OVERVIEW

6.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter:

A. Describes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) policy, procedures, and responsibilities for leadership development; and

B. Provides guidance and identifies key resources available to supervisors and employees so they can focus on and guide leadership development and career planning.

6.2 What are the objectives of this chapter? Our objectives are to:

A. Prepare employees to assume the responsibility of leadership in the Service,

B. Align employee development efforts with behaviors appropriate to the level of leadership the employee aspires to achieve,

C. Provide guidance to those interested in assuming leadership positions or improving their effectiveness in their current position,
D. Foster continuous learning through assessment and development of leadership skills,

E. Encourage candid discussion of leadership issues as common practice within the Service,

F. Adopt the 28 leadership competencies that the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) identifies as critical to leadership success as components of our own competency model,

G. Use the Service’s Leadership Competency Development Model (see Exhibit 1) as our primary leadership development guidance, and

H. Focus development efforts on the seven leadership competencies the Service identifies as most critical for success at each of the four organizational levels of leadership. Highlighting these competencies helps supervisors and employees understand which are important as they write their Individual Development Plans (IDP) (see 231 FW 2).

6.3 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter applies to all Service employees.

6.4 What are the authorities for this chapter?

A. Civil Service Regulations, Training and Supervisory, Management, and Executive Development (5 CFR 410 and 412.101 through 401).


6.5 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?

A. Leadership competencies. Defined attributes, skills, behaviors, and knowledge that organizations use to assess and develop leaders. These reflect the organization’s definition of what constitutes a good leader according to its unique work culture.

B. Leadership development. Actions associated with gaining leadership competencies to enhance readiness for positions of greater leadership responsibility. Developing our competencies complements and enhances the technical and natural resources management skills that are critical to the accomplishment of the Service mission.

RESPONSIBILITIES

6.6 Who is responsible for leadership development in the Service? See Table 6-1.
Table 6-1: Responsibilities for Leadership Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>These employees...</th>
<th>Are responsible for . . .</th>
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| **A. The Director** | (1) Ensuring we have a leadership development program in place, and  
(2) Fostering an environment that values and seeks leadership development. |
| **B. Director, National Conservation Training Center (NCTC)** | (1) Administering and overseeing our leadership development training courses and programs,  
(2) Advising the Director about strategies to help the Service to achieve leadership goals,  
(3) Supporting the implementation of this and other leadership policy, and  
(4) Overseeing and supporting Service leadership development programs and efforts. |
| **C. Deputy Assistant Directors and Deputy Regional Directors** | (1) Ensuring career development and leadership opportunities are available to all employees, and  
(2) Overseeing and supporting Service leadership development programs and efforts. |
| **D. Chief, Division of Training (NCTC)** | (1) Working with the Directorate and other managers to identify leadership development needs; and  
(2) Providing resources, oversight, and guidance to NCTC leadership development efforts. |
| **E. Chief, Branch of Conservation Leadership and Communication (NCTC); and Regional Chiefs, Leadership and Employee Development** | (1) Identifying what is required to deliver products, services, courses, and programs on leadership development to Service employees;  
(2) Developing and implementing those components identified; and  
(3) Evaluating the components to determine how well they are helping us to achieve our goals. |
| **F. Managers and Supervisors** | (1) Holding themselves accountable for:  
(a) Their personal leadership development, and  
(b) The development of their employees (see the Department of the Interior’s (Department) Performance Appraisal Handbook on the NCTC website); |
These employees… | Are responsible for . . .
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(2) Providing ongoing feedback and supporting, mentoring, and coaching employees to promote leadership development;  
(3) Ensuring assessments and reviews are conducted in a sound, fair, and objective way and that coaching, guidance, training, developmental opportunities, and career counseling are available to all employees under their supervision;  
(4) Approving time for and encouraging employees to pursue developmental opportunities (see 231 FW 1, Continuous Learning); and  
(5) Ensuring every employee has an IDP (see 231 FW 2, IDPs).

G. Service Employees  
(1) Holding themselves accountable for their personal leadership development;  
(2) Meeting with their supervisors to discuss developmental needs as they write their IDPs using FWS Form 3-2020B (for more information, see NCTC's “Career Planning and the IDP” or “Things to do as an Employee;”  
(3) Giving their IDP to their supervisors for final approval; and  
(4) Working with their supervisors to implement their IDPs.

POLICY AND ROLES

6.7 **What is the Service's leadership development policy?** Our policy is to ensure that leadership and supervisory development is a priority for all employees, regardless of their grade or position.

6.8 **How does this policy relate to achievement of employee career goals?** All employees can enhance their leadership skills and provide leadership in the workplace. Leadership is important at all levels, from leading volunteers and seasonal employees to leading field stations, staff divisions, Regions, and programs. What employees learn and apply as a result of their leadership development efforts helps them to be more competitive and achieve their career goals.

6.9 **What is the supervisor’s role in developing an employee’s leadership capacity?**

A. Supervisors are responsible for the leadership development of the employees they supervise. They must identify and nurture leadership abilities in their employees by putting employee career development on a structured path toward higher levels of skill and responsibility. To facilitate this process and encourage communication between employee and supervisor, see the Leadership
B. Supervisors should encourage employees to develop their leadership competencies even if the employee is not interested in moving to a higher level of leadership.

(1) Although it is acceptable for an employee to decide not to move up to higher levels of leadership, each employee must grow and develop in their current position to meet the changing needs of the organization.

(2) To help employees develop, supervisors can encourage them by setting expectations about fostering and maintaining skills necessary for their position as well as informing them about the annual goal of 40 hours of training.

6.10 What is the role of NCTC in leadership development?

A. NCTC staff are responsible for developing and implementing Servicewide leadership development programs. NCTC can provide information and resources on leadership development and assessments that are available through NCTC, other Federal agencies, learning institutions, and commercial vendors.

B. For more information, employees should visit:

(1) The NCTC website, and

(2) The online resource entitled, “Reaching Your Full Potential: A Guide to Employee Development.”

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

6.11 How can Service employees develop the competencies associated with national-level experience required for senior- and executive-level leadership positions?

A. Employee work experiences, details, and training collectively contribute to your leadership competency development. In addition to your existing capability, it is important you gain exposure to national-level experiences.

B. The Assessment of Needed National Aptitudes (ANNA) (see Exhibit 3) is a table that cross-references the executive functions of the Service with criteria that reflect steps toward achieving the competencies associated with each function. The ANNA criteria appear in the order of increasing complexity for each executive function. Although there is no set number of criteria that guarantees mastery of a specific competency, having experience with multiple criteria in each of the executive functions indicates in-depth experience with relevant competencies.
6.12 What are the different leadership development activities in which employees may engage?

A. IDPs. Employees must work with their supervisors to complete their IDPs (FWS Form 3-2020B) to document short- and long-term professional goals and the actions needed to accomplish those goals. The IDP identifies training, developmental assignments or details, relevant reading, and other actions to improve current performance, to prepare for positions of greater responsibility, and to provide ongoing technical training to enhance leadership competencies. See 231 FW 2 for additional IDP guidance.

B. The Leadership Development Portfolio. Employees should keep a personal collection of guidance, assessments, evaluations, notes, references, records of training, and other items that chronicle their leadership development over the course of their careers. We encourage employees to start a portfolio after attaining their career or career-conditional status.

(1) Who sees the contents of an employee’s portfolio? Employees can choose to share or not to share the contents of their portfolio with others. However, we encourage employees to share and discuss their portfolio with their supervisors, mentors, and others.

(2) How do employees use the portfolio? Employees have an important responsibility in planning their careers and should use the portfolio as a tool to examine their leadership strengths and developmental needs throughout their career. For example, information in the portfolio can assist with identifying training needs and potential developmental assignments; preparing job applications and statements addressing ranking factors; and comparing existing knowledge, skills, and abilities with those required for higher level positions. When faced with career “crossroads,” such as changing programs, job series, or moving from a non-supervisory to a supervisory position, a review of your portfolio can help you make the right decision.

C. Leadership Assessments. Leadership assessments involve using questionnaires and other self-assessment instruments and personal observations to evaluate leadership effectiveness and promote employees’ self-awareness. Knowing oneself is the critical first step in becoming a successful leader.

(1) Tools for leadership assessment: Tools for leadership assessment are continually evolving. NCTC offers a variety of courses that include assessments. NCTC staff can also help employees individually assess and develop their leadership skills. For more information, employees should visit the NCTC website.

(2) 360-degree assessment: This is a tool employees can use to evaluate their knowledge, skills, and abilities by collecting feedback from a variety of sources, but primarily from themselves, supervisors, peers, and subordinates.

D. Coaching. Coaching can apply to personal, professional, and organizational challenges. Coaching skills are important for all supervisors and leaders to practice. Coaching is appropriate for situational, short-term problem-solving and long-term career development. Coaches can be assigned to staff during a developmental program or training, or as a means to address a performance problem. Anyone can learn coaching skills, and coaching can support overall career development.
E. Mentoring. Mentoring is a one-on-one voluntary relationship that focuses on the needs of the mentee. It fosters a respectful, caring, trusting relationship that guides, encourages, and supports the mentee’s development by sharing information and life experiences. This partnership focuses on helping individuals to develop their vision for the future and to develop strategies to interact positively within the workplace. Based on their professional experience, mentors advise mentees on career decisions and opportunities, and encourage mentees to contact others who can provide advice about specific issues.

F. Mobility. We recognize that Service employees gain valuable knowledge and skills through an array of diverse experiences and assignments throughout their careers. We encourage employees to develop their leadership skills through assignments in multiple geographic locations, in different Regions, at different organizational levels (field, Region, Headquarters), and across the various Service programs. Mobility helps employees understand the ecological, cultural, and political diversity of the Service’s mission.

G. Continual Learning. This is when an employee uses a wide variety of learning experiences to ensure individual competency in areas of his/her position description and development for future positions. It involves realistically assessing one’s own strengths and areas to improve and continually seeking self-development opportunities while making use of feedback from others to change behavior, maximize potential and productivity, and develop areas for improvement within the position description. We encourage employees seeking upper-level management and leadership positions to pursue additional, formal higher education as well as opportunities for continuous learning outside the agency (see 231 FW 1).

H. Details and Other Assignments. A detail is a specified period of time that an individual works in a different job, program, or setting to gain experience with different parts of the Service’s mission and to practice competencies identified in his/her IDP (see 223 FW 1). Details require cooperation and approval from all involved supervisors. An employee’s home duty station or that of the hosting station may cover the cost of details. These opportunities exist within the Service, across Regions and programs, at a national level, and among the Service and our partners locally, regionally, and nationally. In these types of assignments, employees address issues on a larger scale than they experience in their work unit, and they grow their professional network. Employees may visit the Service’s “USFWS Detail Opportunities” intranet site for more information.

LEADERSHIP TOOLS

6.13 What is the Leadership Competency Development Model? The USFWS Leadership Competency Development Model (see Exhibit 1) defines five levels within the Service and the corresponding leadership competencies and behaviors. The model is derived from the OPM’s Leadership Competency Model. The NCTC website includes information on resources, developmental activities, and training suggestions for each competency level.

6.14 What is the Leadership Competency Development Checklist? The Leadership Competency Development Checklist (see Exhibit 2) is a tool that employees and their supervisors can use to determine the most important competencies an employee needs to
develop over the next 1 to 2 years. The information employees and supervisors obtain by using this checklist can give them valuable information for completing the employee's IDP.

6.15 What is the Course Guide for Leadership and Supervision? The Course Guide for Leadership and Supervision lists all of the leadership courses NCTC offers as well as some of the online courses needed for leadership development. Courses are divided into three different levels—introductory, intermediate, and advanced. Employees and supervisors may use the Course Guide, which is available on the NCTC website, to help employees choose leadership courses to attend.

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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