



Developing Senior Executive Capabilities to Address National Priorities



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Foreword

On behalf of the IBM Center for The Business of Government, we are pleased to present this report, *Developing Senior Executive Capabilities to Address National Priorities*, by Bruce T. Barkley, Sr., a former federal senior executive.

This report is intended to spark a discussion of how to create a cadre of experienced career senior executives who can lead major, cross-agency initiatives on national priorities. According to the drafters of the original 1978 civil service reforms that created the Senior Executive Service (SES), they intended for all SES members to have a government-wide, or at least a department-wide, perspective. The SES corps today, however, is often composed of highly skilled professionals in specific mission functions, with relatively few having cross-agency expertise.

Recent trends in government have created a new demand for cross-agency capabilities, thus resurfacing the importance of leaders who understand cross-agency impacts. This report attempts to offer a practical, targeted approach. It is divided into two parts:

- The first part assesses the creation of a subset of SES members who would be designated government-wide cross-agency leaders.
- The second part is a case study of how the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) created a corporate senior executive management office to more effectively develop, manage, and deploy its senior executive corps.

This report follows two recent, related reports by the IBM Center. All three papers focus on the potential impact of the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, which requires the development of government-wide priority goals and greater coordination among agencies. Jane Fountain's report, *Implementing Cross-Agency Collaboration: A Guide for Federal Managers*, provides useful insights into how the government can proceed in creating effective cross-agency collaborations that can improve outcomes significantly. Donald Moynihan's *The New Federal Performance System: Implementing the GPRA Modernization Act*, describes the key challenges facing the federal government in crafting an effective performance management system.



Daniel J. Chenok



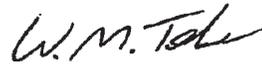
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This new report by Bruce Barkley adds another dimension to the discussion of the Modernization Act's implementation, and of cross-functional leadership on challenges reaching beyond this new law. While processes have been put in place for implementing the Act, a key remaining action item for the federal government is to create a cross-agency leadership corps with the skills and experience needed to successfully manage the challenge of cross-cutting initiatives. The report discusses strategies for developing such a skilled corps, both government-wide and in individual departments. These strategies are informed by the case study of the VA's management of its SES cadre, which can serve as a model for other departments seeking to move to an enterprise approach to managing its senior executives.

We hope that federal executives will find the ideas and recommendations presented in this report useful as they further consider the design and implementation of collaborative cross-agency initiatives required by the Modernization Act.



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Part I: Developing a Cadre of Senior Executives to Undertake Cross-Agency Initiatives

Introduction

The federal government faces an urgent need to create and mobilize a cadre of senior career executives with the skills and experience necessary to respond to critical national and government-wide challenges and opportunities. The GPRM Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRAMA) requires government-wide goal setting and performance management processes focused on addressing broad priorities and minimizing agency duplication and inefficiency. To fulfill this requirement, a cadre of senior executives with cross-agency leadership capabilities is needed.

Many current SES executives have the skills and competencies to collaborate, but the opportunities, incentives, and support systems for managing and leading cross-agency initiatives are not now there. The federal government needs more career executives who can undertake cross-agency activities. The Modernization Act created a new urgency that the SES be modified to meet new challenges to collaboratively plan and undertake cross-agency initiatives. A subset of SES members should be designated as cross-agency leaders and assigned to a new government-wide office that would manage their assignments.

While a new, government-wide process for planning and implementation has been set out in the Modernization Act, the people and leadership factors have not been as clearly addressed. Who will implement this new way of doing the federal government's business? There are now two crucial missing links as to what is needed for government to implement its new cross-agency mandates:

- A cadre of senior executives who are available and willing to undertake cross-agency work
- An office responsible for managing a new corps of senior executives working on cross-agency goals

This report recommends that the SES should be modified to undertake the job now at hand. A subset of the SES should be designated as cross-agency executives. This group of top executive talent would be deployed where needed to respond to broad governmental and cross-cutting challenges. This cadre will consist of a corps of high-level executives with wide leadership experience, ideally public and private, to be commissioned to manage cross-agency priorities and coordination challenges.

About the Study

The study is based on the following:

- Face-to-face interviews with over 25 SES members and thought leaders
- An extensive literature review
- A survey questionnaire with responses from over 50 SES executives
- Online discussions

Findings

A major finding of this study is that the lack of SES mobility across agencies is a significant barrier to developing the talent and experience needed for effective cross-agency collaboration. While this is not a new issue, it has become more critical to address. For example, the recent failure of the decade-long effort by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to create a common electronic medical record is a case where more effective cross-agency leadership could have made a difference.

SES executives often find it difficult to build cross-agency partnerships, especially if their home agencies are narrowly focused on their own program performance and protecting their own resources. Collaboration is difficult at best and runs against prevailing incentives and agency value systems. Current OMB guidance in performance management focuses largely on single-agency, rather than interagency and broad network outcomes. According to GAO, the recently promulgated cross-agency priorities are still in the early stages of implementation (GAO, 2012).

An analysis of previous studies reveals that there has historically been little mobility among SES members:

- In 2007, OPM sponsored a Thought Leader Forum on developing federal executives in the 21st century; it recommended:
 - Central coordination of development opportunities, especially for transferable, enterprise-wide skills and competencies
 - A centralized career path for a small subset of executives with particularly cross-cutting skills and competencies who would be designated as enterprise-wide executives
- The Partnership for Public Service 2009 study of the SES, *Unrealized Vision: Reimagining the Senior Executive Service*, looked at SES mobility and found virtually no mobility among SES executives across agencies.
- A follow-up study by the Partnership in 2012, *Mission-Driven Mobility*, found that only eight percent of SES members have worked in more than one agency during their careers. The study also concluded that agencies tend to hoard good executive talent and are reluctant to encourage mobility.

The lack of mobility has been especially acute in domestic civilian agencies. Domestic agencies have not embraced the Department of Defense (DOD) process of rotating executives and managers around the military services for leadership experience and development. Typically, military officers in the DOD have two years of leadership and management training during their career while equivalent civilian executives in the domestic agencies have much less mobility, less training (estimated to be about two months), and less exposure to a wide variety of technologies, organizational cultures, and new management approaches in various agencies.

Other countries have recognized the need for centralized development and management of senior executives. For example, the Canadian government has approximately 250 executives in what are called the EX-4 and EX-5 groups. This core group is seen as a corporate resource for the whole of government. The underlying principle is to develop a cohort of senior executives with a broad view of government operations, able to take on top-level responsibilities within the same department or elsewhere. A central unit called the Leadership Network supports this group.

In the U.S., there is no government-wide corps of experienced executives dedicated to the implementation of national or cross-agency priority goals. While OPM has an office dedicated to the SES, OPM does not currently have the authority to take responsibility for SES rotations

and development in general. SES executive training and career path development are largely left to individual agencies, thus there is wide disparity in the way career development is handled. There is no government-wide coordination of SES development to prepare SES executives to take on major leadership roles requiring proven people skills and government-wide performance improvements and reform initiatives that require a unified, “whole-of-government” approach.

While one strategy might be to continue to encourage increased mobility for SES members (as advocated by many), in a fiscally constrained environment it is highly unlikely that agencies will be willing to let their best performers leave. In addition, previous research has also shown that SES members themselves have demonstrated little interest in mobility. A new approach is needed. We are confident that there is a small cadre of SES members who would be interested in government-wide and cross-agency assignments. These executives would become government-wide employees placed in a new government-wide office that would assume responsibility for their development and placement.

What Has Changed

The implementation of the Modernization Act could influence the way government does business in the years ahead. As mandated by the Modernization Act, OMB in early 2012 established 14 cross-agency priority goals. These goals are explained in the box *2012–2014 Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals*. A full list of the interim CAP goals (FY 2013) is presented in Appendix I.

The capacity of senior career leadership to carry out these cross-cutting goals and the longer-term performance planning mandated in the legislation has not been addressed. While there are leaders for each CAP goal, there is no apparent government-wide plan to mobilize agency leadership talent to implement cross-agency initiatives.

These CAP goals represent an example of the many potential whole-of-government assignments for enterprise-wide SES executives who would collaborate across agencies to build a government-wide view and program frameworks for addressing cross-cutting issues. While collaboration is already going on, it is argued in this report that the lack of a critical mass of career SES leadership talent dedicated to cross-agency goals could impede the federal government’s capacity to implement the cross-cutting mandate across agencies in the years ahead.

2012–2014 Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals (February 2012–February 2014)

Outcome-Oriented Goals

- Exports
- Entrepreneurship and Small Business
- Broadband
- Energy Efficiency
- Veteran Career Readiness
- STEM Education
- Job Training

Management Improvement Goals

- Cybersecurity
- Sustainability
- Real Property
- Improper Payments
- Data Center Consolidation
- Closing Skills Gaps
- Strategic Sourcing

Note: See Appendix I for a more detailed description of each of the above goals.

Another dimension in coordinating the implementation of the federal cross-cutting goals and programs through better cross-agency collaboration is the beneficial impact of this kind of change on state and local government. Because many state and local government programs mirror federal programs, and suffer inefficiencies when federal programs are not coordinated and rationalized, the lack of collaboration at the federal level increases the friction in program implementation in the states.

In the past, there have been many calls for new approaches to managing the SES pool. Participants at the 2007 OPM Thought Leader Forum raised the need for a “centralized career path for a small subset of executives with particularly cross-cutting skills and competencies that would be designated as enterprise-wide executives.” As noted earlier, the forum saw a need for “some sort of central coordination of development opportunities, especially for executives with transferable, enterprise-wide skills and competencies ... there may be a place for centralized, government-wide action to leverage opportunities and coordinate agency activities.”

Recommendations: What is Needed Now

In view of the increasing importance of interagency collaboration to address the requirements of the Modernization Act, such as the implementation of cross-agency priorities, the executive branch needs more SES executives who can address and resolve whole-of-government problems and priorities beyond their home agency missions. Based on our research, we no longer believe this can be accomplished through existing mobility and rotation programs that permit executives to move around to various agencies. Current barriers to such movements, such as the loss of an SES position, have greatly hindered the interest of SES members to move around government and take cross-cutting assignments.

Current OMB and OPM guidance does not address capacity issues raised by the Modernization Act of having a cadre of SES executives who could be deployed to work on broad network and interagency/intergovernmental issues of increasing importance across government. OPM did, however, issue a *Memorandum* in January 2012 (as required by the Modernization Act) that presented 34 core competencies needed in the implementation of the Modernization Act. That *Memorandum* is presented in Appendix II.

While the expectations for the SES are framed by the Office of Personnel Management in terms of culture change and transformation, there is currently no clear goal and process to develop leaders for culture change and cross-agency work. If the SES is expected to change from an *agency-level program focus* to a *cross-agency results focus*, how will that change occur given the agency-centricity of the current system? How will executive performance against cross-agency goals and priority issues be assessed?

For these reasons, we recommend the following two actions to create a new professional and collaborative SES leadership core in the federal government.

- **Recommendation One.** Create a small, high-level cadre of cross-agency executives. This corps of executives will work with agency-level executives who have been assigned to work on cross-agency goals. They will serve as catalysts for cross-agency initiatives.
- **Recommendation Two.** Create a cross-agency SES corporate management office responsible for deployment of a government-wide SES pool to work on cross-agency projects. This office could be placed under the direction of the President’s Management Council, or, alternatively, in conjunction with the Performance Improvement Council.

Recommendation One: Create a small, high-level cadre of cross-agency executives.

A subset of the existing SES should be designated as cross-agency executives. This cadre would be selected from a pool of high-performance executives capable of taking on assignments to address cross-agency priorities and issues, such as those posed by the Modernization Act and other mandates to implement such initiatives. This smaller pool of government-wide leaders could have term contracts on assignment from their home agencies, and an incentive-based executive compensation system driven by performance goals and performance evaluations.

These executives would be held accountable for the implementation of defined, time-bound, cross-agency initiatives. This would involve leadership across agencies to create a truly collaborative planning process involving strategic plans and annual performance reports. Major emphasis would be placed on cross-agency collaboration to achieve shared goals, strengthening problem-solving networks to improve outcomes, and spreading promising performance management practices across networks.

SES executives identified for government-wide assignments would develop individual transition plans, which could be tailored after the Department of Veterans Affairs internal, enterprise-wide SES management system. (See Part II for a case study of the VA's management of their SES cadre.) Selected individuals would have a track record of experience, such as experience of at least two years of executive performance in private-sector or nonprofit organizations outside of their home agency. Appendix III presents additional information on the proposed qualifications of this SES cadre.

This new cadre of SES members would consist of executives who can work with many agencies to achieve cross-agency priorities and who will perform independently of any single agency mission, working at the interface of related agencies. They would collaborate on cross-agency goals and bridge between-agency gaps that now inhibit management of broad priorities. A recent GAO study found that the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and HUD and the SBA were not working effectively together to encourage entrepreneurs and small businesses. Despite the existence of 52 federal programs to help small startups, these agencies have failed in GAO's view to collaborate to ensure that programs were aligned, delivered, and evaluated (GAO, 2011).

These SES executives would work to achieve broad program outcomes and best practices from a whole-government approach. That kind of cross-agency coordination is difficult to achieve now, given the predominant single-agency cultures and narrow agency silos.

Development of a government-wide SES cadre will require a balance between broadly applicable core qualifications and competencies tailored to specific policy or program groupings. Agencies address issues with common strategic outcomes (e.g., communities of intelligence; transportation, development, and commerce; and education and labor) that share common goals and programs that must be coordinated to succeed.

One policy arena that has adopted this strategic results-oriented approach is the intelligence community. The core qualification standards developed in 2010 for senior civilian officers in the intelligence community (which spans 15 agencies) stress leading the intelligence enterprise through collaboration and integration (building effective networks across agencies), enterprise focus (demonstrating a deep understanding of the intelligence community components), and values-centered leadership (commitment to selfless service, moral and intellectual courage, and collaboration, leveraging the diversity of all members of the community).

Recommendation Two: Create a cross-agency SES corporate management office responsible for deployment of a government-wide SES pool to work on cross-agency projects. This office could be placed under the direction of the President's Management Council or, alternatively, in conjunction with the Performance Improvement Council.

The recommendation is to create a small, central SES support staff that would be responsible for the recruitment and assignment of a government-wide leadership core with the capacity to lead cross-cutting initiatives that achieve the cross-cutting priorities and performance goals mandated by the Modernization Act.

The new SES cadre will need a home base and an executive sponsor. This new office could be sponsored by the President's Management Council (PMC) and have administrative support provided by the General Services Administration as part of its current responsibility for managing a series of government-wide councils. An alternative would be to co-locate it with the Performance Improvement Council (PIC), which was created statutorily by the Modernization Act. This new office would work with OMB, OPM, and the agencies to identify, build, and deploy the cadre of experienced SES cross-agency leaders.

The focus for development of this new cadre of experienced SESers would be the implementation of government-wide or cross-cutting agency initiatives, including those associated with the GPRA Modernization Act's cross-agency priority goals.

Part II: Case Study

Developing an Enterprise-Wide Focus among Senior Executives at the Department of Veterans Affairs

There is a need for a cadre of senior career executives who have a broad perspective of government and experience in implementing cross-agency initiatives. The President's Management Council (PMC), comprised of the deputies of each of the major departments and agencies, had identified a parallel need in 2010 within those organizations. The PMC worked with the President's Management Advisory Board, comprised of CEOs of major corporations, to identify corporate best practices and strategies for developing an enterprise-wide—or whole-of-organization—perspective and experience among their career senior executives. The Department of Veterans Affairs was a pioneer in developing such an approach.

Subsequently, the President's Management Council worked with both the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management to develop a strategy appropriate in a federal government context. OMB and OPM issued a joint *Memorandum* in 2011, calling upon departments and agencies to strengthen the SES by:

- Improving SES professional development programs
- Streamlining burdensome administrative processes
- Strengthening personnel performance management
- Expanding and diversifying executive talent pipelines

The VA SES initiatives are an important development because cross-agency leaders cannot develop their skills and experience without prior experience in their home agencies. Future cross-agency executives should be developed within each department as is now being done in the Department of Veterans Affairs. Departments should develop their SES corps with an enterprise-wide perspective. This will help departments in performing their mission, as well as creating a long-term pipeline of skills and experience for cross-agency leadership opportunities. A leading example is the Department of Veterans Affairs, which is reviewed here as a case study.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) appears to be a model of effective and focused Senior Executive Service support at the enterprise (departmental) level. A central staff, headed by a deputy assistant secretary, is successfully shaping an enterprise-wide program to build a stronger, collaborative, and more agile SES cadre within VA. The process is part of a broader, department-wide effort to provide a corporate, enterprise-wide perspective in developing and managing the VA workforce.

When Secretary Eric Shinseki arrived in 2009, he realized that transforming the VA required him to change the way VA managed its senior executives. In the fall of 2009, he centralized management of the entire SES executive cadre and established a corporate office to do so. In

early 2010, VA selected a new deputy assistant secretary, Ms. Christine Klueh, for the corporate office and began laying the foundation for corporate management. Since then, VA has made strategic improvements in the effectiveness of its executive cadre.

After reviewing SES performance and placement issues, VA leadership concluded that many of its SES members were unequipped for the executive roles they were expected to play, especially in VA hospitals, and that the department's support system for the SES was inadequate. Although VA had a strong cadre of professional senior executives, there was not always a focus on addressing VA enterprise challenges.

To transform the way VA manages and supports SES members and leaders, the department created the Corporate Senior Executive Management Office (CSEMO). In effect, the office is the owner/manager of the entire department's SES pool and the pipeline that feeds it. CSEMO was assigned responsibility for equipping senior executives to handle future leadership roles in the department when and where they are needed.

Christine Klueh assumed responsibility for corporate senior executive management in February 2010. Bringing high-level experience from the Defense Department to the job, Ms. Klueh had a vision of how the office should operate. CSEMO committed to help VA deal with its past failures to equip its managers for executive roles.

Because VA had a strong culture of decentralized management, SES members and executives were often stovepiped and were not receiving consistent and deliberate support. CSEMO was established to apply an enterprise-wide approach to SES management, including recruiting, retaining, developing, training, and rewarding VA senior executives. CSEMO now provides one-stop services for SES executives, including benefits counseling and employee advice and assistance. The underlying theory in VA is that with more support and development, senior executives will be more collaborative, decisive, ethical, and more agile in leading the transformation of the department. The sections below each describe a key component of how CSEMO is managing its SES cadre.

Improving the Management of the SES and Service Delivery

CSEMO initiated a series of actions to improve SES management and service delivery to VA's customers and stakeholders:

- Hiring strong leaders and positioning them for success when they join VA's executive team
- Working with stakeholders to streamline the current hiring process and ensure consistency in processes and procedures across VA
- Developing executive competencies and recognizing that while there may be some technical requirements in an executive job, technical capacity should not be the only emphasis
- Partnering with OPM to address executive/leader assessments, and processes to identify strong leaders in applicant pools
- Reaching out to other agencies to encourage executives to consider employment in VA
- Working to ensure that VA has a diverse SES cadre comprised of executives from outside government, from other government agencies, and promoted from within VA
- Driving a culture of continuous learning for executives, an environment where executives are held accountable and are results-driven

Improving the SES Professional Development Program

VA overhauled its SES leader development program, including:

- Establishing an SES orientation program to train SES leaders on core VA issues, priorities, and leadership
- Requiring orientation plans for all executives when they start new jobs
- Providing executive coaches to new executives
- Developing a robust on-boarding process for all new executives
- Creating a culture of movement and talent management where executives understand that they are expected to develop through various experiences that should include rotational assignments and details
- Changing the operating philosophy and procedures for performance management and accountability
- Revising performance plans to ensure linkages to the VA's strategic plans and transformation priorities
- Providing that clear objectives and metrics be developed to enable more explicit measurable performance, and personal accountability is emphasized

Improving On-Boarding

VA developed a comprehensive on-boarding program, including an innovative approach to SES personal and professional transition planning. This individual SES transition plan is a plan for personal and professional change and transition to a leadership role. The VA on-boarding checklist includes seven stages of development activity:

- **Pre-board activities.** This set of activities includes introduction of a new executive to the department, the provision of needed facilities and office space, a security briefing, providing a list of stakeholders and agency leaders, and assignment of a mentor. During this period, a briefing book is prepared and training is scheduled, which includes performance management and distribution of staff bios and position descriptions.
- **Day 1/Week 1.** This set of activities includes a processing session, a welcome, presentation of CSEMO role, and development of a plan for executive training and development.
- **First 30 days.** This set of activities includes drafting performance objectives, creating an executive development and transition plan, the facilitation of networking, and obtaining an executive coaching contractor for assessment development. During this period, the new SES member receives a briefing on the SES and meets with his or her mentor to discuss how to get things done in VA. In addition, meet-and-greet appointments are scheduled and the new SES member is assigned an executive sponsor.
- **First 90 days.** The new executive identifies professional development opportunities and develops an action plan based on his or her risk assessment, meets with coach and mentor, and receives feedback on his or her performance during the first 90 days.
- **Six months.** During this period, a leadership assessment process is conducted, a feedback session is scheduled, and the initial development plan is revisited.
- **One year.** A roadmap for long-term success is developed and the SES member attends a VA executive forum.
- **18 months.** The SES member registers for CSEMO mandatory training courses. CSEMO follows up with the executive's needs and assesses the on-boarding process prior to closing it out.

Streamlining Burdensome Administrative Processes

VA found the SES hiring process to be its most burdensome administrative problem in recruiting external hires. To address this problem, VA collaborated with OPM to speed up hiring and recruiting external talent by focusing on competencies and resumes in its talent search. CSEMO created a talent management process and a major effort to streamline processes to manage VA's executive talent lifecycles and help executives achieve results and outcomes. Using project management and business process improvement expertise, CSEMO is mapping and documenting current VA business processes, tools, and data sources for VA's executive lifecycle management. CSEMO has also commissioned a benchmarking study of top-performing government and industry talent management systems, and is developing a robust business process and system reengineering report with standardized products such as tracking systems, templates, reports, and program materials.

To eliminate traditional, paper-based communication tools and facilitate speedy communications among executives, CSEMO developed and implemented a CSEMO Connect website to enhance communication and collaboration among VA's senior leadership. More online training is planned as well.

Strengthening Executive Performance Management

VA is upgrading its performance appraisal systems to more clearly focus SES members on specific goals and objectives. These plans will inform performance award decisions. The secretary and deputy secretary are personally involved and have robust reviews of organizational performance throughout the year.

VA is driving a culture where every executive feels personally responsible for ensuring that the department keeps its commitment to America's veterans. This requires that executives understand that they are part of the leadership team, not simply there to do "their" job. Executives are expected to instill passion across the department to drive home changes needed to deliver the best possible services to VA's key customers.

Expanding and Diversifying Executive Talent Pipelines

Recognizing that VA had no effective SES pipeline, the secretary and CSEMO instituted an enterprise-wide approach to filling these key leadership positions, focusing on strategic leadership competencies and VA-wide needs. The selection process now requires greater senior-level engagement. Interviews are conducted at multiple levels and two or more levels of management must endorse nominations. The secretary approves every SES selection. VA is focused on hiring the right person for the right position and investing in each executive's development. VA leadership has prioritized filling senior executive positions with the right people in a timely manner.

Assessing the Success of the VA Initiative

VA faces the classic challenge of measuring the effectiveness of its focus on executive talent. Ideally, the measure of success would be an indicator(s) of the agency's performance in serving customers. Processing times for veteran services, for instance, have improved. On a cross-agency front, the department is working to improve effective coordination and collaboration with the Defense Department.

Effective response to OMB guidance on performance management is another way of measuring success. Government-wide, there is some evidence that senior executives are not yet fully implementing OMB policy on performance management by using performance data in

management and resource allocation. Recent research indicates that OMB performance management initiatives promoting the use of performance data in agency budgeting and program management have not yet produced any fundamental changes in the way agency programs and budgets are handled. If that is the case, then it appears that SES performance in the agencies has not been effectively tied to OMB mandates for performance management. This raises the issue of whether the separate OMB performance management and OPM human capital functional silos are being integrated in guiding VA and other agencies.

Appendix I: Cross-Agency Priority Goals, FY 2013*

OMB has identified 14 cross-agency priority goals (CAP goals). Seven focus on mission-related functions. Seven focus on mission-support. All are existing initiatives but now have a higher profile. However, there is currently no government-wide, SES cadre available to help implement these broad goals.

A [statutory requirement](#), as part of the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, directs OMB to designate a senior government official to serve as the lead for each of the goals and to conduct quarterly reviews on the progress toward these goals, which are supposed to span a two- to four-year timeframe. These goals are not supposed to represent new policy initiatives or require new monies but are rather a focus on implementing existing policies within existing monies.

The FY 2013 goals are technically interim goals, since the CAP goal cycle is supposed to be co-terminus with a presidential term. The “real” CAP goals are not due until February 2014, and will appear in the FY 2015 budget.

OMB [posted the FY 2013 CAP goals](#) on its Performance.gov website. The goal statements are accompanied by a description that provides some context for the goal, the name of the goal leader, a summary of the action plan, and a list of the agencies and programs that will contribute to the action plan.

CAP GOALS FOR MISSION-RELATED FUNCTIONS:

CAP Goal 1: Exports: Double U.S. exports by the end of 2014.

Goal Leader: Michael Froman, assistant to the president and deputy national security advisor for international economic affairs.

CAP Goal 2: Entrepreneurship and Small Business. Increase federal services to entrepreneurs and small businesses with an emphasis on 1) startups and growing firms and 2) underserved markets.

Goal Leaders: Jason Furman, deputy director, White House National Economic Council, and Tom Kalil, deputy director for policy, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

CAP Goal 3: Broadband. As part of expanding all broadband capabilities, ensure 4G broadband coverage for 98 percent of Americans by 2016.

Goal Leader: Todd Park, U.S. chief technology officer, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

* This appendix originally appeared in [Implementing Cross-Agency Collaboration: A Guide for Federal Managers](#) by Jane Fountain. IBM Center for The Business of Government, 2013.

CAP Goal 4: Energy Efficiency. Reduce energy intensity (energy demand/\$ real GDP) 50 percent by 2035 (with 2010 as the base year).

Goal Leader: Heather Zichal, deputy assistant to the President for energy and climate change, Domestic Policy Council.

CAP Goal 5: Veteran Career Readiness. By September 30, 2013, increase the percent of eligible service members who will be served by career readiness and preparedness programs from 50 percent to 90 percent in order to improve their competitiveness in the job market.

Goal Leader: Rosye Cloud, White House policy director for veterans, wounded warriors and military families.

CAP Goal 6: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education. Work with education partners to improve the quality of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education at all levels to help increase the number of well-prepared graduates with STEM degrees by one-third by 2022, resulting in an additional one million graduates with degrees in STEM subjects.

Goal Leaders: Steve Robinson, special assistant, White House Domestic Policy Council.

CAP Goal 7: Job Training. Ensure our country has one of the most skilled workforces in the world by preparing two million workers with skills training by 2015 and improving the coordination and delivery of job training services.

Goal Leader: Portia Wu, special assistant to the President for labor and workforce policy, White House Domestic Policy Council.

Significantly, some existing cross-cutting initiatives, such as food safety, are not on the list. This might be because these functions were seen as well underway and not needing the prominence of being named a CAP Goal.

CAP GOALS FOR MISSION-SUPPORT FUNCTIONS:

CAP Goal 8: Cybersecurity. Increase federal information system cybersecurity. By 2014, achieve 95 percent utilization of critical administration cybersecurity capabilities on federal information systems, including strong authentication, Trusted Internet Connections (TIC), and Continuous Monitoring.

Goal Leader: J. Michael Daniel, special assistant to the President and cybersecurity coordinator.

CAP Goal 9: Sustainability. By 2020, the federal government will reduce its direct greenhouse gas emissions by 28 percent and will reduce its indirect greenhouse gas emissions by 13 percent by 2020 (from 2008 baseline).

Goal Leader: Nancy Sutley, chair, Council on Environmental Quality.

CAP Goal 10: Real Property. The federal government will manage real property effectively to generate \$3 billion in cost savings by the end of 2012.

Goal Leader: Danny Werfel, controller, Office of Management and Budget.

CAP Goal 11: Improper Payments. The federal government will reduce the government-wide improper payment rate by at least two percentage points by FY 2014.

Goal Leader: Danny Werfel, controller, Office of Management and Budget.

CAP Goal 12: Data Center Consolidation. Improve IT service delivery, reduce waste and save \$3 billion in taxpayer dollars by closing at least 1200 data centers by fiscal year 2015.

Goal Leader: Steven VanRoekel, federal chief information officer.

CAP Goal 13: Closing Skill Gaps. Close critical skills gaps in the federal workforce to improve mission performance. By September 30, 2013, close the skills gaps by 50 percent for three to five critical federal government occupations or competencies, and close additional agency-specific high risk occupation and competency gaps.

Goal Leader: John Berry, director, Office of Personnel Management.

CAP Goal 14: Strategic Sourcing. Reduce the costs of acquiring common products and services by agencies' strategic sourcing of at least two new commodities or services in both 2013 and 2014, that yield at least a 10-percent savings.

Goal Leader: Joseph Jordan, acting administrator for federal procurement policy, Office of Management and Budget.

In addition to the 14 CAP goals, the major agencies also developed priority goals, as required by the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010. There are 103 agency priority goals in the FY 2013 budget. About half are continuations of goals that were set administratively by the Obama administration when it came into office. The remainder are new or are a step beyond the original goals set in 2009.

Appendix II: Memorandum for Chief Human Capital Officers on Functional Competencies for GPRAMA



The Director

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

JAN 3 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS

FROM:

JOHN BERRY
DIRECTOR

Handwritten signature of John Berry in black ink.

Subject:

Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act of 2010
Functional Competencies

The Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act (GPRAMA) of 2010 required the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to identify the competencies needed to perform the following three functions: developing goals, evaluating programs, and analyzing and using performance information for the purpose of improving Government efficiency and effectiveness. In May 2011, OPM, working with the Performance Improvement Council and the Office of Management and Budget's Office of Performance and Personnel Management, initiated a study to identify these critical competencies. Subject matter experts provided insights into the competencies needed and worked with us to identify the competencies associated with the key roles of Performance Improvement Officer, Performance Improvement Staff, and Goal Leader. Over the next year, as specified in the GPRAMA, OPM will provide guidance on how to incorporate the skills and competencies into positions descriptions and will work with the Chief Learning Officers to incorporate the key skills and competencies into agency training programs.

If you have any questions regarding the competency model, please contact Andrea Bright, Manager of Classification and Assessment Policy, at (202) 606-3600, or e-mail competency@opm.gov.

Attachment

cc: Human Resources Directors

GPRAMA 2010 Functional Competencies

Thirty-four competencies were found to be important for performing work in the GPRAMA functions of developing goals, evaluating programs, and analyzing and using performance information. The table below identifies the core subset of competencies essential for the performance of this work within each role. All other competencies are supplemental and may be useful or enhance the function. Definitions of the competencies follow the table.

Functional Role Core Competencies		
Performance Improvement Officer	Performance Improvement Staff	Goal Leader
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accountability ▪ Creativity and Innovation ▪ Decision Making ▪ External Awareness ▪ Influencing/Negotiating ▪ Leadership ▪ Oral Communication ▪ Organizational Awareness ▪ Partnering ▪ Performance Measurement ▪ Political Savvy ▪ Problem Solving ▪ Strategic Thinking ▪ Technical Credibility ▪ Vision ▪ Written Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accountability ▪ Attention to Detail ▪ Customer Service ▪ Influencing/Negotiating ▪ Information Management ▪ Oral Communication ▪ Organizational Awareness ▪ Organizational Performance Analysis ▪ Partnering ▪ Performance Measurement ▪ Planning and Evaluating ▪ Problem Solving ▪ Reasoning ▪ Technical Competence ▪ Written Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accountability ▪ Creativity and Innovation ▪ Customer Service ▪ Decision Making ▪ External Awareness ▪ Influencing/Negotiating ▪ Leadership ▪ Oral Communication ▪ Organizational Awareness ▪ Partnering ▪ Planning and Evaluating ▪ Problem Solving ▪ Strategic Thinking ▪ Vision ▪ Written Communication

GPRMA 2010 Functional Competencies

Accountability - Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost-effective results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.

Attention to Detail - Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.

Change Management - Knowledge of change management principles, strategies, and techniques required for effectively planning, implementing, and evaluating change in the organization.

Compliance - Knowledge of procedures for assessing, evaluating, and monitoring programs or projects for compliance with Federal laws, regulations, and guidance.

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.

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.

Customer Service - Works with clients and customers (that is, any individuals who use or receive the services or products that your work unit produces, including the general public, individuals who work in the agency, other agencies, or organizations outside the Government) to assess their needs, provide

information or assistance, resolve their problems, or satisfy their expectations; knows about available products and services; is committed to providing quality products and services.

Decision Making - Makes sound, well-informed, and objective decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, to accomplish organizational goals; causes change.

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.

Financial Analysis – Knowledge of the principles, methods, and techniques of financial analysis, forecasting, and modeling to interpret quantitative and qualitative data; includes data modeling, earned value management, and evaluating key financial indicators, trends, and historical data.

Flexibility - Is open to change and new information; rapidly adapts to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.

Influencing/Negotiating - Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.

Information Management - Identifies a need for and knows where or how to gather information; organizes and maintains information or information management systems.

Interpersonal Skills - Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness to others; develops and maintains effective relationships with others; may include effectively dealing with individuals who are difficult, hostile, or distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and different situations; is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences.

Leadership - Influences, motivates, and challenges others; adapts leadership styles to a variety of situations.

Legal, Government and Jurisprudence - Knowledge of laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, legal practices and documents, Government regulations, Executive orders, agency rules, Government organization and functions, and the democratic political process.

Mathematical Reasoning - Solves practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical and statistical techniques.

Oral Communication - Expresses information (for example, ideas or facts) to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information (for example, technical, sensitive, controversial); makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately.

Organizational Awareness - Knows the organization's mission and functions, and how its social, political, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them; this includes the programs, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the organization.

Organizational Performance Analysis - Knowledge of the methods, techniques, and tools used to analyze program, organizational, and mission performance; includes methods that deliver key performance information (for example, comparative, trend, diagnostic, root cause, predictive) used to inform decisions, actions, communications, and accountability systems.

Partnering - Develops networks and builds alliances; collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.

Performance Measurement - Knowledge of the principles and methods for evaluating program or organizational performance using financial and nonfinancial measures, including identification of evaluation factors (for example, workload, personnel requirements), metrics, and outcomes.

Planning and Evaluating - Organizes work, sets priorities, and determines resource requirements; determines short- or long-term goals and strategies to achieve them; coordinates with other organizations or parts of the organization to accomplish goals; monitors progress and evaluates outcomes.

Political Savvy - Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Perceives organizational and political reality and acts accordingly.

Problem Solving - Identifies and analyzes problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations.

Project Management - Knowledge of the principles, methods, or tools for developing, scheduling, coordinating, and managing

projects and resources, including monitoring and inspecting costs, work, and contractor performance.

Reasoning - Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data, or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or draws accurate conclusions.

Resilience - Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks.

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.

Team Building - Inspires and fosters team commitment, spirit, pride, and trust. Facilitates cooperation and motivates team members to accomplish group goals.

Technical Competence - Uses knowledge that is acquired through formal training or extensive on-the-job experience to perform one's job; works with, understands, and evaluates technical information related to the job; advises others on technical issues.

Technical Credibility - Understands and appropriately applies principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise.

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.

Written Communication - Writes in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience.

Appendix III: Proposed Qualifications for the Proposed Cadre of Cross-Agency Senior Executives

The existing “executive core qualifications” for demonstrating the skills needed to be a successful federal executive seem to be appropriate for individuals within a department or agency. However, in conversations with seasoned executives who have worked in cross-agency environments, we found that they recommended different qualities for success in cross-agency leadership roles. Following are possible core qualifications for the proposed cross-agency SES cadre. These six criteria are tailored to broad, government-wide leadership competencies:

- **Strategic management and thinking skills**, which includes the capacity to think and manage strategically, to achieve longer-term goals, to develop strategic goals and plans for achieving the GPRA and OMB cross-cutting priorities. Candidates would be expected to have experience addressing complex, strategic challenges involving organizational change. Strategic actions would include the generation of a sense of urgency for change in agency leadership, building cross agency coalitions, designing change initiatives, and thinking through how to monitor performance in complex performance networks.
- **Shared leadership and people skills**, which includes the proven capacity to lead, inspire and engage other leaders, including career and non-career executives across organizations and agencies, setting new standards for interagency collaboration and coordination, toward enterprise-wide goals. Skills would include visioning new business models, the capacity to listen to key leaders and customers and understand complex systems, writing and collaborative skills, capacity to analyze and distill complex performance data, and demonstrating the capacity to articulate a broad, government-wide vision of performance.

Candidates for this subset of SES members would complete leadership assessments, work with assigned executive coaches, and make themselves available to mentor agency SES members in the SES pipeline. The new cross-agency executives will have the leadership capacity to work with agency heads and chief operating officers in guiding agencies into effectively working to achieve cross-agency priority (CAP) goals and GPRAMA requirements.

- **Performance management capability**, which includes the proven capacity to design and implement a cross-cutting, performance planning, budgeting, and management process as envisioned by the GPRAMA, bringing together appropriate agencies into a unified view of shared goals and objectives, and to use performance data and information in managing, developing budgets, and changing direction and business models when appropriate. The new SES cadre must be prepared to install a new strategic, performance planning and management system that works over the long term.
- **Joint management**, which includes the proven capacity to build and lead coalitions toward shared objectives and processes, working with executives from sometimes disparate and often conflicting agency goals and programs. This competency requires an understanding of complex agency programs and legislative requirements and the development of unified and coherent delivery systems. This competency involves the development of professional stature and respect among peer executives, working in teams across agencies.

- **Business management**, which includes the proven capacity to manage government programs as business entities, demonstrating a broad understanding of business and performance models and best practices from the private and public sectors. This competency requires an appreciation of government/business roles and tradeoffs, proven ability to apply commonly used information technology practices, including financial management and cost control, product development, project management, customer service, and marketing. This competency is not simply focused on support and administrative systems, but rather on mission and program delivery through business practices.
- **Technology savvy and proficiency**, which includes the proven capacity to understand how technology can be used to increase the quality and efficiency of public-sector programs, using IT systems to facilitate changes in the way agencies do business in complex networks. This includes promoting communication, collaboration, and analytic tools that facilitate major changes in agency operations. This competency includes an understanding of cybersecurity concerns, controlling single-agency IT project costs, and ways to link agencies together using shared services and data systems.

Comparison of Existing ECQs to Proposed ECQs for Cross-Agency Executives

Recruitment and development of the new SES subset will require a close look at current ECQs and how they might be supplemented to support an enterprise-wide SES cadre. Below is a comparison of current ECQs (that would remain as guidance for most SES executives) and suggested ECQs for the new SES subset.

Current ECQs		ECQs for Cross-Agency SES Cadre	
Current ECQ	Comments	New ECQ	Comments
Leading change	Single agency context, dated view of “change management,” no content—change to what?	<i>Strategic management and thinking</i> ; long-range collaboration and government-wide, coordinated action; leading joint agency performance toward government-wide goals, e.g., energy efficiency; leading change directed toward streamlined, smart, agile, and open and transparent government	Government-wide context, cross-cutting, enterprise-wide view of government performance goals, not just any change but change toward government-wide view
Leading people	Single agency context, seen as leading in the context of agency mission	<i>Shared leadership and people skills</i> , “leading among leaders”	Multi-agency context, now leading networks of executives in multiple agencies
Results-driven	Old view of results, vague definitions of results	<i>Performance management capacity</i> across agencies, performance-driven budgeting and program delivery	New GPRAMA and other cross-cutting mandates require a new focus on performance management and broad outcomes, not just results
Building coalitions	Very good on cross-agency collaboration, but no direction on leading coalitions toward government-wide goals	<i>Joint management</i> , leading coalitions, collaboration across agencies and intergovernmental networks	New context for leadership is joint management of agency coalitions toward cross-agency goals, shared resources
Business acumen	Still narrowly defined as financial, human resource, etc., support systems, business acumen not practical and applied	<i>Business management</i> , integrating business and cost management into agency cultures, applying best-practice, private business sector solutions, running agencies as business enterprises	Focus agencies on business management and accountability, internal controls, cost control, facilities and resources, project management applications to contract management
No specific technology qualification		<i>Technology savvy/proficiency</i> , capacity to change agency and government-wide business models through technology, not just a “business acumen,” this competency requires integration of multiple agency systems and missions	New, global and technical world requires capacity to drive change through technology, global cybersecurity, social network applications

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Mr. Barkley held a variety of positions in government. Prior to his retirement, he served as Director, Office of Management Systems and Evaluation, United States Environmental Protection Agency. Prior to joining EPA, he served as Director of Legislative Policy, Federal Highway Administration; and Director of Management Planning, Office of the Secretary, United States Department of Transportation (DOT).

Earlier in his career, he served as Program Management Officer, United States Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; and Budget Examiner, United States Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office of the President. He also served as Director of Special Projects, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Environment and Urban Systems, DOT; Director, Office of Program Evaluation, Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA), DOT; and Director, Office of Public Transportation Management Support, UMTA, DOT.

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He is the author of seven books on public and private-sector program and performance management. His most recent book is *Government Program Management* (2011), published by McGraw-Hill. Mr. Barkley holds master's degrees from the Universities of Cincinnati and Southern California.

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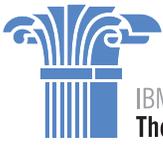
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