Proficiency Levels for Leadership Competencies

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LEADING CHANGE: This core qualification involves the ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.

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	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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 work flow analysis
Level 3 - Intermediate	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Creates a new quality control system to monitor unit processes • Uses cutting-edge ideas to develop business unit services • Works with coworkers to coordinate a project using a creative process
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Recognizes creativity in work unit • Considers innovative ideas generated by others

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	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Keeps up-to-date by attending key meetings hosted by other agencies or organizations • Keeps abreast of developments of other parts of the organization

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

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• Implements a successful action plan after a major organizational change • Prioritizes, considers alternatives, and responds quickly and effectively to unexpected and rapidly changing conditions
Level 4 - Advanced	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• Adjusts organizational priorities quickly as situations change • Shifts agency goals and initiatives to align with administration and Congressional priorities
Level 3 - Intermediate	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Realigns resources to meet changing customer needs • Takes feedback into consideration while implementing organizational change
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Uses staff feedback to streamline processes in order to meet deadlines • Adjusts project plan based on input from staff and stakeholders
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Meets with team to adjust and coordinate schedules to accommodate all team members • Adjusts staff assignments based on feedback and work load priorities

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

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Perseveres on project despite changing objectives, deliverables, and deadlines • Develops strategies using existing resources for achieving objectives following budget cuts
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Reduces project deliverables following funding cut • Continues presentation to customer despite technical difficulties with audio-visual system

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	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Conducts review of the agency's core mission and gathers information from relevant sources to support development of a strategic plan • Develops and implements Governmentwide or agency policy by determining target audience, building coalitions with the appropriate population, and developing a budget
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Develops project teams and staffing plans based on consideration of strategic objectives • Ensures team objectives are consistent with strategic plan

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
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.		
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Meets with staff to address concerns about new organizational structure • Develops and generates support for work group vision

LEADING PEOPLE: This core qualification involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts.

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	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Addresses employee concerns by providing accurate information to reduce conflict or concern within workplace • Takes action to address employee grievances

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	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Attends diversity programs to increase staff awareness • Meets with staff to obtain input on diversity issues within workgroup

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	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Provides developmental feedback to staff on job performance • Involves staff in developing project goals and timelines

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

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Works with team to implement operating procedures within agency • Suggests utilizing team building exercises to improve office dynamics

RESULTS DRIVEN: This core qualification involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
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.		
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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

Accountability (continued)		
Proficiency Level	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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 • Outlines written policies and procedures to ensure consistent adherence by staff

Customer Service - Anticipates and meets the needs of both internal and external customers. Delivers high-quality products and services; is committed to continuous improvement.		
Proficiency Level	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• Anticipates growing customer needs and expectations to continuously improve product development and service delivery • Creates work group consisting of stakeholders and neutral parties to develop solutions to customer service barriers
Level 3 - Intermediate	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Designs and implements guidelines to improve products and services • Develops customer satisfaction surveys, analyzes results, and makes necessary improvements • Addresses customer service deficiencies by involving employees to identify solutions
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Develops guides and user manuals for customers • Ensures products and services comply with customer requirements • Streamlines procedures based on customer feedback
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Addresses customer questions in a timely manner • Updates agency website to reflect changes to services

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	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Makes sound and timely decisions for a project, team, or work unit • Seeks out best practices to make organizational decisions
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• Assesses customer needs and develops innovative products and services to address recommendations • Implements an innovative strategic campaign to accomplish agency goals
Level 4 - Advanced	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Identifies concepts for new programs, products, or services • Seeks feedback for new products or services based on customer needs
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Reconciles conflicting and/or incomplete information to develop solutions • Applies appropriate methodology to discover or identify policy issues and resource concerns
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Addresses routine organizational problems by leading a team to brainstorm solutions • Establishes guidelines to clarify complex and/or controversial processes
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Proposes solution to improve customer satisfaction • Determines cause of workforce problem and recommends corrective action

Technical Credibility - Understands and appropriately applies principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise.		
Proficiency Level	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	- Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations - Serves as a key resource and advises others	- 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	- Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations - Generally requires little or no guidance	- 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	- Applies the competency in difficult situations - Requires occasional guidance	- 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	- Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations - Requires frequent guidance	- Provides staff with feedback and support on technical issues - Makes technically sound recommendations to develop effective work products
Level 1 - Awareness	- Applies the competency in the simplest situations - Requires close and extensive guidance	- Interacts with staff to understand technical aspects of job duties - Gathers technical information from internal and external stakeholders

BUSINESS ACUMEN: This core qualification involves the ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.

Financial Management - Understands the organization's financial processes. Prepares, justifies, and administers the program budget. Oversees procurement and contracting to achieve desired results. Monitors expenditures and uses cost-benefit thinking to set priorities.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Justifies requested budget allocation to management in relation to program objectives • Allocates program budget across multiple projects
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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

Technology Management - Keeps up-to-date on technological developments. Makes effective use of technology to achieve results. Ensures access to and security of technology systems.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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 • Reforms infrastructure and develops innovative IT business systems by leveraging expert IT knowledge and sharing information with staff
Level 4 - Advanced	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• Improves ability of agency to gather and act on data from stakeholders by using online surveys and related IT tools • Improves agency productivity by expanding the use of existing IT applications for use by clients and staff
Level 3 - Intermediate	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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 • Manages the implementation of a new electronic processing system in the agency
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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 • Adapts processes to keep pace with new technological developments
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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

BUILDING COALITIONS: This core qualification involves the ability to build coalitions internally and with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Partnering - Develops networks and builds alliances; collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.		
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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 • Works with a team of managers or employees across agencies to address mutual issues and concerns
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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

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	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Addresses political issues that may impact internal and external stakeholders • Develops relationships with new political leaders in the agency
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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

FUNDAMENTAL COMPETENCIES: These competencies are the foundation for success in each of the Executive Core Qualifications.

Interpersonal Skills - Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations.		
Proficiency Level	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• Interacts with public interest groups with opposing viewpoints while conducting the organization's work • Is consistently open and approachable when resolving highly sensitive and complex issues
Level 4 - Advanced	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• Treats individuals from all levels of the agency with courtesy and sensitivity • Meets with staff and listens to their perspective on organizational policies and procedures
Level 3 - Intermediate	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Makes self accessible to employees at all levels • Corrects employee mistakes in a courteous manner
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Shows employees empathy and respect • Welcomes new employees into organization by explaining mission and agency goals
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Interacts with co-workers in a tactful manner • Responds to employee inquiries

Oral Communication - Makes clear and convincing oral presentations. Listens effectively; clarifies information as needed.		
Proficiency Level	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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 • Communicates sensitive information of broad organizational impact on topics without precedence
Level 4 - Advanced	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• Conducts presentations and briefings for high-level agency officials • Presents, explains, and defends agency positions and proposals to staff and stakeholders
Level 3 - Intermediate	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• 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 • Presents information, analyses, and recommendations to officials and stakeholders
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Communicates effectively with staff by conducting regular meetings to discuss initiatives and current events • Explains and clarifies policy to affected parties • Provides status updates to management team during quarterly division meeting
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• 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 • Listens actively to staff ideas and concerns regarding work-related issues

Integrity/Honesty - Behaves in an honest, fair, and ethical manner. Shows consistency in words and actions. Models high standards of ethics.

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition	Proficiency Level Illustrations
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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 • Displays fortitude to support ethical actions that may negatively impact self or stakeholders
Level 4 - Advanced	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• Instills a climate of trust by admitting own mistakes and taking responsibility for one's actions • Discusses potential ethical problems and wrong-doing with employees and responds appropriately
Level 3 - Intermediate	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Communicates honestly with employees regarding potential changes affecting the organization to ensure staff are treated fairly • Investigates issues and takes corrective action, as appropriate
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Provides staff with accurate information about the vision of the agency and outlines changes in an upfront manner • Remains fair and objective when determining skill set needed for projects to select effective team members
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Establishes open and honest communication with employees • Addresses concerns with employee behavior in a confidential and respectful manner

Written Communication - Writes in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience.		
Proficiency Level	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• Writes complex technical reports using clear terminology and a concise format for use by high-level decision makers • Reviews technical reports, edits materials, and provides suggestions to improve clarity while ensuring documents are targeted to the intended audience
Level 3 - Intermediate	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Develops documents outlining agency mission and goals for use by the local community • Writes reports and position papers outlining various viewpoints on controversial subjects
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Writes daily briefs or guidelines to ensure employees are provided with updated information • Develops press releases to ensure important issues are addressed
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Summarizes recommendations made in annual report • Drafts checklist to track project status

Continual Learning - Assesses and recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; pursues self-development.		
Proficiency Level	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• 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	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Completes human capital training required for managers and applies key learnings • Recognizes areas needing improvement and takes training to increase skills
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• 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	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Attends professional conferences to maintain technical knowledge • Recognizes opportunities for self-development

	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	**Proficiency Level Definition**	**Proficiency Level Illustrations**
Level 5 - Expert	• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations • Serves as a key resource and advises others	• Designs and develops programs to address critical community requirements • Elicits employees' commitment to serve the public good in responding to a disaster
Level 4 - Advanced	• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations • Generally requires little or no guidance	• Partners with community leaders to develop neighborhood action plans • Cultivates relationships with community stakeholders to validate usefulness of proposed products and services
Level 3 - Intermediate	• Applies the competency in difficult situations • Requires occasional guidance	• Approves funding documentation in accordance with procedures to ensure public resources are utilized appropriately • Improves processes used to monitor contractors and vendors for supplies, services, and/or equipment to ensure government funds are expended appropriately
Level 2 - Basic	• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations • Requires frequent guidance	• Reviews unit's policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure they are consistent with public needs • Determines community needs by surveying citizens
Level 1 - Awareness	• Applies the competency in the simplest situations • Requires close and extensive guidance	• Responds promptly and accurately to public inquiries about agency policies • Suggests gaining feedback from public regarding new policy