

Leadership Development Action Plan Template

This worksheet is designed to guide your leadership development activities over the next 12-24 months. Many of the steps require significant effort and/or reflection. Very few require money. Most of these activities can be self-guided, but it would be very helpful to recruit a mentor to help you along the way.

Please resist the temptation to rush through the steps; the more effort you put into each of the activities below the more you will learn.

1. **Do a Self-Assessment:** If you have used a self-assessment tool recently (e.g. StrengthsFinder, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or Kolb Learning Style Inventory), review your results.
 - a. What strengths do you have that you would like to cultivate?
 - b. What strengths do you have that you might be overusing?

2. **Create a Life Mission Statement:** Your Life Mission Statement can provide insights about your motivation to lead and guide your development efforts in a direction congruent with your long-term goals.
 - a. Article about Life Mission Statements (www.GovLeaders.org/mission.htm)
 - b. Life Mission Statement Worksheet (www.GovLeaders.org/mission_worksheet.htm)

3. **Master Core Skills:** Are there any core supervisory skills that you have not yet mastered (e.g. giving feedback, delegating, leading meetings, or hiring/firing)?
 - a. Which would be the most useful to learn and practice this year given the current goals and challenges you have with your team?

- b. When (and with whom) will you practice this skill in the coming months?
 - c. Resources for learning to give feedback, delegate, lead meetings, or hire/fire employees are available at www.GovLeaders.org/categories/toolkit.htm.
4. **Identify Exemplars:** Choose two leaders to learn from, e.g. a famous leader and an effective leader you have worked with.
- a. What characteristics do you appreciate most about the leader with whom you have worked?
 - b. Read a biography or watch a movie about a famous leader you admire (see www.GovLeaders.org/categories/biographies.htm and www.GovLeaders.org/categories/movies.htm).
5. **Find a Mentor:** If your agency has a formal mentoring program, sign up for it. If your agency doesn't have a program--or if you already have a potential mentor in mind--reach out to a more senior officer who you think would be a good fit for you. Ask them if they would be willing to meet with you for a mentoring session. (At this stage they would not be committing to a long-term mentoring relationship.)
- a. Before the first meeting develop a list of your objectives and questions you would like to ask.
 - b. If there is chemistry between the two of you at that initial meeting, ask if they would be willing to mentor you while you work through this Leadership Development Action Plan.

6. **Seek Challenging and Varied Experiences:** What kind of jobs/tasks do you have the least experience with?

_____ Turnarounds

_____ Start-Ups

_____ Big Leaps in Scope/Scale

_____ Projects/Task Forces

_____ Switches between staffer and line manager

_____ Managing in a Crisis

- a. Select one of the gaps you identified above and work with your supervisors to seek opportunities to gain that experience.
- b. Suggested reading: "Making the Most of Developmental Assignments" (www.GovLeaders.org/development.htm) and "Twenty-Two Ways to Develop Leadership in Staff Managers" (www.GovLeaders.org/22ways.htm).

7. **Sign Up for Training:** Investigate leadership training opportunities in your agency. If resources are available, sign up for an appropriate course.

- a. Find leadership programs for U.S. Federal Government Agencies or State Government at www.GovLeaders.org/categories/training.htm.

8. **Seek Feedback:** Develop a plan for seeking feedback from your subordinates (or peers if you are not a supervisor)

- a. Who will you ask?
- b. When do you plan to do it?
- c. Resources for learning to receive feedback at www.GovLeaders.org/categories/feedback.htm.