



PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

OUR VISION FOR A BETTER GOVERNMENT

Our reform agenda outlines five foundational reforms to improve government performance, support the federal workforce and rebuild public trust. In these documents, we'll dive deeper into the five priorities.

Read the full agenda at: bit.ly/3SWWxnd



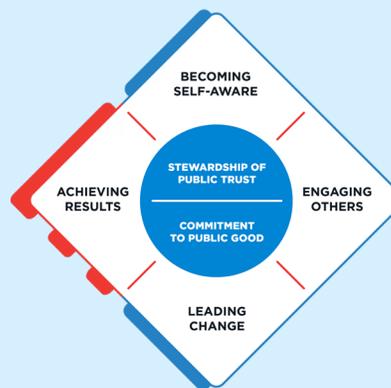
PRIORITY 1

DEVELOP BETTER GOVERNMENT LEADERS

Placing competent people in leadership roles is the most critical factor for our government's success and impact. Individuals appointed by a president, and federal employees in positions of authority, hold great responsibility. They must develop innovative solutions to complex problems, motivate their workforce and hold their teams accountable for delivering critical services.

At a time of declining faith in American institutions, federal leaders—including elected, appointed and career leaders—can rebuild trust in government by meeting public needs effectively. However, our government is struggling to identify, hire and develop individuals for leadership roles.

WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE LEADER?



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Good leaders are critical to any organization's success, and our federal government is no different. But leading effectively in government requires a unique skill set. Our [Public Service Leadership Model](#) sets the standard for effective federal leadership. Its core values—stewardship of public trust and commitment to public good—are uniquely relevant to government leaders. The model's four competencies—becoming self-aware, engaging others, leading change and achieving results—round out the leadership skills needed to succeed.

Government leaders at every level can make a positive impact at work and on the public by using these competencies and core values to understand themselves, their team and the federal system.

Recommendations for Developing Better Government Leaders



Modernize leadership requirements

THE CHALLENGE

Unlike organizations within the private sector and the military, the executive branch does not have a systematic, deliberate approach to developing and supporting leaders. Many senior government officials have been moved into top positions for their expertise on a particular issue but lack fundamental knowledge on how to manage an organization. Yet, they may have tens of thousands of employees in their chain of command.

SOLUTIONS

All federal executives and managers, including political appointees, need to meet a standard of leadership that holds them accountable for running healthy and high-performing agencies. The government should adopt a framework, like the one developed by the Partnership, that requires leaders to prioritize skills essential to effective public service. Additionally, the Executive Core Qualifications should be revisited and regularly reevaluated to ensure they reflect the skills federal executives need to succeed.



Reduce the number of appointees subject to Senate confirmation and streamline the confirmation process

THE CHALLENGE

Between the November election and Inauguration Day, incoming presidents must prepare to fill over 4,000 political appointments. More than 1,300 of these positions require Senate confirmation—an increase of more than 60% since 1960—making it difficult for a new president to get a full team in place quickly.

SOLUTIONS

Congress should reduce the number of positions subject to Senate confirmation, such as persistently vacant seats and postings that report to several other layers of Senate-confirmed roles. Additionally, Congress needs to reform the lengthy confirmation process to make it easier for agencies to fill critical leadership vacancies. For nominations that could win broad bipartisan support, the Senate should develop a model for “bundling” nominations and [improve the privileged calendar](#) to expedite consideration. Congress also should [update the Federal Vacancies Reform Act](#) to clarify who may serve temporarily in a position until a political appointee steps into a role.



Improve the hiring process for senior executives

THE CHALLENGE

The skills needed to lead in a complex, digital world have changed drastically, and our government has not updated methods for hiring and recruiting members of the Senior Executive Service for decades. Nor has there been improvement in ongoing skills development for SES members. These issues often discourage current federal employees, as well as top people from outside government, from applying for these positions.

SOLUTIONS

The government needs to change the way it recruits, identifies and hires people to be federal leaders, including ensuring they have a diversity of experience within the public, private or nonprofit sectors. The Office of Personnel Management should develop and provide agencies with leadership and skills assessments for incoming and aspiring executives that reflect talent needs and private-sector best practices. Agencies should support aspiring government leaders by providing opportunities for joint-duty assignments and cross-sector collaboration, and by making professional development more widely available to GS-11-GS-15 employees.

Public Service Leadership in Action

The following case studies highlight public servants who have used our Public Service Leadership Model’s core principles to solve big challenges, make a public impact and strengthen our country.

STEWARDSHIP OF PUBLIC TRUST

In 2007, public servants representing four different agencies collaborated to start the Medicare Fraud Strike Force. Today, it is a nationwide initiative that has saved about \$10 billion in Medicare costs. Most importantly, it is a clear symbol of what federal leaders can do when they are stewards of the Constitution, taxpayer dollars and the workforces they lead.

COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC GOOD

Dr. Francis Collins, former director of the National Institutes of Health and science advisor to the president, has left an indelible mark on global medicine. Throughout his four-decade career, he leveraged our leadership model competencies to serve the public good and improve the well-being of current and future generations worldwide.

Learn [more](#) about how federal leaders apply the core values and key competencies of our Public Service Leadership Model to make a positive impact on our country.

Research and Resources

- [Public Service Leadership Model](#)
- [Public Service Leadership 360 Assessment](#)
- [Leadership Development Programs Course Catalog](#)
- [LeadHERship in the Federal Government: Leadership and Gender Differences in the Federal Government and Beyond](#)
- [Persistently Vacant: Critical Federal Leadership Positions Go Unfilled for Years](#)
- [A Pivotal Moment for the Senior Executive Service](#)
- [Senior Executive Service: Trends Over 25 years](#)