SES Candidate Development**—a proactive response to the expected attrition in the VBA SES ranks focusing on the five core Executive Core Qualifications and lasting 12 to 18 months.

In each of these programs, targeted at different stages in a leader's career, individuals prepare a plan for development with their mentors. The plan seeks to capitalize on the application of principles presented in periodic seminars and practiced during the times between seminars, and on the identification of varied, challenging work assignments. A more detailed description of one of these programs—the LEAD Program—will be instructive. (See "The VBA LEAD Program" on pg. 63.)

Lessons

The challenge of transforming an old-line organization whose basic "business" is the processing of claims and applications and interacting with clients, primarily by correspondence and telephone, is a daunting one. The necessity for accuracy, speed, and a human component in customer service has led to a "high-tech, high-touch" response and a strong emphasis on developing leaders throughout their careers. There are three distinctive lessons from the VBA experience:

1. *Take a comprehensive approach to develop leaders at all levels.* VBA has invested in a continuous

approach to succession and leader development that grows leaders at critical career junctures—at all levels almost from the very beginning of the person's career. It also reflects the need to identify high potential younger leaders and to emphasize development of a broad pool (except incumbent SES members, which is a future developmental agenda item).

The importance of this approach is that it stands a much higher chance of inculcating a leader-centered culture throughout the organization because of the broad nature of the programs themselves; because of the emphasis on engaging leaders to be the mentors, coaches and trainers; and because of the extensive use of action learning team projects at the local office and nationally.

2. *Use a competency model as the basis for development of all leaders at all levels and align the behaviors with the strategic direction of change.*

A consistent and progressive leader competency model provides a clear understanding of behavioral and skill expectations for leaders—not simply for development but for performance as well. What will be key for VBA is whether the leaders demon-

The VBA LEAD Program

This is offered once each year to promising GS 9-12 employees. The first class was comprised of 25 individuals, selected by senior leaders from a pool of over 150 applicants. The application process itself is designed to elicit basic experiential and biographical data and to allow candidates to reflect on various topics such as the strategic challenges facing VBA, their career plans, successes they have experienced, and their interest in future leadership.

Each candidate is expected to do a personal essay reflection on “Is This for Me?” It is a means of encouraging each person to consider whether leadership is what they aspire to and to help them understand the implications for future diverse leadership learning experiences including career geographic and functional moves. This exercise confronts individuals with the need to be honest about both the rewards and the pitfalls of leadership and with their own motives.

The LEAD Program has three weeks of formal training seminars during its nine month duration with 10 separate and varied learning components:

1. **Introduction to other VA organizational elements**—This is done through senior-level speakers from throughout the VA and from site visits to different aspects of VA operations in the field, including hospitals and cemeteries.
2. **Mentor Relationship**—A unique web-based process helps to identify the best pairings combining complementary experiences and the individual’s desires. The mentor receives training, as does the mentee, to help gain organizational knowledge, develop a networking system, and to share experiences and advice along the way.
3. **Individual Development Plan (IDP)**—The IDP is based on feedback from personal assessment tools, and input from the mentor and home organization management.
4. **Team-building skills**—Each participant is assigned to work in teams on a variety of assignments, including strategic organizational issues, to help develop or enhance team-building skills, to strengthen leadership and interpersonal skills, and to provide a forum to explore contemporary management issues.
5. **Shadowing assignments**—Each participant selects his or her mentor, plus one of the division chiefs from the home station, preferably in a different division, to shadow for at least one week. The shadowing assignments are designed to give exposure to the challenges of managerial responsibilities and to different approaches to handling them by leaders outside of their normal organization experiences.
6. **Action learning assignments**—Either locally or at another location, office directors coordinate specific team-based assignments to provide work experiences that will strengthen leadership competencies (such as problem solving, conflict management, and written communication) through new challenges.
7. **Presentations**—Throughout the program, there are many opportunities to speak to the group and to senior officials through both spontaneous and planned presentations. As part of the final session of the program, there is a one-hour formal team presentation on the major action learning project.
8. **Management interviews**—Each participant conduct two interviews with senior management officials to gain management insights and knowledge to assist in developing a broader professional understanding.
9. **Assessment tools**—There are several forms of assessment (e.g., 360-degree assessments) used to help provide insights for team learning activities and for preparing the IDP.
10. **Self-study projects**—Several self-study projects are expected including extensive reading assignments and practical learning experiences conducted at the home office.

strating these competencies are actually the ones who advance and are rewarded or whether the “old culture” is reinforced by using the old (unwritten) criteria for advancement. The alignment of all components of the human capital system is critical to the success of a competency-based model.

3. The wide use of mentoring is a great enhancement to the potential success of leader development and engages the senior leaders more readily as key actors in the development of the next generation.

The use of mentoring in all of the leadership programs is important because it provides for training and orientation of the mentors and the mentees in certain behaviors that will be useful throughout. VBA has installed an extensive screening process for mentors and mentees that allows for a good match. The requirement to regularly engage each other and the clear description of expectations helps to frame the mentoring component so that it is aligned with the purposes of the leader development activities.

However, the extensive amount of leader development occurring throughout the organization makes it imperative that these mentoring responsibilities are seen as key requirements for senior leaders and not simply as additional duties to be fit in if convenient.

Social Security Administration (SSA)

Mission Challenge

SSA realized several years ago that it faced a turnover in its executive and senior leader ranks that dwarfed the magnitude of the problem in almost any other federal agency. As a result, it also got on top of the problem well before most agencies.

By way of comparison, SSA has a potential retirement-eligible population of 82 percent of the current SES rank leaders, 91 percent of the GS-15 senior managers, and 93 percent of the GS-14 senior managers. That this comes at a time when the workload is spiking with the generational wave of retirement eligibles, the growing ranks of those filing for disability, and the pressures for Social Security reform, makes the necessity for action on succession a strategic imperative.

Approach

SSA is one of the few agencies in government with a clearly developed strategic plan that links its long-term strategy with the development of future leaders. While the key operational thrusts of the agency’s strategic plan are to deliver customer-responsive world-class service, promote valued, strong, and responsive programs, and conduct effective policy development and research, the primary goal regarding the people who deliver the services and the programs is:

To be an employer that values and invests in each employee

SSA’s strategy to grow leaders has been ongoing for some time and arose out of the transition to becoming an independent agency in 1994. At the time, a GAO report targeted a lack of succession management and leader development as being major issues to tackle for the new organization.

Paul Barnes, one of the key line managers as regional director in Chicago and deputy regional director in Atlanta, has advocated for developing the next generation of leaders. Now, as SSA’s associate director for human resources, he leads the four programs that undergird the succession strategy. It is a strategy that includes developmental programs for leaders at all levels.

As one of the more mature leader development programs, they began with a focus on the SES candidates and the more senior leaders at the GS 13-15 levels. This initiative has now progressed to a program for the recruitment and initial development of future leaders and the development of first line supervisors and potential supervisors (GS 9-12). A key objective in all of this has been to break down the career single path developmental stovepipes that have long existed. Interviewees agreed that this paradigm shift has been the toughest cultural challenge to overcome.

Description

Like the VA, SSA has a comprehensive approach to developing leaders over the course of their careers, but it begins with accession into the federal ranks. The following four programs comprise the scope of the national succession and leader development process in SSA:

- Presidential Management Intern Program (PMI) for initial accession, GS 9
- Leadership Development Program (LDP), GS 9-12
- Advanced Leadership Program (ALP), GS 13-15
- SES Candidate Development Program (SESCDP)

These are each national-level programs and are primarily two years in duration. The particular focus of interest is in developing broader based leaders with people and customer service competencies as well as technical competency. In each case, they involve:

- An orientation to the particular career stage and the developmental challenges faced in SSA;
- Core training components geared to the level of need;
- The use of developmental experiences where individuals are taken off their job and placed into challenging assignments for on-the-job leadership learning; and,
- The use of senior mentors for coaching and advice.

There are also some distinctive components to each of the four programs.

PMI Program

Over the past several years, SSA has been recruiting 30-40 PMIs—the top ranking graduate school students who desire a career in public service. These are truly “the best and the brightest” and SSA has been investing in hiring over 10 percent of the selectees in this flagship OPM recruitment program. SSA says they are particularly looking for individuals with substantive life experience, as well as superior intellectual credentials.

Once at SSA, PMIs are jump-started into mid-level jobs but remain part of a centralized developmental pool where rotational assignments are used to give them varied experiences before being assigned to a permanent position at the end of the two-year program.

LDP and ALP Programs

In keeping with the SSA strategy to begin with the most senior replacement pools, the ALP was launched before the LDP and will take up to four more years to fully implement. The LDP is just emerging from the pilot stage and is on a similar timeline for full implementation. Both programs select applicants in a competitive process that engages senior leaders as selecting officials. The numbers selected are based on replacement projections, flexibility and range of experience and diversity.

Selectees for both of these programs are given temporary promotions and accept new assignments within 90 days of selection. This accomplishes the key developmental task of a new, challenging job-based experience. The added organizational benefit is that their position is also vacated and filled by another person who is also given a job-based development opportunity. The individuals revert to their original position and grade at the end of the two years if they do not find a position at their new, temporary grade.

Both programs also use specially designed structured interviews and self-assessments of the Executive Core Qualifications competencies as a basis for initial selection and later for individual development plans. They also make extensive use of action learning in cluster teams of individuals selected for these programs.

SES Candidates Program

This leader development program is announced government-wide and for selected applicants results in a temporary GS 15 position. The first phase attracted over 400 applicants, 100 finalists and a final class of 35. Senior SSA leaders make the final selections.

Similar to the design for the ALP and LDP, selectees are moved to occupy temporary positions, providing opportunity for a similar “ripple effect” for others assuming temporary positions that have been vacated. For their rotational job assignments, SES Candidates take one temporary position outside of SSA (public or private sector), in operational areas, in the headquarters, and in hands-on jobs serving customers.

There is also an intentional exposure to the most senior executives in SSA and to the strategic agenda and decisions.

Selection into SES positions at the completion of the program is the measure of success used. By all accounts this has been highly successful in accomplishing the initial outcomes. SSA has become a benchmark for several other federal agencies.

Lessons

Given that SSA is further along in addressing succession, there are certain lessons that are highly useful to draw from its experiences:

1. Make a strong business case for leader development.

Too often, anything that sounds like training is relegated into second or third tier priority which cannot withstand competition from operational issues. SSA realized that a massive turnover in its senior leader ranks would ill prepare it for the demographic challenges that all statistical models predicted for its future workload. The political sensitivity of Social Security policy alternatives only enhanced the severity of the challenge. But it was in initially tying the need for leader development to the provision for succession that set the stage for today's success. This priority and the business case made for the strategic plan communicated to decision-makers and supervisors the importance of investing in the development of people at all levels.

2. Get clear senior executive buy-in along with their deep involvement.

SSA chose as its lead champion an experienced operational leader, Paul Barnes, to head the succession initiatives, rather than an HR expert. Barnes had a track record of growing leaders and respect among his peers.⁸ As a result, he was better able to engage other senior leaders as mentors and instructors in their various programs. Senior leaders are active participants as mentors and as selecting officials.

3. Use an approach that is grounded in practical research on "best practices" that apply to the public sector.

In this case, SSA grounded its approach in many of the findings from the Center for Human Resources

Management at the National Academy of Public Administration. Developed in a series of publications during the 1990s, the research found that there is great value in learning from others in the public sector and private sector and adopting the basic principles and approaches where appropriate to the culture and needs of the organization.

4. Challenging, rotational job assignments are not only the best method of growing leaders, but if properly structured can have a ripple developmental effect.

SSA has a unique and innovative approach to the use of job-based developmental experiences. By temporarily promoting participants and by centrally controlling their development, they not only can use different experiences as development tools, they open up opportunities for others as well. This may well be the best of the best practices discussed in this report.

Making Sense of It All: Reaching Conclusions for Action

What Does It All Mean?

This is where it gets difficult. Knowing something, even if it is successfully done by others, is no guarantee that we can do it successfully. It's much like riding a bicycle.

To extend the bike metaphor a bit, what we have done in this report is simply to describe, in some detail, what it takes to ride a bicycle and how others have done so. But with 10 examples or even 20, we would be no closer to learning how to balance and ride without falling. That takes learning by doing. It's the same way with growing leaders.

At some point, these findings do not make sense until an organization actually begins to do the hard work of finding out what works best for them by taking action. This section is meant to offer additional insights for organizational learning by comparing initiatives in the five public sector organizations and contrasting them with the best lessons and examples in the private sector.

It is hoped that the distilled wisdom will provide actions for organizations to take in developing the next generation of leaders.

We turn now to a brief comparison of what we have seen in the five different public sector organizations.

Key Principles and Best Practices in the Public Sector

Key Principles

The following lessons summarize the exemplary leadership development principles gleaned through

the experiences of the five case studies. Embedded within them are several instances of “best practices,” implications, and methods that these and other federal agencies have used to produce and to continue to produce excellent results.

Progress with this component of human capital will certainly take time and persistence. The six principles noted here are perhaps better considered “habits”—the underlying truths, if you will, of thought and action in leadership development and succession management that need to be applied both consistently and together as a whole. They underscore the findings in “Leaders Growing Leaders.”⁹

Best Practices

There seems to be an endless fascination with success and “how to” become like the best companies. This movement probably began with the popular success of Tom Peters and Bob Waterman's *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best Run Companies*. Unfortunately for the learning enterprise, a decade later many of those companies had gone out of business or were swallowed whole. In truth, what is often posed as “best practices” are more realistically what noted executive educator and author Dave Ulrich calls “interesting practices.”

In some ways comparing the practices of the five exemplary public sector organizations with each other can lead to deceptive conclusions—much as contrasting them with exemplary private sector organizations can. This is one reason that I have also tried to examine underlying principles, which are more enduring. So-called best practices can be

Six Principles in Growing Leaders

- It is fundamentally senior leaders themselves who must provide the leadership for a succession initiative aligned with and helping to drive forward the strategic change direction of the organization.
- The framework for an excellent leadership development program is based upon significant, challenging, and varied job-based experiences, intentionally chosen to advance the competencies and to test the character of future leaders.
- Senior leaders must assume responsibility for the development of future leaders as coaches, mentors, teachers—and most of all, as exemplars—within and without leader development programs.
- Strategic partnerships between a cadre of senior leaders and the HR and development organization is key to success in the design of the succession approach, in the selection of future leaders for development experiences, and in the tracking of their progressive development needs.
- Both the competencies needed for the leaders of the future and the outcome measures used to identify success (and accountability) must be aligned with the strategic direction of the organization and must be clearly defined as a “business case.”
- Leaders must persistently and patiently lead not simply in the strategic direction but in the change in culture—forming a strategy for cultural change, dispelling the myths, identifying the dislocations between word and action and their underlying assumptions, and championing a long-term investment in every aspect of the area of human capital to which leadership and cultural change are the keys to wider transformation.

helpful for insight, but one clear finding is that each organization made decisions about those practices that recognized its own unique circumstances. Size, resources, past experience, change imperatives, and individual culture—each of these has helped to shape the varying approaches taken, and the resulting development and succession initiatives.

It should also be noted that most of these succession programs are relatively new and the lessons of their experience are still being sifted. Even within the same organization (and here I am referring to both private sector and public sector organizations), the existing culture and mission challenges can vary significantly, thus shaping the practices that are adopted.

Observations

There are a few consistent practices used by all of the exemplary organizations. The use of senior mentors, the identification of behavioral leader competencies for development (in some cases keyed to different levels of pending responsibility), the use of well targeted internal training courses,

and the use of self-development study or reading are all consistent practices. In addition, exposure to the strategic agenda and to officials of the organization and the use of individualized development plans are widely used.

But beyond these, the practices and their combinations vary widely including the choice of whom to develop for the future leader pool and when development for leadership begins (i.e., at recruitment and at all levels, or only for a selected level of the organization).

Two comments are appropriate here. First, as noted, the mission challenges vary among the organizations, as does the amount of resources available within the organizations. In general, the larger organizations have committed larger amounts of resources to succession and development and tend to have more comprehensive programs for leaders at all levels. This is similar to findings for the private sector.

Second, we also see that these leader programs are still, except for SSA, in the early stages. The reason-

Table 1: Leader Development Practices by Selected Agencies

| Development Practice | PBGC | USCG | WAPA | VBA | SSA |
|---|------|------|------|-----|-----|
| Rotational temporary assignments managed by senior leaders | √ | | √ | | |
| Succession/development at all levels | | √ | | √ | √ |
| 360 feedback | √ | √ | √ | | |
| Action learning team projects | √ | | √ | √ | |
| Exposure to strategic issues agenda | √ | | √ | √ | √ |
| Individual development plan framework | √ | | √ | √ | √ |
| Use of senior mentors/advisors | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Self development—volunteer church/community leadership | √ | | √ | | |
| External leadership programs | √ | √* | √ | | |
| Internal training courses | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Development in specific leader competencies | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Self development—readings/self study | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Observation of senior leaders | √ | | √ | √ | |
| Full-time job rotations managed by senior leaders | | √ | √ | | √ |
| Limited selection of high potentials for leader development | √ | | | √** | √ |
| Wide and voluntary participation in succession programs | | √ | √ | √ | |

* Professional military education for senior officers with other military branches.

** In the LEAD Program.

able expectation is that given success in meeting the mission challenges through developing future leaders, there will be a widening of the types of practices and the scope of the programs. That remains a speculation, however.

Before positing some conclusions from these comparisons, we turn now to a brief contrast of public sector practices and approaches with those of the private sector. But first, we need to consider one question that hangs over such comparisons: Can the public sector and the private sector be compared?

Uniqueness

What lies behind this question is another question I often hear particularly in benchmarking visits: “The federal government doesn’t have a ‘bottom line,’ so what can we learn from the private sector that can ever be applied to us?”

Admittedly, there are unique factors in the public sector. Many would cite the frequent political turnover at the top of organizations, the number of oversight mechanisms that agencies must contend with, the different types of change challenges that are now occurring, the lack of a Profit & Loss Statement for most agencies, and perhaps a more

complex political environment. But the more accurate answer is that the principles and practices of how to grow leaders are not significantly different in organizations. This is borne out by both the research to date and by the results in growing leaders where similar practices have been used by different organizations in the public and private sectors.

Key Principles and Best Practices in the Private Sector

This synopsis of leadership development best practices in the private sector is drawn from a variety of sources.¹⁰

Key Principles

The following principles are deemed by the private sector as being the most important success factors:

- More than anything, by a factor of 10, development of leaders is based on challenging job experiences.
- The wholehearted support and consistent involvement of senior leaders is the single most important factor abetting development through varied and challenging experiences.
- The intentional encouragement of key relationships between younger candidates and older leaders is fundamental.
- Conducting rigorous and continuous evaluation of outcomes based on sound metrics builds commitment.
- Linking leadership to the strategic direction of the organization and incorporating development of key leadership competencies into the specifics of the strategic plan ensures a compelling business case.
- Involving line managers in the design and overall approach is critical to gaining widespread support and culture adaptation.
- Maximizing the opportunity for feedback at all levels of leadership continues to inject both reality and an understanding of progress, and identifies any gaps in fostering continued development.
- A self-development ethos is just as critical to success as the support of senior leaders.

- Development to maximize potential is of fundamental importance as a strategy for recruitment and retention of the best employees.

Best Practices

These are the succession and leader development practices that stand out as most consistently employed to good success:

- Action learning
- 360-degree feedback
- Observing senior executives in action
- Involvement in action with the organization's strategic priorities
- Cross-organizational assignments or networking
- Cross-functional rotations
- Individual development plans
- Coaching and mentoring (primarily informal)
- Leveraging internal resources (e.g., in-house leaders) and technology

Observations

What this surface comparison shows is that there are great similarities in the developmental practices between excellent organizations in the public and private sectors. This should not be surprising because, in almost every instance, the design for succession and leader development in each agency examined was preceded by extensive research and benchmarking.

The major difference between the two sectors (at least as of this writing) has been the level of commitment to the strategic importance of people, in general, and of succession and leader development, specifically.¹¹

While it is a top priority for the private sector, GAO found in the latest round of strategic and performance plans examined that, for the government, succession remains a work in progress and is not yet a priority for immediate action.¹² Similarly, the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board recently found that the excellent recruitment program for the best and brightest, the Presidential Management Intern Program, was not using future leadership and

What the Private Sector Can Teach About Leadership Development

Developing leaders can drive the successful strategic direction of an organization.

Senior leaders' involvement in managing challenging job experiences as a leader development approach in succession is of primary importance.

Clear organizational measures of leader development success and of senior leader accountability are key to effective alignment.

Excellent leader development and succession require the commitment of time and thought by senior leaders.

management potential as a factor in the candidate selection process.

The highlights from the five selected agencies and the brief comparison with the research on exemplary companies provide the following insights that can help shape public sector actions by an agency whose senior leaders are seriously committed to growing the next generation of leaders. The conclusions from the research lead to the recommendations for action by each organization in government in the next section.

1. **Excellent public sector organizations base their practices consistently on the proven principles for growing leaders found both in research and in the best private sector organizations.**

The primary principles in evidence are:

- Use challenging job-based experiences, selected by senior leaders, as a development strategy;
- Involve future leaders in a substantial way in the organization's strategic agenda with senior leaders as mentors and through real action learning team projects;
- Use the Executive Core Qualification leader competencies as a template for development—typically using the same competencies by which all senior leaders

are selected and held accountable (alignment).

2. **Excellent public sector organizations make a business case for succession and leader development.**

In fundamental ways, the better organizations have built a foundation for success and for cultural and organizational change linked to their strategic agenda and to results. They understand the need for both programmatic excellence and cultural understanding as a foundation for change.

3. **Excellent organizations hold themselves accountable for results in growing leaders and begin by involving senior leaders in significant ways to ensure there is accountability and strategic alignment.**

While clear, measurable indication of successful results in growing leaders and their direct link to operational imperatives—e.g., serving customers, providing a great place for employees to work and produce, and achieving important bottom line mission results—are still a work in progress, senior leaders involvement in these organizations is a clear signal that growing leaders is of strategic importance and ensures wider commitment and results.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are targeted to two different audiences: first, individual government organizations and second, organizations with government-wide program or policy responsibility. These are systemic recommendations that are aligned and interrelated.

The focus of this research has been on the practices and principles of growing leaders in excellent public sector organizations. What I would recommend to individual organizations or components of organizations flows directly from these findings. They are recommendations that can be acted upon immediately and certainly within the next two years.

Following these individual organizational recommendations are recommendations that are for government-wide action, based on the basic principles that have been already clearly identified. Several of the more senior leaders have observed in the course of their discussions with me that there are some fundamental policy changes that would be extraordinarily helpful, even essential, for all agencies. For this purpose they are included for consideration, recognizing that government-wide action is notoriously difficult to achieve and they are likely longer term in nature.

Finally, since these six recommendations are ultimately systemic in nature, I recommend that the President's Management Council recruit a cadre of senior career executives (active or retired) to work with them and to help take the lead in energizing both a shared vision and certain action across government as a critical investment in the future of the

public service to the American people. This would be a legacy well worth committing to.

For individual government organizations:

1. Each organization should base their succession and leader development practices consistently on the proven principles for growing leaders:

- Challenging, job-based experiences selected by senior leaders as a development strategy;
- The involvement of future leaders in a substantial way with senior leaders in the organization's strategic agenda, as mentors and through real action learning team projects;
- The use of Executive Core Qualification leader competencies as a template for development—those that are the same competencies by which senior leaders are selected and held accountable (alignment).

It must be noted that the widespread commitment to and use of managing challenging job experiences (not simply “shadowing” for example) as a leader development approach orchestrated by senior leaders themselves is much further along as the *sine qua non* of leader development in the private sector.

As we have seen, the range and extent of practices varies widely depending on the mission challenges each organization faces, their culture, and their current strengths. But the selection of “best practices” themselves may be less important than

understanding the fundamental leader learning principles that lie behind them, and that to be a leader a person needs to see real leaders in action.

2. Make a business case for succession and leader development and ground it in a real imperative that will urge action by senior leaders.

In fundamental ways, we have seen that the better organizations have gone well down the road in building a foundation for success and for cultural and organizational change by linking it to the strategic agenda and to real results. They have built their strategies not as a “good thing to do,” but as a driver of the mission. This alignment as a business case is critical to engage senior leaders in spearheading the effort and moving leader development from being an initiative for the HR organization or the trainers and educators to try to sell.

This can be seen in the fact that each of the agencies examined has embarked on the long path of developing their leaders because of strategic mission imperatives and has formed strategies that align with those mission challenges. In other words, they do not simply start succession programs without making the clear business case. This must be the beginning point not only for success but for energetic senior leader involvement all along the way.

3. Each organization and their senior leaders must hold themselves accountable for results in growing leaders. This begins by involving key senior leaders right from the beginning, but it cannot end there.

The involvement of a few champions of the need to grow future leaders, then a widening circle of senior leaders, is the means to speak volumes to the rest of the organization. That alone fosters accountability for forward movement with excellence. After that, each organization will need to declare clear, measurable indications of successful results—not only in growing leaders, but also identifying the direct and indirect links to operational imperatives—serving customers, providing a great place for employees to work and produce, and achieving important bottom line mission results. These are the ultimate purposes for any investment in growing people as leaders.

The commitment to the development and rigorous use of meaningful measures, and the level of accountability for senior leaders and all employees, are the key factors. Such rigor in meaningful measures of the impact of developing leaders, particularly in holding senior leaders accountable for developing those around them, must be seen not only as a leader’s legacy, but as a non-negotiable responsibility.¹³

For government-wide action:

What often causes paralysis in the federal government is the need for wider systemic changes in policy that everyone recognizes must occur. While this doesn’t necessarily preclude action by individual organizations with an innovative bent, it is often used as an explanation for inaction when so many priorities compete for attention. The whole area of people is one such issue that has cried out for wider changes for many years, but eluded even the broad reinvention agenda of the last eight years.

To date, the response to this situation has been varied. For example, several organizations have sought individual human resource policy flexibilities. This tack has been used where agencies have either unique challenges or unique political clout. Temporary and demonstration projects are also ways that the “one size fits all” rules are sometimes waived, if only for a time. The organizations profiled in this report have, for the most part, worked around any government-wide impediments without seeking any waivers.

But, government-wide, the response to this need has been a mixed message on leadership, with downsizing of the manager and SES ranks being the most visible message. So far, meaningful changes that benefit people (Civil Service Reform) and allow government to be even minimally competitive with the private sector for the best and brightest (and maybe even that assumption needs reexamination) have languished. There is an apparent lack of policy priority for human capital and succession that is only now beginning to be addressed in policy circles. In short, wider changes are wanted, but it’s tough to get agreement on how to do it.

Based on the track record, widespread changes that support the development of leaders are not likely to

be realized. That is why the first task of a leader is still to grow other leaders, whether or not the senior leader's own organization or even the federal government is fully supportive—in culture or in policy.

Nevertheless, an optimistic reading of the climate for change in human capital government-wide would lead to at least the following recommendations for action at the federal level. These recommendations emerge directly from the implications of the research on the essential principles and practices for growing leaders. The timing, opportunity, and needs all have coalesced to act on the following initiatives.

For the President's Management Council:

4. Provide a clear mandate to career Senior Executives to take the lead in growing their successors and incorporate this human capital initiative into a government-wide business case spearheaded by the President's Management Council.

Senior leaders in the career public service often see themselves—and are seen by others—as change implementers rather than change leaders. In other words, they are often seen more in the manager role than the leader role. It is one of the myths of leadership development that is unique to the public sector, where over 3,000 political appointees occupy very senior government leadership positions—and this at a time of downsizing in the career manager ranks. (See Myth 6 in Appendix II.)

And while the new Executive Core Qualifications make it clear that those in the SES ranks and those being developed for senior leadership are expected to lead change, lead and develop people, and focus on results, the reality of senior leaders being responsible for growing their successors has not yet penetrated the culture deeply enough except in rare cases. The change leaders identified in this report—Joe Thompson at VBA, Paul Barnes at SSA, Admiral James Loy in the Coast Guard, John Seal at PBGC, and Mike Hacsckaylo at WAPA—are the exceptions still.

As the research and experience show, leaders primarily grow by exposure to challenging job-based experiences and by observing leaders in action.

This a long-term proposition, but by the nature of political leadership, there is frequently turnover and often a shorter-run focus on initiating complex policy initiatives within election cycles. This is even truer for those at the assistant secretary or comparable levels than for cabinet secretaries. While the contemporaries of government senior political leaders in the private sector might be responsible for developing their successors, there is no comparable tradition in government. This is one of the factors that makes the challenge of leadership development in the public sector unique.

I need to be clear at this point. There have been and are many extraordinarily good leaders in the political ranks who have done an excellent job of leading change and in growing leaders in the career ranks—James Lee Witt at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Phil Diehl at the U.S. Mint come immediately to mind. Colin Powell and Paul O'Neill certainly will be included among them as well. They are not only gifted leaders in their own right, they have stayed the course (or, in the case of Powell and O'Neill, likely will) to build the momentum for change over several years and leave a legacy of stronger career leaders after they depart.

While the George W. Bush administration has made a proposal to reduce the number of political positions to approximately 2,000, that will likely not change the culture of expectations for leadership development. The recommendation here is to establish a clear mandate to Senior Executives that one of their primary tasks in the next three years will be to grow their successors. This is an initiative that can best be taken by the President's Management Council on behalf of the President.

For the Office of Personnel Management:

5. Make mid-level manager, senior leader and executive mobility a requirement for assumption of future SES leadership responsibility.

This was a proposal that was offered in the last administration for the Senior Executive ranks but was quickly taken off the table. It needs to be reexamined in light of today's reality of how future leaders develop.

Mobility is a key to development of leaders as each of these five organizations has demonstrated in one way or another—intentional moves to new and challenging job-based experiences (not necessarily geographical). It is also a norm among the better private sector organizations we have reviewed. It isn't simply a perk nor is it a means to provide greater variety for managers and executives with an itch to move. It is critical to development and to breaking down the stovepiped barriers of culture that permeate almost every organization in some way. For the effective would-be executive, such opportunity is not a threat but an opportunity. But it takes leadership from the top by OPM and support from Senior Executives themselves as we have seen. Given purposeful policy direction from OPM this becomes a task not for the HR shops, but for the senior leadership of organizations like the five studied.

As we have seen in the leader development path, this opportunity must begin early on with mid-level managers or even with incoming future leaders. Movement from operational field assignments to staff assignments in the headquarters; rotation to other agencies or to other branches or levels of government; exchange assignments with leading private sector organizations—these should be the norm for progression to senior leadership. The days of growing expertise in one functional stovepipe or one agency alone should be drawing to a close.

If pay disparity is to be an issue for senior government leaders, then the career challenge disparity needs to be a gap that is also closed.

6. Form a volunteer cadre of retiring Senior Executives and those who have already retired to consult back on a part time basis to government organizations as coaches, teachers and mentors of the successor generations.

Many observations have been made about the generation of leaders that is about to pass from the scene or has already departed and the resulting knowledge and leadership gap. Yet, current provisions make it extremely difficult for these senior leaders to consult back to their organizations on a part time basis—a common practice in the private sector. I have found that many senior people have a great passion for public service and there are likely many who would accept an offer to serve as men-

tors, coaches, and teachers to help bring along the next generation of leaders.

This, as discussed, is also one of the very best sources for developing future leaders. These experienced leaders are people with the wisdom, the commitment, and the credibility. These are the people who will have the time and inclination to do what their present challenging jobs often deter—grow the next generation. Steps need to be taken now by OPM to revise the policies and to knock down the current barriers. OPM must also lead an effort with individual organizations to recruit those current and former leaders with a bent toward growing others, and to help prepare through selected training sponsored by OPM and the Federal Executive Institute to give back to the next generation from what they have received.

Appendix I: VBA Leader Competencies by Level

| Role/Scope | Leading Change | Leading People | Managing for Results | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| All employees including team leaders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity and innovation • Flexibility • Resilience • Adaptability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict management • Cultural awareness • Integrity/honesty • Teamwork • Commitment to people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability • Decisiveness • Problem solving • Bias for action • Judgement • Technical skills | |
| First-Line Managers/Coaches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages innovation • Creative thinking • Implements change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowers others • Team building • Develops people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk management • Technical credibility • Information-based management | |
| Mid-Level Managers (e.g., Division Chiefs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic thinking • Establishes direction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops managers/coaches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing organizational performance goals | |
| Directors/Executives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External awareness • Vision • Benchmarking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeling organization values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal setting • Monitoring organizational performance | |

| | Business Acumen | Building Coalitions, Communications | Professional and Personal Growth | Customer Service |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal skills • Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to learn • Continuous learning • Personal development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to veterans and families • Responsive to veterans |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influencing • Negotiating • Partnering | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes learning • Coaches employees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes excellent customer service |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource management • Technology management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunities for learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowers others to take action |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative learning environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaks down barriers to good service • Establishes customer-oriented culture |

Appendix II: Leadership Myths and Truths

This material is intended for those who want a more extensive exploration of the “why” issues in leader development. It is framed as a discussion of myth and truth. A bibliography is included for further background reading.

The basic principles or “lessons” for growing leaders and for initiating and managing an excellent program of succession are the antithesis of some

well-honed myths about leadership. As we have seen these myths are dispelled by experience and results, which provide the foundation from which these lessons are drawn for others to apply within their own organization’s culture.

For each myth there are key lessons of experience that contradict it.

Myths

Myths have always existed in societies as a means of explaining the seemingly unexplainable. When the ancient Greeks and Romans could not adequately understand why things happened, they posited the presence of gods—who watched over mankind and interacted with humans (often capriciously and with similar motives to humans). Both the Greeks and later the Romans were also fascinated with heroic leaders and would ascribe their skills to some form of human connection with the gods. Hence, Achilles was half god and half man, but also an archetype for all leaders.

While modern man tends to denigrate such naiveté, we still have our own myths that upon examination do not hold up any better under scrutiny. The problem is that many believe these myths and then implant them in the very marrow of their organizations—the culture. When applying the lessons of growing leaders to their own situations, senior leaders need to confront the myths that are likely present, if unspoken.

The Six Leadership Myths

Myth 1: Leaders are born, not made.

The research of John Kotter, The Center for Creative Leadership, and others demonstrates that early experiences and even genetic wiring have very little to do with shaping a leader. Other than basic intelligence, few things are predictive of future leadership ability. Leaders can be and are being developed, and much research and experience has demonstrated the falsity of this pervasive myth. But it is still an excuse for doing little or nothing and letting nature take its course.

Myth 2: If leaders can be grown, they develop needed skills by attending leadership development training courses; the more expensive, the better the result.

Leaders are grown—say both the research findings and the applied lessons of that research in hundreds of excellent organizations—by the lessons of challenging and varied experiences, by the relationships they forge with senior leaders, and, most surprisingly, by the hardships of career and life experiences. Training courses (even the ones with the cachet of reputation and good marketing) are

more like the teaspoon of salt in the pound of bread dough—a necessary catalyst but a relatively small part that is not tangibly evident in the outcome.

Myth 3: If leaders can be grown, the best people to accomplish this task are (a) trainers; (b) consultants; (c) the HR organization; (d) all of the above.

The reason that this is a myth is that the answer is (e) none of the above. The truth is that *the best people to accomplish this task are experienced senior leaders, themselves*. Experienced leaders have credibility, real life context, and understanding of the culture. They embody the core values and are committed to the core purpose of the organization and of public service. Senior leaders are not only exemplars of good leadership, but they act as coaches, mentors, and even teachers in the process of growing other leaders. That is how the best organizations produce leaders of the future.

It takes leaders to grow other leaders.

To be sure, senior leaders forge strategic partnerships with the HR shop, and use trainers and consultants as well as outside leader development courses. But the key players in all of this are the senior leaders themselves—throughout the organization. (That’s one indicator, by the way, of a leader-centered culture).

Myth 4: Leaders are people who have gained expertise and capability in their field. (Its corollary is that there is serious career risk in moving to another functional area, to another agency, or to the field from the headquarters, and vice versa.)

The typical career path of most Senior Executives confirms the existence of this myth in the federal government: advancement to a senior leadership position within one career field and within one organization and often within either a “field” milieu or a “headquarters” milieu.

This myth is disproved rather simply. Get together some future (early to mid-career) leaders and ask them to describe the “great” leaders they have worked for and the “lousy” leaders. Having done this on a number of occasions, I can predict the results.

First, the qualities that people seek in those they will follow voluntarily are not those of capability and expertise in a chosen field, but those of character: integrity, courage, balance, emotional stability, caring and empathy, selfless service, and humility.

The whole subject of how to grow character in leaders is one that deserves separate treatment in far greater length. Suffice it to say that what successful organizations have found is that leaders with depth of character and capability, those with high EQ (emotional quotient), are most likely to be those who have been grown by varied and highly challenging experiences, including learning from life’s hardships.

Often these leaders have gained a measure of *humility* by the occasional opportunity to learn something completely outside of their core expertise and to call upon those around them (rather than relying on their own expertise) for assistance in learning. Or perhaps they learn courage when asked to take on a challenge where failure is a real option and staying put offers security. Or they may learn *integrity* in a meaningful way when faced with complex ambiguity in an unfamiliar political or global environment that causes them to fall back upon what lies at the core of themselves and the organization—purpose and values. Or they learn to micromanage their team (among the deadliest of the negatives for “lousy” leaders) and to *trust* their people because they are no longer the resident experts.

In short, most leadership development patterns in government show that growing expertise in a single field has been the road to SES and to (apparent) external success. While it may still be an accurate description of the prevailing milieu today, it also confuses “great” leadership with position and rank and career success and flies in the face of the experience of the best organizations. Leadership excellence is not dependent on rank—it is a deception for some of those aspiring to lead.

Myth 5: Leadership is a “soft” skill that defies the tougher challenges of a performance management orientation and the measurement of hard results. (The corollary to this is that leader development is a task for those in the “soft” functions—HR and training—and not

worth the time of senior leaders who engage in the “hard” functions like internal and external budget negotiations.)

The track record of those companies and more recently those federal organizations, that take leadership development seriously and link it to measurable outcomes is far superior to those who don't. What began more than a decade ago as an intuitive response to the need for a different type of leader to transform organizations to meet the challenge of change has now become an established understanding.

Myth 6: Senior Executives are not really the change leaders in their organizations, it is political appointees. If future leaders are to be grown, this is an initiative for the political cadre.

As we have seen, this is one leadership and leader development challenge that is the exclusive province of the public sector (the military and some law enforcement and intelligence agencies aside).

Paul Light has brought a consistent message over the years that the excessive growth in the layers of government with political appointees, Schedule C political support staff, and the use of non-career SES positions to augment political appointments have all worked to the detriment of effective public service in terms of accountability. For growing leaders, this is also true and has two chilling effects related directly to how leaders are grown over time.

One impact is that the initiative for growing leaders passes to those who are least able to invest significant time and energy in what is a long-term proposition. Political leaders have only a short time to implement the policies they wish to enact, and there is little hope of an immediate payoff in growing leaders. And as with every conclusive statement, there are fortunately some good exceptions to the rule—James Lee Witt at FEMA being a most recent example.

A second impact is that the challenging experiences that are so central to growing mature senior career leadership in the SES ranks are often confined primarily to those who are political. This is particularly true where political leaders who are leery of the incumbents do not overcome their ini-

tial suspicions of the career bureaucrats and isolate them from substantive discussions, meetings, and policy decision making. Where these responsibilities are seen as those of senior career leaders, the outcome is quite different.

Nevertheless, this is a myth that the public sector must work hard to overcome if the next generation of leaders is to be grown and if Senior Executives are to see this as their task. Senior career leaders must gain a mindset that is similar to that held by most general and flag officers in the military, who clearly see themselves as the stewards of the development of the next generation to follow them and take that role very seriously.

That attitude and mindset is missing among the majority of the career SES ranks. The culture of the bifurcation of leadership between career and political is still a conundrum in many ways. To some extent, the challenge is to draw back on the incoming administration's understanding of the “spoils” due them; to some extent it is to provide more opportunity for leadership by careerists through both better cooperation and better opportunity through reducing the sheer number of political appointees.

Endnotes

1. Ray Blunt, "Leaders Growing Leaders: Preparing the Next Generation of Public Service Executives" (IBM Center for The Business of Government, May 2000).
2. U.S. General Accounting Office, *High Risk: An Update* (GAO-01-263, January 2001).
3. U.S. Office of Personnel Management, *Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness, Supervisors in the Federal Government: A Wake-Up Call*, (January 2001).
4. IBM Center for The Business of Government, *Results of the Government Leadership Survey: A 1999 Survey of Federal Executives*, (June 1999), p. 4.
5. John Kotter, *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management*, (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1993).
6. Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership, 2nd Edition*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992). These findings have been endorsed for several years by the leading companies in the private sector and help explain the great interest that has been shown in recent years in making the business case for growing leaders.
7. Mid-level and senior Coast Guard officers attend the professional military education senior service schools of the other services (e.g., the National War College, the Navy Command and Staff College).
8. See *Leaders Growing Leaders* for a further discussion of Barnes' approach to growing leaders.
9. Blunt, *ibid.*
10. The following sources have been used as a basis for the research in this section: Cynthia D. McCauley, Russ S. Moxley, and Ellen Van Velsor, eds., *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998); Jay A. Conger and Beth Benjamin, *Building Leaders: How Successful Companies Develop the Next Generation*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999); The Corporate Leadership Council, *The Next Generation: Accelerating the Development of Rising Leaders*, (Washington, D.C.: The Advisory Board Company, 1997); David Giber, Louis Carter, and Marshall Goldsmith, eds., *Best Practices in Leadership Development: Case Studies, Instruments, Training*, (Lexington, Mass.: Linkage Press, 1999); "Developing Leaders in the War for Talent," a presentation by McKinsey Company at the Wharton Leadership Conference, June 7, 2001; and the General Accounting Office, *Human Capital: Key Principles from Nine Private Sector Organizations*, (GAO/GGD-00-28, January 2000).
11. See particularly the General Accounting Office, *Human Capital: Key Principles from Nine Private Sector Organizations*, (GAO/GGD-00-28, January 2000) and The National Academy of Public Administration, *Managing Succession and Developing Leadership: Growing the Next Generation of Public Service Leaders*, (September 1997).
12. General Accounting Office, *High-Risk Series: An Update* (GAO-01-263, January 2001).
13. See Larry Bossidy, widely respected CEO of Allied Signal Corporation in his recent article in *Harvard Business Review*, "The One Job a CEO Cannot Delegate."

Bibliography

Conger, Jay A., and Beth Benjamin. *Building Leaders: How Successful Companies Develop the Next Generation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishing, 1999.

Covey, Stephen. *Principle Centered Leadership*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990.

Giber, David, Louis Carter, and Marshall Goldsmith, eds. *Best Practices in Leadership Development Handbook*. Lexington, Mass.: Linkage Press, 1999.

Kotter, John. *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management*. New York: The Free Press, 1990.

Kotter, John P., and James L. Heskett. *Corporate Culture and Performance*. New York: The Free Press, 1992.

McCall, Morgan W., Jr., Michael M Lombardo, and Ann M. Morrison. *The Lessons of Experience: How Successful Executives Develop on the Job*. New York: Lexington Books, 1988.

McCall, Morgan W., Jr. *High Flyers: Developing the Next Generation of Leaders*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1998.

McCauley, Cynthia D., Russ S. Moxley, and Ellen Van Velsor, eds. *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998.

Vicere, Albert A., and Robert M. Fulmer. *Leadership by Design: How Benchmark Companies Sustain Success Through Investment in Continuous Learning*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1997.

Websites:

The Center for Creative Leadership,
<http://www.ccl.org/>

The Council for Excellence in Government,
Leadership Development,
<http://www.excelgov.org/leaddev/index.html>

The Peter F. Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management, <http://www.pfdf.org>

The Federal Executive Institute and Management Development Centers,
<http://www.leadership.opm.gov/fei/index.html>

The Wharton Leadership Digest,
<http://leadership.wharton.upenn.edu/digest/index.shtml>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ray Blunt primarily focuses on working with public service leadership development, and succession and change management initiatives as a consultant, instructor, coach, and mentor. He is currently an adjunct faculty member at the Federal Executive Institute.

He has been affiliated with the Council for Excellence in Government since 1997 as a leadership coach and with the Leadership Development Academy of the Graduate School as an instructor and executive coach. He has also been a senior consultant with the Center for Human Resources Management, National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA).

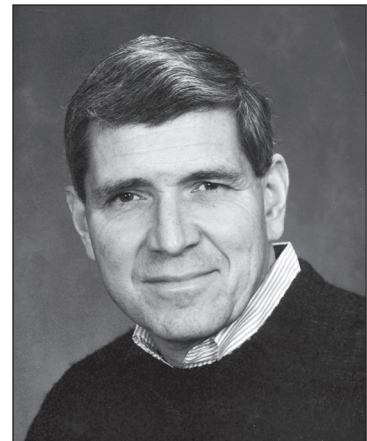
Blunt has worked as a consultant and executive coach with a number of governmental organizations including the World Bank, the Department of Treasury, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the National Archives and Records Administration, the Peace Corps, the Office of Personnel Management, the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, the National Park Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, the United States Air Force, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Food and Drug Administration.

He frequently speaks to a variety of forums in the public sector on leadership and strategic thinking issues. He has also worked extensively with non-profit organizations in strategic planning and board management.

Blunt served 35 years in public service in the Air Force, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, the last 17 of those years as a senior executive. He has successfully led a number of significant change initiatives and headed organizations involved in strategic planning, and policy and organizational analysis.

He has written articles for *The Government Executive* and *The Public Manager*, and co-authored with Hugh Clark *Managing Succession and Developing Leadership: Growing the Next Generation of Public Service Leaders* (The National Academy of Public Administration, September 1997).

A 1964 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy with a concentration in engineering and political science, Blunt holds a master's degree in economics from Central Missouri State University. He has done post-graduate work in management and theology.



KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

To contact the author:

Ray Blunt

1904 Toll Bridge Court
Alexandria, VA 22308-2447
(703) 780-1016
fax: (703) 780-3037
e-mail: rblunt@cox.net

To contact individuals from the exemplary organizations (Part II):

Dr. Ellen Roderick

Director
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Training
Institute
1200 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20005-4026
(202) 326-4110
e-mail: Roderick.Ellen@pbgc.gov

Ms. Ann Capps

Corporate Training Director
Western Area Power Administration
Corporate Services Office
12155 W. Alameda Pkwy.
P.O. Box 281213
Lakewood, CO 80228-8213
e-mail: capps@wapa.gov

CENTER REPORTS AVAILABLE

E - GOVERNMENT

Supercharging the Employment Agency: An Investigation of the Use of Information and Communication Technology to Improve the Service of State Employment Agencies (December 2000)

Anthony M. Townsend

Assessing a State's Readiness for Global Electronic Commerce: Lessons from the Ohio Experience (January 2001)

J. Pari Sabety
Steven I. Gordon

Privacy Strategies for Electronic Government (January 2001)

Janine S. Hiller
France Bélanger

Commerce Comes to Government on the Desktop: E-Commerce Applications in the Public Sector (February 2001)

Genie N. L. Stowers

The Use of the Internet in Government Service Delivery (February 2001)

Steven Cohen
William Eimicke

State Web Portals: Delivering and Financing E-Service (January 2002)

Diana Burley Gant
Jon P. Gant
Craig L. Johnson

Internet Voting: Bringing Elections to the Desktop (February 2002)

Robert S. Done

Leveraging Technology in the Service of Diplomacy: Innovation in the Department of State (March 2002)

Barry Fulton

Federal Intranet Work Sites: An Interim Assessment (June 2002)

Julianne G. Mahler
Priscilla M. Regan

The State of Federal Websites: The Pursuit of Excellence (August 2002)

Genie N. L. Stowers

State Government E-Procurement in the Information Age: Issues, Practices, and Trends (September 2002)

M. Jae Moon

Preparing for Wireless and Mobile Technologies in Government (October 2002)

Ai-Mei Chang
P. K. Kannan

Public-Sector Information Security: A Call to Action for Public-Sector CIOs (October 2002, 2nd ed.)

Don Heiman

The Auction Model: How the Public Sector Can Leverage the Power of E-Commerce Through Dynamic Pricing (November 2002, 2nd ed.)

David C. Wyld

The Promise of E-Learning in Africa: The Potential for Public-Private Partnerships (January 2003)

Norman LaRocque
Michael Latham

Digitally Integrating the Government Supply Chain: E-Procurement, E-Finance, and E-Logistics (February 2003)

Jacques S. Gansler
William Lucyshyn
Kimberly M. Ross

Using Technology to Increase Citizen Participation in Government: The Use of Models and Simulation (April 2003)

John O'Looney

Seaport: Charting a New Course for Professional Services Acquisition for America's Navy (June 2003)

David C. Wyld

E-Reporting: Strengthening Democratic Accountability (February 2004)

Mordecai Lee

Understanding Electronic Signatures: The Key to E-Government (March 2004)

Stephen H. Holden

Measuring the Performance of E-Government (March 2004)

Genie N. L. Stowers

Restoring Trust in Government: The Potential of Digital Citizen Participation (August 2004)

Marc Holzer
James Melitski
Seung-Yong Rho
Richard Schwesler

CENTER REPORTS AVAILABLE

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Credit Scoring and Loan Scoring: Tools for Improved Management of Federal Credit Programs (July 1999)

Thomas H. Stanton

Using Activity-Based Costing to Manage More Effectively (January 2000)

Michael H. Granof
David E. Platt
Igor Vaysman

Audited Financial Statements: Getting and Sustaining “Clean” Opinions (July 2001)

Douglas A. Brook

An Introduction to Financial Risk Management in Government (August 2001)

Richard J. Buttimer, Jr.

Understanding Federal Asset Management: An Agenda for Reform (July 2003)

Thomas H. Stanton

Efficiency Counts: Developing the Capacity to Manage Costs at Air Force Materiel Command (August 2003)

Michael Barzelay
Fred Thompson

MARKET-BASED GOVERNMENT

Determining a Level Playing Field for Public-Private Competition (November 1999)

Lawrence L. Martin

Implementing State Contracts for Social Services: An Assessment of the Kansas Experience (May 2000)

Jocelyn M. Johnston
Barbara S. Romzek

A Vision of the Government as a World-Class Buyer: Major Procurement Issues for the Coming Decade (January 2002)

Jacques S. Gansler

Contracting for the 21st Century: A Partnership Model (January 2002)

Wendell C. Lawther

Franchise Funds in the Federal Government: Ending the Monopoly in Service Provision (February 2002)

John J. Callahan

Making Performance-Based Contracting Perform: What the Federal Government Can Learn from State and Local Governments (November 2002, 2nd ed.)

Lawrence L. Martin

Moving to Public-Private Partnerships: Learning from Experience around the World (February 2003)

Trefor P. Williams

IT Outsourcing: A Primer for Public Managers (February 2003)

Yu-Che Chen
James Perry

The Procurement Partnership Model: Moving to a Team-Based Approach (February 2003)

Kathryn G. Denhardt

Moving Toward Market-Based Government: The Changing Role of Government as the Provider (March 2004, 2nd ed.)

Jacques S. Gansler

Transborder Service Systems: Pathways for Innovation or Threats to Accountability? (March 2004)

Alasdair Roberts

HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Profiles in Excellence: Conversations with the Best of America's Career Executive Service (November 1999)

Mark W. Huddleston

Reflections on Mobility: Case Studies of Six Federal Executives (May 2000)

Michael D. Serlin

Managing Telecommuting in the Federal Government: An Interim Report (June 2000)

Gina Vega
Louis Brennan

Using Virtual Teams to Manage Complex Projects: A Case Study of the Radioactive Waste Management Project (August 2000)

Samuel M. DeMarie

A Learning-Based Approach to Leading Change (December 2000)

Barry Sugarman

Labor-Management Partnerships: A New Approach to Collaborative Management (July 2001)

Barry Rubin
Richard Rubin

Winning the Best and Brightest: Increasing the Attraction of Public Service (July 2001)

Carol Chetkovich

A Weapon in the War for Talent: Using Special Authorities to Recruit Crucial Personnel (December 2001)

Hal G. Rainey

A Changing Workforce: Understanding Diversity Programs in the Federal Government (December 2001)

Katherine C. Naff
J. Edward Kellough

Life after Civil Service Reform: The Texas, Georgia, and Florida Experiences (October 2002)

Jonathan Walters

The Defense Leadership and Management Program: Taking Career Development Seriously (December 2002)

Joseph A. Ferrara
Mark C. Rom

The Influence of Organizational Commitment on Officer Retention: A 12-Year Study of U.S. Army Officers (December 2002)

Stephanie C. Payne
Ann H. Huffman
Trueman R. Tremble, Jr.

Human Capital Reform: 21st Century Requirements for the United States Agency for International Development (March 2003)

Anthony C. E. Quainton
Amanda M. Fulmer

Modernizing Human Resource Management in the Federal Government: The IRS Model (April 2003)

James R. Thompson
Hal G. Rainey

Mediation at Work: Transforming Workplace Conflict at the United States Postal Service (October 2003)

Lisa B. Bingham

Growing Leaders for Public Service (August 2004, 2nd ed.)

Ray Blunt

CENTER REPORTS AVAILABLE

MANAGING FOR PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

Corporate Strategic Planning in Government: Lessons from the United States Air Force (November 2000)

Colin Campbell

Using Evaluation to Support Performance Management:

A Guide for Federal Executives (January 2001)

Kathryn Newcomer
Mary Ann Scheirer

Managing for Outcomes: Milestone Contracting in Oklahoma (January 2001)

Peter Frumkin

The Challenge of Developing Cross-Agency Measures:

A Case Study of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (August 2001)

Patrick J. Murphy
John Carnevale

The Potential of the Government Performance and Results Act as a Tool to Manage Third-Party Government

(August 2001)

David G. Frederickson

Using Performance Data for Accountability: The New York City Police Department's CompStat Model of Police Management (August 2001)

Paul E. O'Connell

Moving Toward More Capable Government: A Guide to Organizational Design (June 2002)

Thomas H. Stanton

The Baltimore CitiStat Program: Performance and Accountability (May 2003)

Lenneal J. Henderson

Strategies for Using State Information: Measuring and Improving Program Performance (December 2003)

Shelley H. Metzenbaum

Linking Performance and Budgeting: Opportunities in the Federal Budget Process (January 2004, 2nd ed.)

Philip G. Joyce

How Federal Programs Use Outcome Information:

Opportunities for Federal Managers (February 2004, 2nd ed.)

Harry P. Hatry
Elaine Morley
Shelli B. Rossman
Joseph S. Wholey

Performance Leadership: 11 Better Practices That Can Ratchet Up Performance (May 2004)

Robert D. Behn

Performance Management for Career Executives:

A "Start Where You Are, Use What You Have" Guide (August 2004, 2nd ed.)

Chris Wye

INNOVATION

Managing Workfare: The Case of the Work Experience Program in the New York City Parks Department (June 1999)

Steven Cohen

New Tools for Improving Government Regulation: An Assessment of Emissions Trading and Other Market-Based Regulatory Tools (October 1999)

Gary C. Bryner

Religious Organizations, Anti-Poverty Relief, and Charitable Choice: A Feasibility Study of Faith-Based Welfare Reform in Mississippi (November 1999)

John P. Bartkowski
Helen A. Regis

Business Improvement Districts and Innovative Service Delivery (November 1999)

Jerry Mitchell

An Assessment of Brownfield Redevelopment Policies: The Michigan Experience (November 1999)

Richard C. Hula

San Diego County's Innovation Program: Using Competition and a Whole Lot More to Improve Public Services (January 2000)

William B. Eimicke

Innovation in the Administration of Public Airports (March 2000)

Scott E. Tarry

Entrepreneurial Government: Bureaucrats as Businesspeople (May 2000)

Anne Laurent

Rethinking U.S. Environmental Protection Policy: Management Challenges for a New Administration (November 2000)

Dennis A. Rondinelli

The Challenge of Innovating in Government (February 2001)

Sandford Borins

Understanding Innovation: What Inspires It? What Makes It Successful? (December 2001)

Jonathan Walters

Government Management of Information Mega-Technology: Lessons from the Internal Revenue Service's Tax Systems Modernization (March 2002)

Barry Bozeman

Advancing High End Computing: Linking to National Goals (September 2003)

Juan D. Rogers
Barry Bozeman

CENTER REPORTS AVAILABLE

COLLABORATION: PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

Leveraging Networks to Meet National Goals: FEMA and the Safe Construction Networks (March 2002)

William L. Waugh, Jr.

21st-Century Government and the Challenge of Homeland Defense (June 2002)

Elaine C. Kamarck

Assessing Partnerships: New Forms of Collaboration (March 2003)

Robert Klitgaard
Gregory F. Treverton

Leveraging Networks: A Guide for Public Managers Working across Organizations (March 2003)

Robert Agranoff

Extraordinary Results on National Goals: Networks and Partnerships in the Bureau of Primary Health Care's 100%/0 Campaign (March 2003)

John Scanlon

Public-Private Strategic Partnerships: The U.S. Postal Service-Federal Express Alliance (May 2003)

Oded Shenkar

The Challenge of Coordinating "Big Science" (July 2003)

W. Henry Lambricht

Communities of Practice: A New Tool for Government Managers (November 2003)

William M. Snyder
Xavier de Souza Briggs

Collaboration and Performance Management in Network Settings: Lessons from Three Watershed Governance Efforts (April 2004)

Mark T. Imperial

TRANSFORMATION OF ORGANIZATIONS

The Importance of Leadership: The Role of School Principals (September 1999)

Paul Teske
Mark Schneider

Leadership for Change: Case Studies in American Local Government (September 1999)

Robert B. Denhardt
Janet Vinzant Denhardt

Managing Decentralized Departments: The Case of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (October 1999)

Beryl A. Radin

Transforming Government: The Renewal and Revitalization of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (April 2000)

R. Steven Daniels
Carolyn L. Clark-Daniels

Transforming Government: Creating the New Defense Procurement System (April 2000)

Kimberly A. Harokopus

Trans-Atlantic Experiences in Health Reform: The United Kingdom's National Health Service and the United States Veterans Health Administration (May 2000)

Marilyn A. DeLuca

Transforming Government: The Revitalization of the Veterans Health Administration (June 2000)

Gary J. Young

The Challenge of Managing Across Boundaries: The Case of the Office of the Secretary in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (November 2000)

Beryl A. Radin

Creating a Culture of Innovation: 10 Lessons from America's Best Run City (January 2001)

Janet Vinzant Denhardt
Robert B. Denhardt

Transforming Government: Dan Goldin and the Remaking of NASA (March 2001)

W. Henry Lambricht

Managing Across Boundaries: A Case Study of Dr. Helene Gayle and the AIDS Epidemic (January 2002)

Norma M. Riccucci

Managing “Big Science”: A Case Study of the Human Genome Project (March 2002)

W. Henry Lambright

The Power of Frontline Workers in Transforming Government: The Upstate New York Veterans Healthcare Network (April 2003)

Timothy J. Hoff

Making Public Sector Mergers Work: Lessons Learned (August 2003)

Peter Frumkin

Efficiency Counts: Developing the Capacity to Manage Costs at Air Force Materiel Command (August 2003)

Michael Barzelay
Fred Thompson

Managing the New Multipurpose, Multidiscipline University Research Centers: Institutional Innovation in the Academic Community (November 2003)

Barry Bozeman
P. Craig Boardman

SPECIAL REPORTS

Enhancing Security Throughout the Supply Chain (April 2004)

David J. Closs
Edmund F. McGarrell

2004 PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION SERIES

Government Reorganization: Strategies and Tools to Get It Done (August 2004)

Hannah Sistare

Performance Management for Political Executives: A “Start Where You Are, Use What You Have” Guide (August 2004)

Chris Wye

CENTER FOR HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT REPORTS

The Power of Frontline Workers in Transforming Healthcare Organizations: The Upstate New York Veterans Healthcare Network (December 2003)

Timothy J. Hoff

IT Outsourcing: A Primer for Healthcare Managers (December 2003)

Yu-Che Chen
James Perry

BOOKS*

Collaboration: Using Networks and Partnerships
(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004)

John M. Kamensky and Thomas J. Burlin, editors

E-Government 2001

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001)

Mark A. Abramson and Grady E. Means, editors

E-Government 2003

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002)

Mark A. Abramson and Therese L. Morin, editors

Human Capital 2002

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002)

Mark A. Abramson and Nicole Willenz Gardner, editors

Human Capital 2004

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004)

Jonathan D. Breul and Nicole Willenz Gardner, editors

Innovation

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002)

Mark A. Abramson and Ian Littman, editors

Leaders

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002)

Mark A. Abramson and Kevin M. Bacon, editors

Managing for Results 2005

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004)

John M. Kamensky and Albert Morales, editors

Managing for Results 2002

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001)

Mark A. Abramson and John Kamensky, editors

Memos to the President: Management Advice from the Nation's Top Public Administrators

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001)

Mark A. Abramson, editor

New Ways of Doing Business

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003)

Mark A. Abramson and Ann M. Kieffaber, editors

The Procurement Revolution

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003)

Mark A. Abramson and Roland S. Harris III, editors

Transforming Government Supply Chain Management

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003)

Jacques S. Gansler and Robert E. Luby, Jr., editors

Transforming Organizations

(Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001)

Mark A. Abramson and Paul R. Lawrence, editors

About the IBM Center for The Business of Government

Through research stipends and events, the IBM Center for The Business of Government stimulates research and facilitates discussion on new approaches to improving the effectiveness of government at the federal, state, local, and international levels.

The Center is one of the ways that IBM seeks to advance knowledge on how to improve public sector effectiveness. The IBM Center focuses on the future of the operation and management of the public sector.

About IBM Business Consulting Services

With consultants and professional staff in more than 160 countries globally, IBM Business Consulting Services is the world's largest consulting services organization. IBM Business Consulting Services provides clients with business process and industry expertise, a deep understanding of technology solutions that address specific industry issues, and the ability to design, build and run those solutions in a way that delivers bottom-line business value. For more information visit www.ibm.com/bcs.

For additional information, contact:

Mark A. Abramson

Executive Director

IBM Center for The Business of Government

1301 K Street, NW

Fourth Floor, West Tower

Washington, DC 20005

(202) 515-4504, fax: (202) 515-4375

e-mail: businessofgovernment@us.ibm.com

website: www.businessofgovernment.org