

Core Leadership Competencies

The following guidance further clarifies the distinctions between levels of performance for the 8 core competencies outlined in Element 1 of all DHS SES performance plans. This guidance should be utilized by executives as they prepare their self-assessments, as well as by the rating officials when they complete their evaluations.

Core Leadership Competencies
Definitions of Achieved Excellence and Achieved Expectations

1.1 Principled – adheres to the highest ethical standards of public service and promotes a culture of integrity within DHS.

Achieved Excellence - The executive has exhibited performance that sets an outstanding example for others to follow in adhering to ethical standards and integrity in the workplace, as defined by the Code of Ethics. His/her work habits and devotion to integrity are above reproach and are highlighted by the executive's ability to not only exhibit high personal standards but also to relate positively the principles of high integrity and ethical standards to other managers and employees. Success is evidenced by the great extent to which the executive goes to maintain and promote these principles and the high regard in which the executive is held by other officials and employees.

Achieved Expectations - The executive has satisfactorily met all expectations for adhering to ethical standards in the workplace, as defined by the Code of Ethics. His/her work habits set good examples for others to follow, and integrity is basic to all work performed by the executive. Success is evidenced by the extent to which the executive strives to fulfill expectations for ethical standards and integrity and the absence of any detrimental work habits by the executive.

1.2 People Centered – engages, values, motivates, mentors, recruits, clearly directs and appropriately rewards DHS employees. Fosters a safe working environment.

Achieved Excellence – The executive's outstanding ability to work with employees is exhibited by the high level of results his/her office has achieved in meeting goals and objectives. He/she has exploited a rarely seen ability to engage, value, motivate, mentor, and recognize employees and to do so in a manner that brings out the best in others. Motivation and development of staff has been a key ingredient in the executive's success in being recognized as one of the organization's best leaders.

Achieved Expectations – The executive has satisfactorily met all expectations in being a people centered motivator. He/she successfully met all goals and objectives for the rating period by engaging, valuing, mentoring, and recognizing employees. Performance indicates that the executive was able to produce results which positively impacted operations and programs for which he/she was responsible.

1.3 Effective Communicator – defines the mission for subordinates, colleagues and external partners with clarity; listens effectively and shares information, as appropriate.

Achieved Excellence – Communication is a key attribute of the executive in that he/she has the ability to project confidence and build effective coalitions with higher level officials, peers, and subordinates time after time. His/her outstanding communication efforts have resulted in numerous successes for the organization in situations where it appeared hopeless to do so. His/her negotiation skill and positive attitude in the face of extreme obstacles highlight the many accomplishments achieved for the organization and serve as a measuring device against which others can be evaluated and held accountable for success.

Achieved Expectations – The executive has satisfactorily met all required objectives for being an effective communicator, including listening to employees' perspectives. He/she has confidence and skill in the ability to communicate effectively at all levels of the organization. Success at this level is accented by the achievement of common goals as laid out in planning documents and the executive's commitment to meeting the organization's goals.

1.4 Performance Centered – establishes and meets clear, measurable and meaningful goals in a timely manner, and uses good judgment in decision making.

Achieved Excellence - The executive has established performance expectations that set an outstanding example for subordinate staff by establishing clear, measurable and meaningful goals. The Executive has shown innovation and creativity in supporting the Performance Management Program which adopts an appraisal system that balances competency measures and achieving results. The executive has excelled at establishing plans jointly with subordinate employees and reflecting the specific results that employees are to accomplish during the performance rating period. Feedback on performance is provided to subordinate staff members on a frequent basis; their performance and that of their employees, as an individual or as a member of a team, is recognized with performance awards that are commensurate with the level of performance responsibility and progress toward meeting the goals and objectives; and appropriate and timely action is taken to address performance that does not meet expectations.

Achieved Expectations – The executive has satisfactorily met all expectations establishing and meeting clear, measurable and meaningful goals in a timely manner using good judgment in decision making. Performance plans and appraisals of employees reporting to subordinate managers and supervisors

within the executive's organization are completed by the due date; and at least one performance goal for each is clearly traceable to the DHS goals and objectives. Feedback on performance is provided to staff members on frequent basis; performance is appraised fairly against performance expectations; and employees are recognized with performance awards that are commensurate with the level of performance responsibility.

1.5 Diversity Advocate – promotes workforce diversity, provides fair and equitable recognition and equal opportunity, and promptly and appropriately addresses allegations of harassment or discrimination.

Achieved Excellence – The executive has demonstrated outstanding skill in recruiting and retaining a diverse staff whose members worked together effectively as a team. He/she proactively identified situations where allegations of harassment or discrimination may have occurred and effectively addressed the situations so that conflicts did not escalate. The executive has recognized exemplary work of others throughout the rating period and provided equal opportunities for all staff.

Achieved Expectations – The executive satisfactorily led a diverse team whose members showed accountability for the quality of their work, regardless of background or culture. He/ She has satisfactorily demonstrated the ability to recruit and retain a diverse staff. The executive models open communication and teamwork with all members of the staff. He/She has demonstrated that he/she is comfortable with different cultures and knows the laws related to disability, race, gender and religion. The executive effectively addressed allegations of harassment or discrimination by listening objectively and taking the steps necessary to resolve issues that arose.

1.6 Highly Collaborative – partners effectively within and across DHS components and, as appropriate, with international, federal, state, local, tribal and private sector partners. *In CBP, this core leadership competency will address and measure an executive's efforts toward fostering and achieving mission integration across organizational lines (e.g., Assistant Commissioner Offices).*

Achieved Excellence – The executive has demonstrated an outstanding ability to identify and engage diverse resources and key people to effectively gather information and complete tasks. He/she encouraged and provided clear direction to building collaborative decision-making teams. The executive demonstrated transparent leadership by openly collaborating with all appropriate partners.

Achieved Expectations – The executive satisfactorily demonstrated collaboration by sharing plans, information and resources across DHS components and appropriate partners and by considering partner and stakeholder perspectives. He/she willingly served on diverse teams whose members collaborated to support the department’s mission. The executive promoted a friendly, cooperative climate among his/her staff

1.7 Nimble and Innovative – brings nimble, creative discipline to encourage continuous innovation in support of the DHS mission. *In CBP, this core leadership competency includes supporting and/or implementing DHS efficiency review initiatives (i.e., adhering to new directives, participating in DHS work groups to develop implementation plans and timelines for carrying out these initiatives) to improve efficiency, increase transparency, and maximize resources to fulfill our vital mission.*

Achieved Excellence - The executive has shown outstanding skill in bringing about strategic and operational changes, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. He/she has the inherent ability to establish a vision, convince others to accept it, alter it as necessary, and implement it in a continuously changing environment. He/she is viewed by others as being receptive to and embracing change in the face of extreme obstacles and having the mind set to pursue new directions. His/her ideas and recommendations are actively sought out and followed by others.

Achieved Expectations – The executive has satisfactorily maintained a work environment where open and honest exchanges of information and the expression of ideas are encouraged. He/she is receptive to new ideas and has fully met what is expected of a manager in encouraging continuous innovation.

1.8 Steward of Public Resources – ensures financial and managerial accountability in executing fiduciary responsibilities and appropriately protects classified and other security-sensitive information.

Achieved Excellence - The executive has built and maintained an outstanding level of fiduciary standards for financial and security-sensitive information in his/her office. His proactive leadership in establishing solid working relationships and ensuring accountability are widely known and respected. He is viewed by all as an expert in instilling trust and confidence in the organization’s ability to execute financial matters and protect security-sensitive matters effectively and efficiently.

Achieved Expectations - The executive has satisfactorily ensured that his/her organization's goals for the installation of trust and confidence in accounting for financial and security-sensitive information have been met. He/she has held subordinates fully accountable for executing fiduciary responsibilities and protecting sensitive information.

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