



BLM's Leadership Excellence Program

The BLM developed the Leadership Excellence Program in the late 1990s. The Leadership Excellence Policy, issued in 2003, sets forth the following tenets:

- The BLM's mission is important and worth carrying out. It drives what we do and how we do it. All employees need to understand and see themselves as key to carrying out the BLM mission.
- Organizational and personal leadership are essential to carry out BLM's mission.
- All BLM employees have leadership potential. Such leadership should be encouraged at all levels of our organization, across all functional areas, from our newest employee to our most senior executive.
- In order to leverage this leadership potential, BLM needs to be a learning organization where the intellectual capital required to carry out our mission is recognized, nurtured and protected.
- Each employee can and ought to take responsibility for his/her leadership development.

A series of training courses leads employees throughout their career to grow their leadership skills. The core curricula are: Pathways, Leadership Excellence, Emerging Leaders (new) and Leadership Academy. The underlying tenet of all these classes is to develop leadership and managerial skills. It is at the emerging leadership level that employees will begin to self-select for the managerial tracks. Further competition to participate in the Leadership Academy will identify employees with strong capabilities in leadership for the organization.

BLM Leadership Succession Management Program Questions & Answers

Q1. What is the BLM Key Leadership Succession Management Program?

As part of the Bureau's workforce planning process, the BLM Field Committee prepared a leadership succession report to address BLM's succession needs for key leadership positions. The report focuses on the key leadership positions located in the Washington Office (WO), State and Field Offices, and Centers. Approximately 260 employees serve in these positions. More than 140 employees will reach retirement eligibility on or before the year 2009, though this does not mean that all employees will act on their eligibility.

To maintain organizational effectiveness as the BLM faces a possible wave of retirements in its key leadership positions, the Executive Leadership Team developed the Key Leadership Succession Management Program. Through a competitive application process, this program establishes an applicant pool from which all non-SES (Senior Executive Service) key leadership positions will be filled. This Program will allow the BLM to fill vacancies in a timely manner and give management more flexibility in filling positions as they arise.

The Leadership Succession Management Program will be used to fill the following GS-14/15 positions:

- Deputy Assistant Director
- Associate State Director
- Center Director
- Deputy Center Director
- Deputy State Director
- Special Agent in Charge
- Washington Office Group Manager
- Deputy Group Manager
- District Manager
- Field Manager
- Area Manager

Q 2. Will these positions be filled exclusively from the succession management program?

Yes. All key leadership positions in the BLM will be filled from the applicant pool established from these announcements. This Program will allow the BLM to fill vacancies in a timely manner and give management more flexibility in filling positions as they arise.

The BLM recognizes there are many other leadership and staff positions, which will also become vacant as current employees retire. We will be looking at other strategies for meeting these workforce needs.

Q3. I have heard that you must be mobile and sign a mobility and tenure agreement to apply which allows an employee to be reassigned at any time to any location. Is this really true?

No, it is not true. There is not mobility agreement requirement. However, applicants will be asked to identify the three locations where they are interested in working for each job in which they indicate interest. Relocation bonuses and other incentives may be used to fill positions in less popular locations.

Q4. Not all Area Managers (AM), Field Managers (FM) and District Managers (DM) are currently GS-14s. Will these positions be upgraded to the GS-14 level?

No, there is no intention to upgrade any positions that are currently below GS-14. The leadership development of GS-12/13 AM, FM and DM positions will continue to be addressed through the Leadership Excellence Program at the BLM National Training Center (NTC). The GS-12 and GS-13 positions will be advertised on a position-by-position basis.

Q5. How will competition for GS-14/15 key leadership positions work?

The BLM will open vacancy announcements quarterly soliciting applications for key non-SES leadership positions listed in the answer to Q1. Internal merit promotion and external announcements will be advertised. Special Agents in Charge positions will be advertised under a separate announcement for law enforcement. All non-SES key leadership positions in the BLM will be filled from the rosters of qualified candidates established from these vacancy announcements. Applicants will be required to demonstrate their competencies in the critical Executive Core Qualifications (ECQ) and to describe your area(s) of technical expertise for 3 positions in which you are interested in their application. In addition, you will need to identify the 3 locations per position where you would be willing to live.

The best qualified applications will be reviewed by panels of subject matter experts, which will be the ELT members. If you are among the best qualified, you will be placed on a standing roster for 1 year. Additional names will be added through open continuous announcements. The expiration date will be 1 year from the time your name is placed on the roster. When a position becomes vacant, the appropriate roster will be provided to the selecting official for consideration and selection. Once you are selected for a position, you will be required to complete a 2-year Individual Development Plan (IDP) delineating how you will continue to increase your competencies.

Q6. What if my career goal is to move into a key leadership position; however, I am not mobile at this time?

By applying under the vacancy announcements for these positions, applicants are requested to identify 3 areas to which they would relocate. We recognize there are some locations to which it may be hard to attract top leaders. The BLM will employ relocation bonuses and other incentives to help attract top candidates to these areas. If you are interested in other leadership positions within your commuting area you are encouraged to apply even if you are not mobile at this time. In order to maintain a current pool of applicants, the announcements for these positions will be open for 1 year. When a position becomes vacant, the appropriate roster will be provided to the selecting official for consideration and selection. Regardless of whether you apply under this vacancy announcement, we suggest that you work with your current supervisor to develop an IDP for your current position and career goals.

Q7. What am I committing to if I apply to the Leadership Succession Program announcements?

Your application(s) to the leadership vacancy announcement(s) indicates your interest and willingness to accept a GS-14/15 key leadership position(s) within the BLM organization now and in the future. In addition, you are agreeing to future relocations to other key leadership positions in other locations as determined by the needs of the BLM and your mobility. By applying, you are also committing to continual learning and development of your leadership skills. You will be required to develop and complete an IDP with your new supervisor, which must be completed within 2 years.

Q.8 What is the process if I accept a GS-14 key leadership position, will I have to re-compete?

This vacancy announcement is advertised as a GS-14/15 positions. Your application should indicate 3 positions you are interested in and which you show you are qualified. Once selected into a leadership position from the roster and your performance and development are on target you will be eligible for a non-competitive promotion or reassignment to another non-SES key leadership position.

Q9. Can I indicate my interest in a position that is currently filled or does the position have to be vacant?

When you identify the three positions in which you are interested, they can either be vacant or currently filled since it is possible that the position may become vacant in the future.

Q10: How will this affect me if I currently serve in one of the positions currently identified under Succession Management? Will I be forced out of my job?

You will not be forced out of your job. However, if you are interested in another key leadership position, non-SES or SES, you must first be selected into the Leadership Track through the open announcement and selection process. You may also compete or be reassigned to other GS-14/15 positions that are not designated key leadership positions.

Q11. If I am currently a GS-14/15, how does this Program affect my career?

This program is designed to recruit and develop the leaders who will be following behind you. Current GS-14/15 key leaders whose career plans include other key leadership positions, including SES, may indicate their interest in these positions by applying under this announcement. Those current GS-14/15s who wish to remain in their current positions should not apply. The lists developed under these announcements are only for current vacant positions and that may become vacant in the future.

Q12. What kind of advertisements will we see in the future?

The BLM will no longer publish individual announcements for key leadership positions.

A manager with a key vacancy will ask the Executive Initiatives Team in Washington Office of Human Capital management (WO-700) to send them a list of qualified applicants from the

standing roster. The selection will be made from this roster. Other GS-14/15 supervisory positions, which are not identified as key leadership positions, will continue to be advertised on an individual basis.

Q13. I am interested in a career in management. What do I need to do?

Employees interested in a management career are encouraged to work with their supervisor and mentors to develop an IDP with short-term and long-term goals and strategies to gain and demonstrate the acquisition of the OPM Leadership Competencies. The NTC Leadership Excellence Program is a great training roadmap as you consider developing your career path.

Q14. I am a GS-13 nearing the end of my career and would like to try management. What should I do?

All employees are encouraged to develop an IDP to outline and help them plan how to achieve their goals. Please work with your supervisor, mentors, and the NTC to determine what course of action you need to attain your goals.

Q15. Do I have to attend the Leadership Academy before applying for the GS-14/15 track?

No, however, employees who have graduated from the Leadership Academy will have supervisory experience and will have received valuable development opportunities. Those who are interested in leadership positions are encouraged to apply since the Leadership Academy provides critical competency development opportunities. You may determine that you have had equivalent training external to the BLM and/or experience which demonstrates your capabilities in this area. Your application must demonstrate your competencies through experience and training.

Q16. I worked for the private sector (or other non-Federal government entity) before coming to work for the Federal government. I am currently a GS-12 (or a GS-13 or a GS-14) but have no supervisory or management experience with the Federal government. However, I did have supervisory or management experience in my previous non-Federal jobs. Am I eligible to apply for the pool?

Which vacancy announcement should I apply to, Merit Promotion or Delegated Examining Unit (DEU)?

Yes, you may apply if your experience and training is demonstrated by your application. BLM recognizes and values the diversity of experiences our employees bring to our organization. To qualify for the Leadership Succession Management Program, applicants must have 1 year of supervisory or managerial experience equivalent to the GS-13 or GS-14 level in the Federal government. This experience may have been gained in private sector or other non-Federal government positions.

An important part of your application is demonstrating that your equivalent training and experience gained outside of the Federal government provided you with the competencies and skills to successfully perform in the position(s) for which you are applying.

Generally, as a Federal employee you are eligible to apply under both the Merit Promotion and DEU announcements if you are at the GS-13 level and above. If you have any questions, contact your servicing Human Resources Office for clarification. Veterans preference applies for the DEU announcement. The DEU is the preferred route for those applicants with no Federal work experience.

Q17. If the selectee is required to complete an IDP to obtain certain experience or competencies within two years and they do not comply, what happens?

As a leader, you are expected to follow through on all commitments that you make. Your IDP is designed to improve your leadership competencies and success as a key leader in the BLM. During the two (2) year period, you should regularly review your IDP progress with your supervisor and make any adjustments to ensure that you meet your commitment to continual learning and leadership growth within the two (2) year timeframe.

Q18. If I am placed on the standing roster and my circumstances change, can I put my status on hold and then reactivate my status at a later time?

If for any reason your availability changes, you are required to notify the WO 700, Executive Initiatives Team and your name will be withdrawn from consideration. When you are available again, you should reapply to the next vacancy announcement. The current announcements will be open continuously for 1 year, at which time they will be re-advertised.