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Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer
Office of Learning and Workforce Development

Federal Employee Training

Desk Reference

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CHAPTER I.
TRAINING REQUESTS, APPROVALS, AUTHORIZATIONS AND ALLOWABLE COSTS

1. TRAINING REQUESTS

The training participant ensures completion of, a supervisory official approves, and a designated official authorizes training requests in accordance with the applicable DOE element's training policy and procedures and/or workforce development program training agreements.

a. Training is a work assignment.
b. Training requests must be completed and submitted through CHRIS and approved prior to an employee taking training.
c. If required, a continued service agreement must be signed and submitted with the training request (for additional information on continued service agreements and obligations, see Appendix F).

2. TRAINING APPROVALS

Supervisors will approve or disapprove employee requests for training. In approving training, supervisors certify that the requested training is appropriate for improving DOE mission-related performance.

a. Supervisors may delegate this authority to non-supervisory officials, such as team leaders or senior professional employees, but no employee can approve his or her own training request and no subordinate individual can approve training for a superior.
b. Employees must be notified of approved participation or registration a minimum of two weeks (14 calendar days) in advance of the start date for training provided by DOE or a DOE element, unless special circumstances exist.

3. TRAINING AUTHORIZATIONS

Second-level supervisors (managers) and a designated training official(s), must be assigned responsibility for training authorizations, i.e., the certification that the training meets legal and administrative requirements and that appropriate funds are available.

4. ALLOWABLE COSTS

DOE elements may cover salary, tuition, fees, books, materials, equipment, communication expenses, travel, and other costs legitimately related to an employee's training assignment.

a. Tuition Assistance. Agencies may offer employees assistance to attend academic courses that are job-related.
b. Training and Education related to an Employee's Official Duties. There are several options for training and education related to an employee's official duties. These include:

(1) paying costs of training and education from program funds or;

(2) allowing employees to accept training or reimbursement of training expenses from a non-profit organization; and
(3) paying costs of training and education in advance or;
(4) reimbursing employees for training and education costs;
(5) sharing costs of training and education with employees;
(6) paying costs of qualifying exams (when part of training);
(7) paying for academic degrees;
(8) travel-related expenses;
(9) paying expenses to attend professional conferences or meetings from appropriated funds or;
(10) allowing employees to accept reimbursement of expenses from a non-profit organization; and
(11) paying for memberships in professional organizations; and
(12) continued service agreements to protect the Government's interest.

c. Paying Costs of Training and Education from Program Funds. DOE element may pay training and education expenses from appropriated funds or other available funds to support program functions (5 U.S.C. 4112).

d. Paying Cost of Training and Education in Advance. Agencies may pay a vendor the costs of training and education in advance. They may also advance an employee all or part of the costs of approved training and education. Expenses of training include the cost of tuition; purchase or rental of books, materials, and supplies; library and laboratory fees; and travel, per diem, and relocation expenses. [5 U.S.C. 4109(a)(2)]

e. Reimbursing Employees for Training and Education Costs. An agency may reimburse employees for all or part of the costs of training or education.

f. Sharing the Cost of Training and Education with Employees. Agencies may share training and education costs with employees. This authority allows agencies to support training and education that primarily benefits the employee.

g. Paying Costs of Qualifying Exams (When Part of Training). In some cases, the cost of an examination is inextricably mixed with that of a training program. In this instance, an agency may pay for the examination if it is related to an employee's official duties and meets an identified training need (see DOE guidance on Payment of Training Expenses for Professional Credentials – section 4l(1).

h. Paying for Academic Degrees. The Chief Human Capital Officers Act of 2002 provides expanded authority to agencies to pay or reimburse employees for the cost of academic degree training when it:

(1) contributes significantly to meeting an identified agency training need;
(2) resolves an identified agency staffing problem; or
(3) accomplishes goals in the agency strategic human capital plan.
(4) The requirement for using this flexibility include making it part of a planned, systematic, and coordinated DOE element's development program linked to accomplishing the DOE's strategic goals and obtaining training from a college or university accredited by a nationally recognized body. Employees must be competitively selected for academic degree programs. (5 U.S.C. 4107, 5CFR 410)

i. Allowing Employees to Accept Training Reimbursement of Training Expenses from a Non-Profit Organization. A special provision of training law allows agencies to establish procedures whereby employees may accept reimbursement or waiver of tuition from non-profit organizations. Accepting free tuition or reimbursement of training expenses must not compromise the integrity of the employee or represent a payment for services rendered to the non-profit organization prior to training. Prior approval from a designated high-level agency official is required, often following a consultation with, or review by, the designated agency ethics official. (5 U.S.C. 4111)

j. Training and Education-Related Travel Expenses. Travel, per diem, and transportation are training expenses governed by 5 U.S.C. 4109(a)(2)(A) and (B). The provisions that pertain to paying all or some of the costs of tuition and other training expenses apply to paying travel training-related expenses. This means the agency decides which travel expenses it will pay for employees assigned to training. Examples include:

(1) An agency may pay the costs of training-related travel and per diem from program funds. (5 U.S.C. 4112)
(2) An agency may pay the costs of travel to a carrier in advance or advance an employee some or all of the costs of travel. (5 U.S.C. 4109(a)(2))
(3) An agency may reimburse an employee for training-related travel expenses. (5 U.S.C 4109(a)(2))
(4) An agency may share the costs of travel with an employee. (5 U.S.C. 4109(a)(2)
(5) An agency may pay a reduced per diem rate to an employee in training status.
(6) An agency, at its discretion, may pay limited relocation expenses for an employee assigned to training for lengthy periods of time.

k. Payment of Training Expenses. Payment of any or all costs related to training is discretionary and made in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 4109, DOE Human Capital, and DOE element policies and procedures. In accordance with 5 U.S.C, 5757 (P.L. 107-107, § 1112), DOE may pay for professional credentials, at the discretion of the organization. This would includes professional accreditations, licenses, or certifications that are either directly related to employees' positions or that are considered to further DOE interests, e.g., credentials that are desired for the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities in response to mission/function changes or that contribute to recruitment, retention, career development, or worker transition objectives.

l. Adjusting Employees' Work Schedules for Educational Purpose: Agencies may adjust an employee's normal work schedule for educational purposes. This authority allows the employee to take courses related or not related to his/her official duties. A special tour of duty is permissible if the following conditions are all met:

(1) It will not appreciably interfere with work accomplishment.
(2) The DOE element incurs no additional personnel services costs.
(3) Course completion will equip the employee to effectively work in the agency.

(4) The employee receives no premium pay while on the special tour of duty, even though premium pay would be otherwise payable.

m. Paying Expenses to Attend Meetings from Appropriated Funds. Professional meetings and conferences are valuable sources of information about innovative practices and current trends in various fields. Meeting expenses can be approved as a training related expense at the discretion of the organization.

n. Allowing Employees to Accept Reimbursement of Meeting Expenses from a Non-Profit Organization. DOE elements must establish procedures under which employees may accept payment or reimbursement of travel, subsistence from a non-profit organization, and other expenses incidental to attending meetings. Accepting meeting expenses must not compromise the integrity of the employee or represent a payment of services rendered to the non-profit organization prior to the meeting. Prior approval from a designated high-level official is required, often following a consultation with, or review by, the designated agency ethics officials.

o. Paying for Memberships in Professional Organizations. 5 U.S.C. 5946(1) prohibits the use of appropriated funds to pay for individual employee memberships in professional associations and societies. However, there are several ways for an agency to obtain the professional, scientific, and technological information those associations provide their members. For example, association membership is often included in registration fees for a conference or meeting. If the agency pays the registration fees, the employee's membership in the association is an incidental by-product of meeting attendance. In addition, agencies may purchase an organizational membership in the association or society. They may also purchase a membership for a specific agency position, such as the position of Medical Director. The incumbent in that position uses the membership to improve the conduct, supervision, or management of his/her functions.

p. Continued Service Agreements to Protect the Government's Interest. A continued service agreement is an agreement an employee makes to continue to work for the Government for a pre-established length of time in exchange for Government-sponsored training or education. The service obligation begins when the training is completed. If the employee voluntarily leaves Government service before completing the service obligation, he or she must repay the Government all or some of the costs of the training (excluding salary) unless the DOE element waives its right to the recovery of funds. DOE elements may require service agreements for training of long duration or of high cost. Appendix F provides a formula for determining service agreement requirements.

CHAPTER II. INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

1. SUPERVISORS

DOE supervisors must ensure all DOE employees have individual development plans (IDPs) in place within 60 days of a performance-rating period (unless an exclusion exists).

a. IDPs should be based on job requirements and professional development, including technical qualification standards, and the competencies needed to meet those requirements.

b. At a minimum, supervisors/managers will work with employees to:

(1) Identify organizational and occupational goals and objectives.
(2) Jointly identify performance priorities.
(3) Establish realistic developmental goals/objectives.
(4) Identify and select developmental activities.
(5) Monitor progress toward goals and provide ongoing feedback.
(6) Coach employees as needed.

2. EMPLOYEES

Each employee must work with his/her supervisor to create an IDP (unless an applicable exclusion exists) using the online IDP tool within the CHRIS Employee Self Service (ESS).

a. Employees should complete the following steps in preparing and submitting an IDP:

(1) Work with manager/supervisor to identify/discuss the specific competencies that are most relevant to the employee's current position.
(2) Assess individual professional and personal job talents and competencies.
(3) Establish realistic developmental objectives to enhance necessary competencies.
(4) Identify and select developmental activities to enhance competencies.
(5) Prepare an IDP that communicates developmental needs and training activities using the online IDP tool within CHRIS/ESS.

b. Additional assistance may be available through the organization's training representative or individuals may contact the Office of Learning and Workforce Development, http://humancapital.doe.gov/training.htm.

c. Employees must align development with the mission of the Department and/or the organization and address development required to meet current or future job requirements, professional development, technical qualification standards, and/or the competencies needed to meet those requirements.

CHAPTER III. LONG-TERM AND EXTENDED TRAINING

1. REVIEW OF LONG-TERM AND EXTENDED TRAINING NEEDS

A systematic review of all long-term and extended training needs must be conducted by DOE elements at least annually. This review can be accomplished in conjunction with the annual survey of training needs. Organizational needs as related to the present and projected work force and the individual developmental needs of employee's should be considered. Sources for available programs include:

a. Long-term programs coordinated by the Department.
b. Long-term and extended college and university programs.
c. Any other long-term and extended programs intended to add to or update the scientific, technical, managerial, or administrative skills of DOE employees.
d. Before deciding to use long-term or extended training, all DOE elements must first consider whether one of the following alternatives can meet their needs:

(1) Recruiting fully qualified individuals with the necessary competencies to meet workforce needs.
(2) Using available, fully-trained employees in lieu of long-term training.
(3) Using job rotation, short-term training, or part-time training as a means of obtaining needed competencies.

2. DOCUMENTATION OF LONG-TERM AND EXTENDED TRAINING NEEDS

Based on information indicated in the annual survey of training needs or in response to other supportable needs, DOE elements should report their long-term and extended training needs with the following supplemental information:

a. A statement of the long-term or extended training objective, with an assessment of the organization's current level of competencies available to meet the objective. In making the assessment, consideration should be given to projected turnover in current positions and to the establishment of new positions resulting from program changes for which new competencies will need to be developed.
b. A justification for choosing long-term or extended training as the most efficient and economical means of achieving the stated objective.

3. NATURE OF CONSIDERATION AND SELECTION

Upon receipt of the proper documentation from Departmental elements, the Office of Learning and Workforce Development will determine whether selection for the training program will be conducted on a competitive or non-competitive basis. In either case, selection of employees will be made without discrimination for any reason such as race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or other factors unrelated to the need for training.

a. Competitive. The following training situations require competitive selection under DOE's or the DOE element's merit promotion plan:

(1) A target position at a higher grade has been identified to which the employee will be assigned at the conclusion of the training.

(2) The purpose of the training is to provide additional competencies for one or more employees to meet projected workforce needs. A target position has not been identified.

(3) Long-term or extended training will be competitively announced within certain areas of consideration.

(a) When training is funded by the DOE element, the area of consideration will be the DOE element.

(b) When training is funded by a Headquarters element, the area of consideration will be nationwide for all of the element's field offices, unless an exception to this requirement is obtained from the Office of Learning and Workforce Development, e.g., to advertise on a regional basis.

(c) Documentation submitted to the Office of Learning and Workforce Development should include evidence of a sufficient number of available candidates within the applicable boundaries, as well as a rationale for not offering the training opportunity nationwide.

(d) If advertised at a local or regional level, the training will be coordinated by the applicable servicing human resources office.

b. Noncompetitive Selection. Competition for long-term and extended training is not necessary when an employee is serving in a one-of-a-kind position and has unique qualifications and recognized expertise in a particular specialization related to the proposed training program. In such instances, long-term training may be appropriate to keep the employee abreast of technological advances and/or to increase the proficiency of the employee in his/her area of specialization. After the training assignment, the employee would return to his/her original position. In this instance, a waiver of the requirement for competition for selection for long-term and extended training is necessary. A request for a waiver of competition must be submitted to the Office of Learning and Workforce Development with the following information:

(1) The uniqueness of the position and the incumbent, which warrants consideration of the noncompetitive selection of the employee for long-term or extended training.

(2) The objective of the training assignment in terms of the competencies to be acquired by long-term or extended training, how the competencies acquired will be used by the employee after returning to the job, and a justification for choosing long-term or extended training as the most efficient and economical means of achieving the stated objectives.

(3) An outline of the proposed training program.

c. Prohibited Uses of Long-Term or Extended Training. See the OPM *Training Policy Handbook* (online at http://www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/pubs/handbook/sitemap.asp) for prohibited uses of long-term and extended training through non-Government facilities.

d. Status during Long-Term or Extended Training and Payment of Expenses. The trainee will remain in a pay status during the period of long-term or extended training and will continue to earn annual and sick leave and be covered by health and life insurance benefits. In addition to the cost of the trainee's salary and tuition, the sponsoring

element/office may pay other reasonable costs directly related to the training such as library fees, laboratory fees, books, materials, and supplies. Per diem and travel costs to and from the place of training may also be paid. The trainee may also receive subsistence payments for the period of training, or if less expensive, the cost of the transportation of household goods.

e. Performance Standards. If the period of training is 90 days or more, the trainee must be covered by performance standards that reflect requirements for submission of periodic evaluations by the trainee, completion of projects, satisfactory grade point averages, and other pertinent training-related items.

f. Individual Development Plan (IDP). Employees who have long-term or extended training assignments must document that training in an IDP.

g. Evaluating the Results of Long-Term and Extended Training. Both the trainee and supervisor must evaluate the training in terms of its effectiveness in meeting the training objectives for which it was designed.

(1) For training periods greater than 180 days, the trainee should complete written evaluations, on a quarterly or semester basis, as directed by the performance standards. Information should be provided regarding the trainee's progress in meeting the training objectives and the success of the training facility in providing effective training.

(2) Upon completion of all long-term and extended training, both the trainee and his/her designated supervisor will evaluate the total training program addressing the following:

(1) Whether the stated objectives of the training were met.
(2) Whether new or improved competencies were acquired.
(3) How the new or improved competencies will be utilized on the job.
(4) Whether the new or improved competencies could have been obtained in some other way and at less cost to the DOE.
(5) Whether the continued use of the training facility is recommended.

(3) All final evaluations must be submitted to the servicing human resources office coordinating the training.

CHAPTER IV. COMPUTING LENGTH AND RECORDING TRAINING TIME

1. FULL-TIME TRAINING

Employees assigned to full-time training for at least an entire pay period are to be placed on a 5-day 8-hour work schedule regardless of the number of hours spent in actual training. If an employee attends training or a conference for one week, the DOE element may change the employee's work schedule to a 5-day, 8-hour schedule for the entire pay period or maintain the employee's alternate work schedule (AWS). If the employee is part-time or intermittent and full-time training is directed by the DOE, the employee must be converted to full-time employment for the period of the training and placed on a 5-day, 8-hour work schedule.

2. PART-TIME AND AFTER-HOURS TRAINING

When employees are assigned to training on less than a full-time basis, or attend training after work, their training hours are equal to the number of hours they spend in class or with the instructor in the facility. For example, an employee who attends a course, lasting 3 hours a week for 20 weeks, would be counted as receiving 60 hours of training.

3. CORRESPONDENCE, WEB-BASED, ONLINE, OR SIMILIAR COURSES

Time spent on courses that employees take on their own time is not counted as training time so it is not included in an employee's work schedule. Courses taken during regular duty hours are included as training time. Employees must have approval from their supervisors to spend time on courses during regular duty hours

CHAPTER V. INTEGRATED TRAINING MANAGEMENT

1. DOE TRAINING MANAGEMENT

DOE takes an integrated approach to managing training. The Office of Learning and Workforce Development will work with DOE elements to complete each of the following:

a. Assessment of training needs within each element via the Annual Training Needs Assessment.
b. Development of each element's annual training plan for inclusion in an overall Departmental Training Plan.
c. Review of completed training activities via the Annual Training Summary.

2. TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Training Needs Assessment enables the DOE element working with the Office of Learning and Workforce Development to:

a. Identify critical needs through organizational analysis;
b. Improve the use of training resources and allocation of training funds;
c. Identify an organization's competency gaps to allow selection of learning and development solutions;
d. Make data-driven decisions to manage its training budget; and
e. Provide critical input for the Department's training plan.

3. TRAINING PLAN REPORT

a. At a minimum, annual training plans must include the following data:

(1) Mission critical occupation (MCO) competency gaps.
(2) DOE technical qualification programs.
(3) Mission critical performance issues.
(4) Corporate mandated training requirements.
(5) Recurring training needs and pertinent IDP data.
(6) Training identified through the IDP process.
(7) Professional development programs.
(8) Competency development areas.

b. The Office of Learning and Workforce Development will work with DOE elements to complete this annual process. For more information, organizations should contact the Office of Learning and Workforce Development via its web site. http://humancapital.doe.gov/training.htm.

CHAPTER VI. CONTINUED SERVICE OBLIGATIONS

1. ESTABLISHING CONTINUED SERVICE OBLIGATIONS

a. DOE minimum requirement. A continued service agreement is a written obligation to work for DOE for a specific time period and is required for each training activity that exceeds 180 training hours. DOE elements may require agreements to continue in service for other training incidences or programs of lesser time, if applied equitably to all participants.

b. Training may be a single training activity or incident, a group of concurrent or sequential activities with a common purpose, and/or obtained from the same source over a defined time period. A single incident or a defined group of activities, such as those under a specific training program, requires a single continued service agreement.

c. Exemptions. A continued service agreement is not required for any of the following:

(1) a single work assignment that is not part of a formal training program or an assignment for which only one of the objectives is to develop or assess employee competency levels;
(2) coaching, mentoring, on-the-job, or similar training;
(3) correspondence, web-based, online, or academic courses completed as part-time training;
(4) training provided by manufacturers, suppliers, or contractors for the purpose of equipment or operating systems installation, use, or maintenance; or
(5) training performed under a performance assistance or improvement plan.

d. Employee agreement. Prior to approval of covered training, the employee must sign a continued service agreement indicating that he/she has read and understands the provisions of the agreement and this chapter. The original agreement must be maintained as part of the employee's training record and a copy of the agreement must be provided to the employee. Refusal to sign an agreement makes the training costs involved unallowable and is grounds for denying the training request.

2. PERIOD OF OBLIGATED SERVICE

a. Standard obligation. The standard continued service agreement obligates the employee to remain with DOE for the length of the training plus a post-training period equal to three times the length of the training. The length of the training period equals the sum of full-time training days (at 8 hours per day) and/or the part-time training hours.

b. Adjustment for non-pay status. When DOE pays some or all of the expenses of training, but the employee receives no salary for the training period, the period of obligation is reduced to a period equal to the length of the training period beginning upon the date the employee reports to work after the training.

c. Responsibility for service completion record. Where elements impose a special continued service agreement and no or minimal tuition, fee, or travel costs are incurred, and if the continued service obligation is not met, a memorandum must be placed in the employee's official personnel file documenting the agreement and the employee's actions, unless the service obligation and right of recovery of funds is waived.

3. CALCULATION OF CONTINUED SERVICE OBLIGATION MONETARY VALUE UPON SEPARATION

a. Calculation. The following calculation determines if money is owed to the Federal Government when an employee under a continued service obligation leaves DOE:

(1) Add full-time and part-time hours to determine total hours in training and divide by eight to determine total workdays in training.
(2) Sum the cost of the training, including training-related travel costs, but not salary paid during the training period, to determine the total monetary value of the continued service obligation.
(3) Divide the total monetary value by three times the workdays in training to determine the dollar value of each 8-hour day worked or on paid leave (i.e., average daily payback value) after the trainee has returned to work at the end of the training period.
(4) Multiply each work and leave day after returning to work at the end of the training period by the daily payback value in paragraph 3a(3) and subtract that amount from the total monetary value determined in paragraph 3a(2). When training extends over several months and the trainee returns to work between formal training activities, DOE elements have the option of crediting those days worked toward the continued service obligation or ignoring them and starting the payback period on the first day of return to work after completion of the training period.

b. Completion of obligation. The obligation is completed when the result of the calculation in paragraph 3a above is $0 (i.e., the average daily payback value times the total work and paid leave days credited equals or is greater than the cost of the training assignment).

4. ADMINISTERING CONTINUED SERVICE AGREEMENTS

a. Involuntary separations. A continued service agreement will be canceled and right of recovery waived if the employee is separated involuntarily for reasons beyond his/her control and not because of misconduct or personal delinquency during the training or the post-training, obligated-service period. For purposes of the continued service agreement, when an employee resigns under circumstances that show clearly that the resignation is an election to resign rather than to undergo separation procedures, and there is a record of a reduction-in-force announcement or notice, the resignation is considered an involuntary separation, provided the reason for the separation is not misconduct or personal delinquency.
b. Orders for military service. Military orders to report for active military service (other than training duty) can be sufficient reason for waiving the continued service agreement during the period of training or obligated post-training service. The trainee is responsible for submitting a copy of their military orders.
c. Transfer to an international organization. Separation from DOE for the purpose of accepting employment with an international organization, of which the United States is a member, can be considered grounds for waiving the right to recover if such employment is deemed to be in the interest of DOE and the public.
d. Transfer to another Federal agency. When DOE receives a request for transfer from an employee subject to a continued service agreement, it must notify the gaining agency that

the employee is still subject to a continued service agreement. If DOE determines that the training received will be used in the new position, the agreement is transferred to the gaining agency, and the gaining agency must then ensure the agreement is fulfilled. If DOE determines that the training received will not be used in the new position, it must notify the employee in writing, before the effective date of the transfer that it intends to recover the remaining costs unless the DOE element waives its right of recovery.

e. Liability in voluntary separation. When an employee voluntarily leaves Federal service during a period of obligated post-training service, the employee immediately becomes liable to the Government for repayment of the additional expenses, unless the DOE element waives its right of recovery.

f. Method of collection. Training expenses will be collected from an employee who voluntarily leaves DOE before fulfilling his/her continued service agreement by withholding the actual amount of additional expenses from any monies due the employee by the DOE collection process. The appropriate finance office must collect the amount due.

g. Request for waiver. Each DOE element's training policies and procedures must contain waiver procedures that ensure that an employee with obligated service who leaves DOE is—

(1) notified of the amount DOE intends to recover;
(2) advised of his/her right to request reconsideration of the amount to be recovered or to pursue a waiver of the Government's right to recover;
(3) advised of how to submit the employee's requests in writing before the effective date of separation from DOE when the employee provides at least a 2 week notice;
(4) advised to state the grounds on which the employee believes the determination to reconsider, or waive recovery rights, should be based; and
(5) given the opportunity to respond to the DOE element's findings before DOE may recover training expenses.

h. Record of unmet obligation. If any continued service agreement is violated and a waiver is not granted, a statement to that effect must be placed and retained in the employee's official personnel folder until funds owed to the Government are recovered. The statement must confirm that an unfulfilled agreement exists, specify the amount of the unexpired term of the agreement, and note the amount of money due the Government. After the employee separates from the Federal Government or transfers to another agency, if the obligation is not transferred or waived, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for negotiating and recovering any amount due.

CHAPTER VII. DOE UNIVERSAL, MANAGERIAL, AND LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

1. TALENT CHALLENGE

DOE recognizes that it faces a "talent challenge" in the next few years. To help ensure DOE has the right skills to address this talent challenge, the Office of Learning and Workforce Development developed a competency framework. This framework represents the cross-cutting competencies applicable to all DOE employees, supervisors, managers, and executives. In addition, to address projected shortages of workers with specialized, mission critical skills, work is under way to identify occupational competencies across the Department. These competencies provide a framework to help DOE elements answer and respond to key questions involving skill gaps, current and future capabilities, learning and development efforts, and performance improvement. The competency framework will aid employees and supervisors as they work through the IDP process. In addition to identifying and defining the competencies, a general proficiency scale is established in collaboration with the Office of Human Capital Policy and Strategy. This scale is aligned with standard qualification criteria published by the OPM. Each competency is accompanied by a general definition and competency-specific illustrations at each level of proficiency. The list of Universal, Managerial, and Leadership competencies and the general proficiency scale is below:

DOE UNIVERSAL, MANAGERIAL, AND LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Universal Competencies	***Management Competencies***	***Leadership Competencies***
Oral Communication	Financial Management	Building Partnerships
Written Communication	Human Capital Management	Creativity and Innovation
Interpersonal Skills	Technical Credibility	Developing Others
Team Skills	Process Improvement	External Awareness
Technology Utilization	Project Management	Leveraging Diversity
Customer Service	Safety Management	Strategic Thinking
Public Service Motivation	Program Management	Vision
Knowledge of DOE Business	Conflict Management	Accountability
Integrity/Honesty		Decisiveness
Flexibility		Entrepreneurship
Resilience		Problem Solving
Continual Learning		Political Savvy
Workplace Safety		Influencing/Negotiating
		Team Building
		Executing Strategy
		Improving Organizational Performance

PROFICIENCY LEVELS & GENERAL PROFICIENCY LEVEL DEFINITIONS

Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions –** to be applied to each competency in conjunction with competency-specific proficiency level illustrations.
Level 5 - Expert	▪ Known as an expert in this area and can provide guidance, troubleshoot, and answer questions related to this area of expertise and the field where the skill is used; ▪ Focus is strategic; ▪ Demonstrates consistent excellence in applying this competency area across multiple projects and/or organizations; ▪ Considered the "go to" person in this area within DOE and/or outside organizations; ▪ Creates new applications for and/or leads the development of reference and resource materials for this competency area; and ▪ Able to diagram or explain the relevant process elements and issues in relation to organizational issues and trends in sufficient detail during discussions and presentations, to foster a greater understanding among internal and external colleagues, stakeholders, and customers.
Level 4 - Advanced	▪ Performs the actions associated with this skill without assistance; ▪ Recognized within your immediate organization as "a person to ask" when difficult questions arise regarding this skill; ▪ Focus is on broad organizational/professional issues; ▪ Consistently provides practical/relevant ideas and perspectives on process or practice improvements which may easily be implemented; ▪ Capable of coaching others in the application of this competency by translating complex nuances relating to the specific competency area into easy to understand terms; ▪ Participates in senior level discussions in this competency area; and ▪ Assists in the development of reference and resource materials in this competency area.
Level 3 - Intermediate	▪ Able to successfully complete tasks in this competency as requested; ▪ Help from an expert may be required from time to time, but can usually perform the skill independently; ▪ Focus is on applying and enhancing knowledge or skill; ▪ Applies this competency area to situations occasionally while needing minimal guidance to perform successfully; and ▪ Understands and can discuss the application and implications of changes to processes, policies, and procedures in this competency area.
Level 2 - Basic	▪ Experience gained in a classroom and/or experimental scenarios or as a trainee on-the-job.; and ▪ Needs help when performing this skill; ▪ Focus is on developing through on-the-job experience; ▪ Understands and can discuss terminology, concepts, principles, and issues in this competency area; and ▪ Utilizes the full range of reference and resource materials in this competency area.
Level 1 - Awareness	▪ Requires close and extensive guidance; ▪ Limited knowledge of, or an understanding of ,fundamental techniques and concepts; and ▪ Focus is on learning.

2. UNIVERSAL COMPETENCIES.

The universal competencies needed by every individual to be effective in today's DOE work environment are:

Oral Communication - Makes clear and convincing oral presentations. Listens effectively and clarifies information as needed.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Presents complex information articulately when meeting with key executives or public officials regarding a high-visibility issue; • Testifies before Congress on a catastrophe's or significant issue's impact on the agency's responsibilities and requirements; and • Communicates sensitive information of broad organizational impact on topics without precedence.
Level 4 - Advanced		• Conducts presentations and briefings for high-level agency officials; and • Presents, explains, and defends agency positions and proposals to staff and stakeholders.
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Communicates with committee regarding necessary actions and suggested approaches to accomplish committee objectives; • Conveys information clearly and concisely to ensure staff or team members remain focused on agenda items; • Explains benefits to stakeholders to gain acceptance of programmatic change; and • Presents information, analyses, and recommendations to officials and stakeholders.
Level 2 - Basic		• Communicates effectively with staff by conducting regular meetings to discuss initiatives and current events; • Explains and clarifies policy to affected parties; and • Provides status updates to management team during quarterly division meetings.
Level 1 - Awareness		• Communicates agency goals and initiatives to staff in a clear and concise manner; • Communicates information regarding organizational changes to staff; • Updates supervisors on project status; and • Listens actively to staff ideas and concerns regarding work-related issues.

Written Communication - Writes in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Writes, reviews, and publishes advanced research findings and guidelines to be made available to other groups and agencies; • Writes white paper on key agency objectives for use by high-level officials.
Level 4 - Advanced		• Writes complex technical reports using clear terminology and a concise format for use by high-level decision makers; and • Reviews technical reports, edits materials, and provides suggestions to improve clarity while ensuring documents are targeted to the intended audience.
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Develops documents outlining agency mission and goals for use by the local community; and • Writes reports and position papers outlining various viewpoints on controversial subjects.
Level 2 - Basic		• Writes daily briefs or guidelines to ensure employees are provided with updated information; and • Develops press releases to ensure important issues are addressed.
Level 1 - Awareness		• Summarizes recommendations made in annual report; and • Drafts checklist to track project status.

Interpersonal Skills - Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations. Perceives, assesses and positively influences one's own and other individuals' emotions.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Interacts with public interest groups with opposing viewpoints while conducting the organization's work; and • Is consistently open and approachable when resolving highly sensitive and complex issues.
Level 4 - Advanced		• Treats individuals from all levels of the agency with courtesy and sensitivity; and • Meets with staff and listens to their perspective on organizational policies and procedures.
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Makes self accessible to employees at all levels; and • Corrects employee mistakes in a courteous manner.
Level 2 - Basic		• Shows employees empathy and respect; and • Welcomes new employees into organization by explaining mission and agency goals.
Level 1 - Awareness		• Interacts with co-workers in a tactful manner; and • Responds to employee inquiries.

Team Skills - Acts with integrity and honesty in team processes (honors ground rules set by team; keeps team business within the team, etc.); can shape, guide, and facilitate group processes in meetings, working effectively with others without formal authority, and recognizing the values and talents of others.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Participates as a team member to address controversial agency-wide legislative and regulatory policy issues; and • Contributes as a team member on interagency team to accomplish long-term strategic goals.
Level 4 - Advanced		• Promotes cohesiveness of a team by helping to define roles and responsibilities of each team member and establishing overall objectives; • Participate on teams to implement cross agency programs • Motivates agency-wide team by assigning work based on team member skill level and area of expertise.
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Participates in the decision-making process when developing mission and goals for the division; • Participates on senior-level teams to design and implement requirements for new systems and procedures; and • Serves as a team member for various organizational units to create new systems or processes.
Level 2 - Basic		• Shares skills and abilities within work group to facilitate completion of challenging tasks • Participates on teams to identify and address agency concerns • Informs team members of issues requiring resolution and considers input.
Level 1 - Awareness		• Works with teams to implement operating procedures within agency; and • Suggests team-building exercises to improve office dynamics.

Technology Utilization - Keeps up-to-date on technological developments. Makes effective use of technology to achieve results. Familiarity and effectiveness with the application of e-communications, including e-mail, wireless devices, text messaging, audio/video files, etc., including the exercise of proper e-mail etiquette and the use of standard, DOE provided, computer applications to meet work requirements and updates capabilities as needed. (Examples are Microsoft Word, Outlook, Access, Excel, Power Point, and corporate information systems.) Ensures access to and security of technology systems.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Prioritizes and approves agency investment in information technology (IT) applications and systems • Identifies IT system shortcomings, researches options, and advocates a redesign and restructure of the process to implement new system; and • Reforms infrastructure and develops innovative IT business systems by leveraging expert IT knowledge and sharing information with staff.
Level 4 - Advanced		• Improves ability of agency to gather and act on data from stakeholders by using online surveys and related IT tools; and • Improves agency productivity by expanding the use of existing IT applications for use by clients and staff.
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Applies technical knowledge of IT system to ensure access to, and security of, the system • Uses IT knowledge to streamline nationwide data collection processes and increase output • Develops automated system formulas to calculate costs; and • Manages the implementation of a new electronic processing system in the agency.
Level 2 - Basic		• Works with contractors to implement an IT system change to meet requirements of a new legislative mandate • Researches information technology systems to meet specific program needs; and • Adapts processes to keep pace with new technological developments.
Level 1 - Awareness		• Determines specifications for a new technology system • Streamlines online training to eliminate redundant information • Promotes IT security by disseminating IT security information and reinforcing it.

Customer Service - Balances interests of a variety of clients, and readily readjusts priorities to respond effectively to pressing and changing demands for information, advice and assistance. Anticipates and meets the needs of clients; achieves quality end products; and is committed to continuous improvement of services.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Develops innovative customer service initiative which significantly improves quality and enhances customer satisfaction • Implements organization-wide customer service initiative to raise employee skill levels to improve customer service.
Level 4 - Advanced		• Anticipates growing customer needs and expectations to continuously improve product development and service delivery; and • Creates work group consisting of stakeholders and neutral parties to develop solutions to customer service barriers.
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Designs and implements guidelines to improve products and services • Develops customer satisfaction surveys, analyzes results, and makes necessary improvements; and • Addresses customer service deficiencies by involving employees to identify solutions.
Level 2 - Basic		• Develops guides and user manuals for customers • Ensures products and services comply with customer requirements; and • Streamlines procedures based on customer feedback.
Level 1 - Awareness		• Addresses customer questions in a timely manner; and • Updates agency website to reflect changes to services

Public Service Motivation - Shows a commitment to serve the public. Ensures that actions meet public needs; aligns organizational objectives and practices with public interests.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Designs and develops programs to address critical community requirements; and • Elicits employees' commitment to serve the public good in responding to a disaster.
Level 4 - Advanced		• Partners with community leaders to develop neighborhood action plans; and • Cultivates relationships with community stakeholders to validate usefulness of proposed products and services.
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Approves funding documentation in accordance with procedures to ensure public resources are utilized appropriately; and • Improves processes used to monitor contractors and vendors for supplies, services, and/or equipment to ensure government funds are expended appropriately
Level 2 - Basic		• Reviews unit's policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure they are consistent with public needs; and • Determines community needs by surveying citizens
Level 1 - Awareness		• Responds promptly and accurately to public inquiries about agency policies; and • Suggests gaining feedback from public regarding new policy

Understand the Business of DOE - Understands and supports the various business lines of the Department. Knows how position and organizational functions foster, relate and connect to the Department's mission.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Models an understanding of DOE's and his/her department's services and priorities; and • Models consideration of the interrelationships of departments and functions
Level 4 - Advanced		• Aligns team goals with those of the department; and • In diagnosing problems, considers the interrelationships of DOE organizations and functions
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Ensures that everyone understands each other's roles and responsibilities and how they relate to the department's results; and • Appreciates the political dynamics that exist inside and outside the organization.
Level 2 - Basic		• Understands how his or her job impacts overall county or Department results; and • Demonstrates understanding of how DOE functions and organizations interact to form a whole
Level 1 - Awareness		• Understands DOE's and his/her department's services and priorities; and • Responds promptly and accurately to inquiries about DOE business

Integrity/Honesty - Behaves in an honest, fair, and ethical manner. Shows consistency in words and actions. Models high standards of ethics.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Promotes a climate of openness and honesty and does not penalize responsible dissent; • Does not acquiesce to inappropriate personal requests for favors, political pressure, or promise of gain; and • Displays fortitude to support ethical actions that may negatively impact self or stakeholders.
Level 4 - Advanced		• Instills a climate of trust by admitting own mistakes and taking responsibility for one's actions; and • Discusses potential ethical problems and wrong doing with employees and responds appropriately.
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Communicates honestly with employees regarding potential changes affecting the organization to ensure staff are treated fairly; and • Investigates issues and takes corrective action, as appropriate.
Level 2 - Basic		• Provides staff with accurate information about the vision of the agency and outlines changes in an upfront manner; and • Remains fair and objective when determining skill set needed for projects to select effective team members.
Level 1 - Awareness		• Establishes open and honest communication with employees; • Addresses concerns with employee behavior in a confidential and respectful manner.

Flexibility - Is open to change and new information; rapidly adapts to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Implements a successful action plan after a major organizational change; and • Prioritizes, considers alternatives, and responds quickly and effectively to unexpected and rapidly changing conditions.
Level 4 - Advanced		• Adjusts organizational priorities quickly as situations change • Shifts agency goals and initiatives to align with administration and Congressional priorities.
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Realigns resources to meet changing customer needs; and • Takes feedback into consideration while implementing organizational change.
Level 2 - Basic		• Uses staff feedback to streamline processes in order to meet deadlines; and • Adjusts project plan based on input from staff and stakeholders.
Level 1 - Awareness		• Meets with team to adjust and coordinate schedules to accommodate all team members; and • Adjusts staff assignments based on feedback and workload priorities.

Resilience - Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks. Has ability to identify stress factors and apply learned coping skills to mitigate those factors.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Defends current policy to high-level officials by explaining legal ramifications of suggested changes and the potential impact of legal action on the organization • Demonstrates persistence when providing rationale to staff during times of significant organizational change
Level 4 - Advanced		• Responds to setbacks by developing alternative approaches to determine the best course of action • Maintains unit's effectiveness, quality, and morale during organizational change • Cultivates internal and external stakeholders to develop strategies for obtaining funding from alternate sources following budget cuts
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Perseveres on project despite changing objectives, deliverables, and deadlines • Develops strategies using existing resources for achieving objectives following budget cuts
Level 2 - Basic		• Meets with employees resistant to organizational change to address concerns • Maintains composure and direction in high-pressure situations • Accepts negative feedback in a constructive manner and adjusts behavior accordingly
Level 1 - Awareness		• Reduces project deliverables following funding cut • Continues presentation to customer despite technical difficulties with audio-visual system

Continual Learning - Assesses and recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; pursues self-development.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Engages in systematic, self-directed training and development activities aligned with the strategic needs of the agency • Applies what is learned in training to produce a major positive impact for the agency
Level 4 - Advanced		• Completes leadership development program including training, coaching, and mentoring opportunities and applies key learnings • Arranges and completes rotational assignment, meeting own developmental goals and aligning with organizational strategies
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Completes human capital training required for managers and applies key learnings • Recognizes areas needing improvement and takes training to increase skills
Level 2 - Basic		• Solicits periodic feedback to continually improve quality of own work • Visits other work sites to gain understanding of staff functions and daily tasks
Level 1 - Awareness		• Attends professional conferences to maintain technical knowledge • Recognizes opportunities for self-development

Workplace Safety - Demonstrates safe work practices appropriate for the position and work environment.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Standardizes safe work site safety instructions into SOPs and provides adequate training and equipment • Reviews incidents and recommends improvements
Level 4 - Advanced		• Encourages ideas to improve workplace safety • Identifies and eliminates hazards
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Demonstrates assigned work site safe work habits and communicates warnings to fellow workers • Follows the organization's reporting processes for accidents
Level 2 - Basic		• Recognizes tasks requiring specific safety training • Familiar with applicable rules and regulations
Level 1 - Awareness		• Demonstrates responsibility for maintaining a safe work environment • Practices safe work habits; follows all safety rules and regulations

3. MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES

Outlined below are the management competencies that are needed to be effective in today's DOE work environment. Management competencies are necessary to execute management (not positional) functions. As with leadership competencies, some management competencies can be required of non-supervisory or managerial positions (e.g., managing programs, managing projects, or managing budgets).

Competencies for Assessment of Managers (GS-13 and 14) (Based on DOE Management Competencies) (Managers will also be assessed against employee competencies above.)		
Financial Management - Understands the organization's financial processes. Prepares, justifies, and administers the program or project budget. Oversees procurement and contracting to achieve desired results. Monitors expenditures and uses cost-benefit thinking to set priorities.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Designs and implements an agency-wide financial management system to meet organizational objectives • Develops agency-wide financial procurement procedures and policies • Audits major acquisitions having agency-wide impact, presents findings, and recommends corrective actions
Level 4 - Advanced		• Develops and implements new procurement system to support agency program within time and budgetary constraints • Ensures financial commitments and deadlines are met by facilitating and assessing processes, situations, and issues and takes corrective action, as needed • Considers implications of financial decisions and suggests methods for meeting needs of staff and the organization overall • Develops, justifies, and manages organization-wide budgets for annual projects and programs
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Conducts research to determine resource needs and guides the procurement process to acquire resources • Conducts a cost-benefit analysis to develop sound financial plans with programmatic impact • Follows established guidelines and procedures to ensure approval of funding for key initiatives • Prepares and monitors office's annual operating budget
Level 2 - Basic		• Justifies requested budget allocation to management in relation to program objectives • Allocates program budget across multiple projects
Level 1 - Awareness		• Ensures inventory accounting is accurate and complete • Monitors income and expenditures for projects

Human Capital Management - Builds and manages workforce based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. Ensures that employees are appropriately recruited, selected, appraised, and rewarded; takes action to address performance problems. Manages a multi-sector workforce and a variety of work situations.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Redesigns organizational structure to provide improved service to customers by considering organizational goals, timeframes for achieving goals, and staff responsibilities • Creates new agency-wide human capital programs and activities to meet strategic objectives • Leads task force to analyze agency-wide staffing needs and develops strategy to address recruitment needs • Develops new agency-wide incentive program to retain employees with technical expertise
Level 4 - Advanced		• Develops rewards system to recognize the impact of employee contributions to the organization • Identifies creative strategies to recruit employees with the required skills and qualifications, despite having limited resources • Identifies mission critical occupations and associated competencies needed to perform organizational functions
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Reviews and updates position descriptions and performance plans • Explains restructuring plan to staff and addresses concerns • Recognizes employee contributions by rewarding employees publicly
Level 2 - Basic		• Recognizes and addresses deficiencies of human resources processes or tools • Provides positive feedback to high-performing staff and rewards exceptional performance • Considers impact of personnel decisions on current staff
Level 1 - Awareness		• Makes personnel decisions based upon promotion criteria and position requirements • Utilizes peer recognition process to recognize employees • Meets with employees to set performance goals • Hosts employee appreciation dinner for staff

Technical Credibility - Understands and appropriately applies current laws, policies, and best business practices related to a specialized expertise.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Serves as expert consultant to external managers on complex and controversial matters • Uses expert knowledge in subject matter area to develop new approaches to resolve technical problems
Level 4 - Advanced		• Provides expertise in technical subject area to an organization or team • Develops technical portions of agency guidelines for internal and external use • Evaluates, incorporates, and communicates the latest developments in specialty area through agency guidelines and criteria • Provides technical expertise in the design and implementation of agency-wide projects
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Resolves technical issues promptly by determining and correcting problems • Advises staff on solutions to complex problems, projects, or programs • Uses technical expertise to identify and resolve conflicts between theories, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies
Level 2 - Basic		• Provides staff with feedback and support on technical issues • Makes technically sound recommendations to develop effective work products
Level 1 - Awareness		• Interacts with staff to understand technical aspects of job duties • Gathers technical information from internal and external stakeholders

Process Improvement - Understands and applies strategies, management processes, and resources for process improvement within and across federal agencies with a focus on continuous-process customization and managed improvement. Understands the tools, techniques (for example, business process re-engineering, benchmarking, quality improvement programs, activity-based costing), and technologies that enable process-centric performance improvements to achieve agency missions with dramatic improvements in critical measures of performance such as cost, quality, service and speed.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Wins support and cooperation for process changes for cross-agency improvement initiatives. • Oversees process improvement efforts for major cross-agency processes. • Establishes process teams which produce measureable results in process improvements
Level 4 - Advanced		• Wins support and cooperation for cross-functional process improvement initiatives from multiple DOE offices or organizations. • Improves effectiveness and efficiency for major DOE business processes. • Leads process improvement teams which produce measureable results in process improvements
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Applies the concepts of process management to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of major projects. • Uses benchmarking resources to establish goals for process improvement initiatives • Applies process measurement techniques to measure process effectiveness and efficiency
Level 2 - Basic		• Documents and standardizes key business processes • Documents process improvement opportunities • Plays a key role in implementing process improvement efforts
Level 1 - Awareness		• Participates in cross-organizational process improvement initiatives • Makes recommendations for improving processes

General Project Management - Plans and coordinates projects from inception to successful completion while monitoring teams, goals, communication, time, risk, cost, and quality.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Champions projects to OMB or Congressional officials • Communicates effectively to OMB or Congressional Relations regarding project status, challenges • Serves as expert project management to external managers on complex and controversial matters • Uses expert knowledge of project management methods to resolve technical, cost, or schedule problems
Level 4 - Advanced		• Effectively develops Congressional questions and answers and GAO inquires related to projects • Provides expertise direction and guidance for creation and development of one or more project teams • Evaluates, incorporates, and communicates solutions to project cost, schedule and quality challenges
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Understands applies the policies and practices of DOE Acquisition and Strategy Development and Planning. • Applies and communicates Earned Value Project Management methods • Applies Project Management Practices and Practices in DOE • Supports budget appropriation requests
Level 2 - Basic		• Applies the concepts of Contract Administration for Technical Representatives • Develops project management plans which include planning for cost, schedule, quality and risk mitigation strategies
Level 1 - Awareness		• Effectively plans and manages multiple tasks. • Develops project plans which include cost, schedule and project requirements

Safety Management - Encourages, motivates and demands participation in an integrated safety management system. Leads in the establishment of rules and policies designed to promote employee security, safety and health, accident prevention and hazard awareness.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Ability to advise management on any aspect of a safety and occupational health/risk management program • Formulate and provide recommendations to management on hazard control and abatement
Level 4 - Advanced		• Ability to recommend to management program changes/modifications to existing safety and occupational health program • Conducts/promotes safety activities/awareness for workplace
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Manages Safety and Occupational Health Program for organization
Level 2 - Basic		• Ensures compliance of Safety and Occupational Health Program with laws and regulations
Level 1 - Awareness		• Conducts/promotes safety activities/awareness for workplace

Program Management - Identifies requirements for program objectives. Authorizes, measures, integrates, and controls all program activities. Accepts accountability for program.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Implements program including budgets • Coordinates and facilitates program • Develops comprehensive agreements and contracts to support program • Defines a compelling vision for the program and inspires others to pursue it
Level 4 - Advanced		• Ability to define program mission, goals and structure • Ability to plan program activities • Basic knowledge of types of agreements and ability to draft simple agreements or contract outlines
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Ability to draft and monitor program budget, including status of staff and fiscal resources • Basic knowledge of administrative functions and programs
Level 2 - Basic		• Ability to define objectives for simple projects in a variety of disciplines and to develop and implement basic work plans.
Level 1 - Awareness		• Ability to manage a simple resource management program for a park, or a program in field of expertise

Conflict Management - Encourages creative tension and differences of opinions. Anticipates and takes steps to prevent counter-productive confrontations. Manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Leads managers through consensus process on agency's response to controversial issues • Resolves conflicts arising at the agency level due to competing objectives, limited resources, or differing perspectives
Level 4 - Advanced		• Recognizes conflict and takes steps to address issues by meeting with the involved parties • Mitigates staff concerns regarding agency-wide issues by investigating allegations and taking appropriate action
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Meets with employees and addresses concerns regarding critical issues in an open and honest manner • Takes action to address behavior issues to ensure employees treat each other with respect • Manages conflict among team members by utilizing mediation techniques
Level 2 - Basic		• Implements changes to ensure work environment is fair and equitable based on employee concerns • Ensures employees receive mediation to resolve issues affecting the workgroup • Resolves issues by meeting one-on-one with team member
Level 1 - Awareness		• Addresses employee concerns by providing accurate information to reduce conflict or concern within workplace • Takes action to address employee grievances

4. LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES.

Outlined below are the leadership competencies that are needed to be an effective leader in today's DOE work environment. It is important to note that some leadership competencies can be required by non-supervisory or managerial positions (e.g., strategic planning, strategic execution, building partnerships and change management).

Competencies for Assessment of Executives (GS-15 and above) (Based on DOE Leadership Competencies)		
Building Partnerships - Develops networks and builds alliances; collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Develops, publicizes, and garners support for programs and policies by meeting with key officials, executives, unions, employees, and other interested parties • Partners with key officials from various offices and agencies to develop strategic goals
Level 4 - Advanced		• Collaborates with headquarters, regional offices, and key stakeholders to implement new initiatives • Partners with various parties by sharing information and resources across multiple levels to establish new programs
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Builds consensus with partners by considering input and promoting trust between various parties • Gains support from key leaders and staff within the organization to ensure support for work objectives and team initiatives • Coordinates with partners regarding new strategies to ensure consistent communication with agencies • Ensures future partnerships by developing strong relationships and resolving issues with partners
Level 2 - Basic		• Considers stakeholder input when developing strategies to ensure mutually agreeable initiatives • Coordinates with various agencies to plan and conduct annual events • Coordinates across and within organizations to determine required resources to support goals
Level 1 - Awareness		• Meets regularly with peers and supervisors to identify recurring issues • Develops and maintains network of stakeholders for collection and sharing of information • Meets with staff to discuss plans to implement strategic goals

Creativity and Innovation - Develops new insights into situations; questions conventional approaches; encourages new ideas and innovations; designs and implements new or cutting edge programs/processes.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Devises new methods, procedures, and approaches having agency-wide impact • Develops new performance management system aligned with agency vision to measure staff performance • Develops, introduces, defends, and gains support for a new approach impacting the budget process agency-wide
Level 4 - Advanced		• Creates new methods for planning, designing, and carrying out program objectives • Organizes and leads cross-divisional work group in developing creative solutions to address problems • Creates new units to streamline functions based on workflow analysis
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Creates a system to redistribute work across units during unexpected situations • Solicits feedback from team members in the creation of new agency initiatives and services • Displays creativity by deviating from traditional methods in developing new procedures • Reevaluates current procedures and suggests improvements to ensure an effective, streamlined process
Level 2 -Basic		• Creates a new quality control system to monitor unit processes • Uses cutting-edge ideas to develop business unit services • Works with co-workers to coordinate a project using a creative process
Level 1 - Awareness		• Recognizes creativity in work unit • Considers innovative ideas generated by others

Developing Others - Develops the ability of others to perform and contribute to the organization by providing ongoing feedback and by providing opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Designs and implements opportunities for career development in anticipation of agency restructuring, including mentoring staff and providing training • Directs working group to design training programs focused on skills necessary for meeting strategic goals • Designs, implements, and communicates leadership development opportunities for staff at all levels in the organization
Level 4 - Advanced		• Recommends details and developmental assignments to staff based on career interests and work unit needs • Recognizes staff potential and guides employees in developing skills by recommending appropriate training and sources of information • Works with staff to develop individual development plans addressing employee needs and meeting organizational goals
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Assesses staff and provides timely and consistent feedback regarding technical proficiency and effectiveness • Provides constructive feedback, guidance, and reinforcement to employees regarding job performance • Works with staff to identify work goals and create individual development plans • Evaluates training programs to ensure content meets staff needs
Level 2 - Basic		• Encourages employees to participate in mentoring programs and other learning opportunities • Pairs new staff with seasoned employees to facilitate understanding of the position and organization • Provides orientation to new employees
Level 1 - Awareness		• Provides developmental feedback to staff on job performance • Involves staff in developing project goals and timelines

External Awareness - Understands and keeps up-to-date on local, national, and international policies and trends that affect the organization and shape stakeholders' views; is aware of the organization's impact on the external environment.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Examines and utilizes best practices to build an organizational infrastructure • Develops programs taking into account multiple, diverse views and needs of other agencies or external organizations
Level 4 - Advanced		• Provides policy advice to officials which are consistent with local, national, and international policies and trends • Reflects industry best practices in the development of agency-wide policies and procedures
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Considers the impact of a shift in programmatic direction to meet the needs of local and national customers • Synthesizes complex information gathered from a variety of external sources and disseminates it to staff
Level 2 - Basic		• Gathers and summarizes information to predict stakeholder views on a new policy • Considers external policies and trends when reviewing correspondence, reports, and policy documents
Level 1 - Awareness		• Keeps up-to-date by attending key meetings hosted by other agencies or organizations • Keeps abreast of developments of other parts of the organization

Leveraging Diversity - Fosters an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the organization.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Creates a diverse and inclusive environment after a major reorganization which brings together different cultures, ideas, and experiences • Identifies creative approaches for targeted recruiting to develop a representative workforce that benefits from diverse strengths
Level 4 - Advanced		• Builds a diverse staff with a variety of skills who function effectively to accomplish the mission of the organization • Develops a creative initiative focused on recognizing the various dimensions of diversity to encourage inclusiveness in the workplace
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Recognizes and utilizes skills of staff with diverse backgrounds to benefit the organization, clients, and coworkers • Addresses and corrects the use of inappropriate language or actions which deride diversity
Level 2 - Basic		• Adheres to EEO policies, goals, objectives, and philosophies of valuing diversity in performing everyday duties and responsibilities • Builds teams leveraging diverse capabilities of staff
Level 1 - Awareness		• Attends diversity programs to increase staff awareness • Meets with staff to obtain input on diversity issues within workgroup

Strategic Thinking - Formulates objectives and priorities, and implements plans consistent with the long-term interests of the organization in a global environment. Capitalizes on opportunities and manages risks.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Anticipates a demographic change in society and establishes a vision to effect change through formulation and implementation of objectives and priorities • Designs approaches and procedures to develop a strategic plan supporting key national goals and objectives
Level 4 - Advanced		• Leads and directs a strategic planning team to address and outline the future direction of an organization • Establishes strategic performance measures to allow the organization to continually assess and adjust program direction
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Conducts review of the agency's core mission and gathers information from relevant sources to support development of a strategic plan • Develops and implements Government wide or agency policy by determining target audience, building coalitions with the appropriate population, and developing a budget
Level 2 - Basic		• Considers customer needs and trends in the development of strategic plans • Implements strategic objectives and develops metrics to assess attainment of work unit goals
Level 1 - Awareness		• Develops project teams and staffing plans based on consideration of strategic objectives • Ensures team objectives are consistent with strategic plan

Vision - Takes a long-term view and builds a shared vision with others; acts as a catalyst for organizational change. Influences others to translate vision into action.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Develops an approach to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the organizational structure by using creative reorganizing concepts • Considers various viewpoints from internal and external sources when developing new organizational mission and vision • Builds nationwide coalitions to develop and garner support for shared programs
Level 4 - Advanced		• Directs and provides guidance to managers to develop long-term strategic plan for the division • Educates agency officials about new system and outlines how the long-term benefits align with agency goals • Conducts workshop with employees, human resources staff, and customers to build a vision, strategy, and goals for the unit
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Involves employees and stakeholders in an organizational change process by conducting meetings and providing frequent updates • Acknowledges organizational strengths and develops plan to address areas needing improvement • Communicates vision and mission of new office to employees while incorporating employee feedback for ideas on accomplishing new goals and objectives
Level 2 - Basic		• Involves staff in setting annual goals to ensure buy-in • Conducts interviews with staff to ascertain organization's needs • Conveys vision of agency to staff and stakeholders
Level 1 - Awareness		• Meets with staff to address concerns about new organizational structure • Develops and generates support for work group vision

Accountability - Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost-effective results - monitors and evaluates plans, focuses on results, and measures attainment of outcomes. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Revises and communicates to employees expectations and methods for achieving results in light of failed or delayed agency-level project • Administers and provides oversight of a new complex procedure which delegates responsibility for compliance to various agencies or parties • Accomplishes cultural change of accountability among staff by defining roles and responsibilities to ensure agency goals are met
Level 4 - Advanced		• Provides and promotes position information across divisions to educate staff on respective duties, performance expectations, and consequent impact on accomplishment of agency goals • Holds staff accountable for new performance standards and expectations by taking action with employees not meeting standards
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Implements new guidelines and procedures mandated by Congress • Accepts responsibility when missed deadlines affect major project outcome • Develops and implements internal controls for pilot program to manage potential barriers to implementation
Level 2 - Basic		• Investigates claims of employee violations and encourages staff to take responsibility for actions • Outlines goals and assesses workgroup progress towards goal achievement • Plans and researches safety issues and contacts agency to ensure safety standards are fully utilized • Distributes workload among staff to ensure staff meet key deliverables
Level 1 - Awareness		• Maintains confidentiality of sensitive information by establishing new policies and procedures for handling such information • Delegates work to staff to ensure responsibilities are completed • Meets weekly with team to monitor progress of work plans

Decisiveness - Makes well-informed, effective, and timely decisions, even when data are limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; perceives the impact and implications of decisions.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Uses limited information to solve a variety of complex problems during a crisis situation • Solves highly-complex technical, administrative, and policy issues involved in the implementation of new systems and programs by making timely decisions
Level 4 - Advanced		• Changes course of action despite public support when new information indicates previous strategy would not succeed • Makes timely decisions using available information regarding severe operating budget reductions including possible reductions in force (RIFs)
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Decides to redesign current performance appraisal system to better meet organizational needs • Makes the decision to solve controversial workplace issue by establishing an employee task force
Level 2 - Basic		• Makes sound and timely decisions for a project, team, or work unit • Seeks out best practices to make organizational decisions
Level 1 - Awareness		• Develops meeting agenda and determines topics for group decision making • Determines the appropriate individuals needed for a decision making process

Entrepreneurship - Positions the organization for future success by identifying new opportunities; builds the organization by developing or improving products or services. Takes calculated risks to accomplish organizational objectives.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Assesses customer needs and develops innovative products and services to address recommendations • Implements an innovative strategic campaign to accomplish agency goals
Level 4 - Advanced		• Takes calculated risks by creating new and innovative business lines • Conducts research and develops business proposals resulting in a high return on investment
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Creates a new product, service, or policy based on requirements submitted by users • Makes recommendation to invest in emerging technologies to produce new products
Level 2 - Basic		• Identifies concepts for new programs, products, or services • Seeks feedback for new products or services based on customer needs
Level 1 - Awareness		• Considers current guidelines when developing a new product • Considers feedback when developing a new service

Problem Solving - Identifies and analyzes problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Improves organizational efficiency by developing, planning, and implementing a multi-tier solution to complex or unprecedented problems • Develops and implements a remediation plan restoring stakeholder confidence in a critical agency program
Level 4 - Advanced		• Synthesizes information from internal and external sources to develop an action plan addressing program issues • Addresses systemic barriers inhibiting the achievement of results by forming teams to conduct focus groups and develop solutions
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Reconciles conflicting and/or incomplete information to develop solutions • Applies appropriate methodology to discover or identify policy issues and resource concerns
Level 2 - Basic		• Addresses routine organizational problems by leading a team to brainstorm solutions • Establishes guidelines to clarify complex and/or controversial processes
Level 1 - Awareness		• Proposes solution to improve customer satisfaction • Determines cause of workforce problem and recommends corrective action

Political Savvy- Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Perceives organizational and political reality and acts accordingly.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Understands political issues and effectively works with Congress to receive legislative approval • Leads reorganization of an agency by meeting with stakeholders to understand perspectives and reach consensus on organization-wide plan • Responds to allegations during Congressional hearing
Level 4 - Advanced		• Ensures staff understands documentation and required metrics to analyze political issues • Meets with community leaders to discuss political issues and address concerns • Establishes a clear vision for the organization by meeting with managers agency-wide to ensure initiatives are understood • Addresses controversial political issues by conducting research and considering best practices
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Evaluates political implications by considering different courses of action on a key issue • Meets with key decision makers to ensure approval of new office space to support an agency manpower increase
Level 2 - Basic		• Addresses political issues that may impact internal and external stakeholders • Develops relationships with new political leaders in the agency
Level 1 - Awareness		• Considers impact of union when addressing employee performance expectations • Considers staff concerns regarding organizational changes

Influencing/Negotiating - Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Convinces colleagues and management to accept recommendations involving substantive agency resources and changes in established practice • Influences external executive decision makers to achieve substantive goals
Level 4 - Advanced		• Negotiates with leaders for changes to reorganization design based on feedback from subordinates • Develops plan and convinces high-level agency officials to adopt approach by meeting with officials to explain points • Guides a team of experts to provide advice on, and build credibility for, a multi-level negotiation process
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Develops trust among various parties involved in a negotiation process • Persuades manager to change leadership position or approach to better fit a situational need • Represents the organization in reaching agreements with other organizations and contractors • Obtains union buy-in for a change in working conditions by using open and honest communication and by carefully listening to the union leadership's ideas
Level 2 - Basic		• Meets with team leaders to gain buy-in for new direction of division • Uses factual information to support own point of view when meeting with team members
Level 1 - Awareness		• Explains to staff the importance of their involvement on high stakes projects • Recommends employee seek professional assistance for personal issues affecting work performance • Justifies request for internal resources to accomplish goals

Team Building - Inspires and fosters team commitment, spirit, pride, and trust. Facilitates cooperation and motivates team members to accomplish group goals. Develops leadership in others through coaching, mentoring, rewarding, and guiding employees.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Leads a team to address controversial agency-wide legislative and regulatory policy issues • Inspires interagency team to accomplish long-term strategic goals
Level 4 - Advanced		• Promotes cohesiveness of a dysfunctional team by defining roles and responsibilities of each team member and establishing overall objectives • Leads teams to implement Congressional programs and interact with legislative representatives • Motivates agency-wide team by assigning work based on team member skill level and area of interest
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Includes entire team in decision-making process when developing mission and goals for the division • Creates senior-level teams to design and implement requirements for new systems and procedures • Leads team from various organizational units to create new systems or processes
Level 2 - Basic		• Encourages staff to share skills and abilities within work group to facilitate completion of challenging tasks • Forms teams to identify and address agency concerns • Informs team members of issues requiring resolution and considers input
Level 1 - Awareness		• Works with team to implement operating procedures within agency • Suggests utilizing team building exercises to improve office dynamics

Executing Strategy - Charts the department's direction, develops competitively effective strategic moves and business approaches, and pursues what needs to be done internally to produce good day-in/day-out strategy execution.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Implements and tracks performance of own area of responsibility's contribution to DOE-wide metrics • Regularly reviews performance measures to and informs the organization on needed actions needed to achieve objectives
Level 4 - Advanced		• Establishes subordinate performance plans which link to the strategies • Establishes a system of reward and accountability for achieving performance goals
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Links goals and strategies of the Department to own office-specific goals and strategies • Establishes processes to report their individual offices performance against overall DOE goals and strategies
Level 2 - Basic		• Incorporates DOE-wide strategies into day to day business processes
Level 1 - Awareness		• Communicates DOE organization strategic plan to employees • Communicates to employees how the work they perform support the strategic direction of the DOE

Improving Organizational Performance - Ensures that processes are well defined and systematically monitors, analyzes, and improves performance to improve outcomes; measures the functioning of important processes and services, and, when indicated, identifies changes that will enhance performance.		
Proficiency Level	**General Proficiency Level Definitions**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	*Refer to General Proficiency Scale (at the beginning of Appendix F)*	• Uses benchmarking resources to establish goals for improvement initiatives • Regularly reviews performance measures and takes action related to performance improvement initiatives to improve processes • Initiates and implements DOE-wide improvement initiatives and achieves measureable results
Level 4 - Advanced		• Achieves measurable improvement in processes and reports results • Establishes subordinate performance plans which link to the improvement requirements • Establishes a system of reward and accountability for achieving improvement objectives
Level 3 - Intermediate		• Implements and tracks improvement initiatives for cross functional improvement initiatives • Maps key business processes and establishes a system for continuous improvement
Level 2 - Basic		• Initiates and implements improvement plans for own area of responsibility • Incorporates improvement initiatives into day to day business processes
Level 1 - Awareness		• Communicates improvement strategies to employees • Identifies areas for improvement and develops improvement plans