NPS Leadership Attributes

"Effective Leadership is the number one key driver of employee satisfaction for the NPS, and is considered 'Top Priority', according to the *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government* report (2009). The report and other employee feedback indicate that, "[employees are] not convinced NPS is effective in growing leadership." To address leadership deficiencies, a commonly shared view of desired traits needs to be established, supported and managed for. The Workplace Enrichment Leadership subcommittee, in partnership with Learning and Development and others, created such a list.

The following leadership attributes should be approved and adopted by the NPS to establish a shared definition of leadership for all levels of employees. Next, to ensure accountability, the attributes should be integrated into various NPS systems, expectations and trainings. Doing so will result in clear expectations for all NPS employees on how a leader should act, generate positive employee experiences at all levels and ultimately result in higher employee and manager engagement, making NPS a more desired place to work.

1) Motivation
- Seeks to empower employees to make sound decisions
- Frequently recognizes employees for achievements
- Inspires others with a clear vision and path toward success

2) Conflict Management
- Develops and supports communication models that allow conflict to resolve quickly
- Addresses conflict quickly and fairly
- Use Crucial Conversation techniques

3) Integrity/Honesty
- Creates and supports an atmosphere of transparency
- Owns up to mistakes and commits to resolution
- Behaves in an honest, fair and ethical manner

4) Accountability

- Sets achievable goals and objectives and then measure progress toward interim target goals
- Quickly recognizes target goal achievement
- Quickly addresses deviations from goal path with fair and just recognition

5) Interpersonal Skills

- Is empathetic and looks at issues from the unit perspective, not personal perspective
- Takes time to develop and maintain relationships ahead of project goals
- Listen more than talk and ask for feedback

6) Leveraging Diversity

- Recognizes the need to represent America's vast differences within the workforce
- Understand the value of having a multi-audience perspective in park management
- Seek recruitment opportunities in new places
- Build relationships in all sectors of the local community to strengthen relevancy

This list was developed by the Workplace Enrichment leadership committee by through a multi-step review process:

1) Literature Review
The WE Leadership Subcommittee reviewed traditional NPS literature that discusses desired leadership attributes, further investigated the results of the Federal Human Capital Survey and other associated research findings, and generally assessed NPS leadership programs.

Survey scores, in the Best Places to Work in the Federal Government report related to "Effective Leadership" decreased from 2003 to 2009. The Subcommittee found that attributes or competencies related to leadership in the NPS are deficient according to employees. The research indicates that employees noted a lack of attributes related to motivation, conflict management, integrity/honesty, accountability and interpersonal skills in various levels of their NPS leadership.

2) NPS Program Review
The Subcommittee then reviewed several known NPS leadership programs to identify where course descriptions included statements about the deficient

attributes. It was found that a small minority of the courses specifically addressed many of the deficient leadership attributes.

3) Developed Recommendations

The WE Leadership Subcommittee recommends that all programs aimed at training leaders in the NPS add elements of motivation, conflict management, integrity/honesty, accountability and interpersonal skills to their curriculum. Also, NPS leadership scores would improve from stand-alone training courses teaching these same attributes.

Although the NPS received higher scores for attributes related to vision, strategic thinking and employee development, to manage real change in employee satisfaction NPS leadership will need to improve their attributes in the above described deficient areas.

Existing OPM Leadership Competencies:

Leading Change
. Flexibility
. Creativity/Innovation
. Resilience
. Vision
. Service Motivation
. External Awareness
. Continual Learning
. Strategic Thinking

Leading People
. Integrity/Honesty
. Conflict Management
. Cultural Awareness
. Team Building
. Oral Communication
. Building Coalitions
. Written Communications
. Influencing/Negotiating

Communication
. Partnering
. Interpersonal Skills
. Political Savvy

Results Driven
. Decisiveness
. Problem Solving
. Customer Service
. Accountability
. Technical
. Entrepeneurship
. Credibility

Business Acumen
. Human Resources Management
. Financial Management
. Technology Management