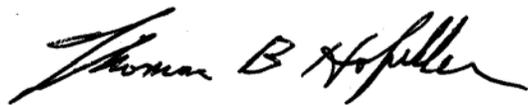


For: FSA Federal Employees

2008 Executive Potential Program (EPP)

Approved by: Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



1 Overview

A Program Announcement

HRD, Training and Development Branch (TDB) is accepting nominations for the FY 2008 EPP sponsored by Graduate School, USDA. EPP is a yearlong competency-based leadership program designed to develop senior-level public service employees into more effective leaders. EPP is based on OPM's **Executive Core Qualifications** and the Graduate School, USDA's Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (LEI).

B Program Curriculum

EPP provides participants with opportunities to:

- build skills in team building, negotiation, conflict resolution, leadership, and empowerment
- complete and receive feedback from managerial assessment instruments
- complete developmental shadowing work assignments
- design an Individual Development Plan
- gain exposure and visibility at the highest levels of agency leadership
- obtain critical knowledge for long term career planning.

C EPP Description

Exhibit 1 describes EPP.

Note: Participants are expected to be away from their current positions for a minimum of 6 months over the course of EPP.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2009	FSA Federal Employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

Notice PM-2621

1 Overview (Continued)

D Program Dates

The dates for EPP are:

- orientation week: **March 9 – 14, 2008**
- leadership training: **July 20 – 24, 2008**
- benchmarking: **November 17 – 21, 2008**
- graduation: **March 8 – 13, 2009.**

E Program Requirements

Participants **must** complete **all** of the following EPP requirements:

- 360-Degree Feedback Assessment LEI
- Leadership Development Plan
- experiential learning teams/projects
- senior executive mentor
- four 1-week residential sessions
- developmental work assignments
- senior executive interviews and shadowing assignments
- benchmarking

Note: EPP candidates are expected to complete a minimum of two 60-calendar day developmental assignments.

- 5 senior executive interviews and one 3-workday shadowing assignment of a high level official
- benchmarking to identify outstanding leadership practices in public service, business, industry, and academia
- experimental learning teams/projects.

F Contact

For additional details or information about EPP or questions about this notice, contact Brian Marincic, FFAS/EPP Coordinator, HRD, TDB by e-mail to brian.marincic@wdc.usda.gov or telephone at 202-401-0353.

Notice PM-2621

2 Nomination Process

A Nominee Qualifications

Nominees for EPP **must**:

- be full-time, permanent Federal employees
- be at GS-13 through GS-15 level (or equivalent)
- demonstrate significant managerial or executive potential.

B Applying for EPP

Eligible employees may apply for EPP by submitting a nomination package containing the following:

- completed AD-2005 (Exhibit 2), including supervisory signature (mandatory)
- Graduate School, USDA EPP Application (Exhibit 3)
- current OF-612 signed and dated by the applicant with current home address
- business case, 1 page minimum, written and signed by the first-line supervisor or the appropriate FSA official stating how EPP will benefit the employee and FSA

Note: The business case should also assess the applicant's potential and need for this training and development experience.

- list of all formal training courses taken in the last 5 years
- written statement, 1 page minimum, addressing how the following abilities or competencies are supported in employees current position:
 - leadership
 - initiative
 - interpersonal communication (people skills)
 - oral communication
 - written communication
 - technical competence.

Note: When providing written statements, address each ability or competency **individually**. Written statement **must** be signed by employee's first line supervisor:

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2 Nomination Process (Continued)

C Submitting Nomination Packages

Because of major USPS mail delays, send the **original and 3 copies** of the completed nomination package using FedEx to the following address:

BRIAN MARINCIC
USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB
1280 MARYLAND AVE SW
4TH FLOOR SUITE 490
WASHINGTON DC 20024
Telephone: 202-401-0353.

Note: FAXed copies will **not** be accepted.

D Deadline

All nomination packages **must be** received in HRD, TDB by **December 28, 2007**. Nomination packages received after December 28, 2007 will **not** be considered. Substitution of nomination package items will **not** be permitted after the deadline.

Note: Only employees who follow FSA's nomination procedures in this notice will be considered for selection to participate in EPP. Do **not** apply directly to the Graduate School, USDA.

3 Selection Process

A Participant Slots

FSA **may** support up to **2 nominees** for EPP.

B Participant Selection

Participants will be selected by HRD, TDB specialist who will assemble an Assessment Panel consisting of at least 2 members who occupy positions at a grade level **not** lower than the full performance level of the Long Term Training Program (LTTP) being filled. There will be an EEO (nonvoting) observer present and there may be a union (nonvoting) representative observing during this process.

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3 Selection Process (Continued)

C Assessment Panel Membership

The Assessment Panel:

- will review and rank employee nominations using criteria established FSA-wide for LTTP's
- has the final responsibility for determining best-qualified candidates based on valid LTTP-related criteria and employee's application package.

Note: The Assessment Panel refers best-qualified candidates to FSA Administrator or designee for approval for the allotted number of slots available. **No panel will be held if the number of nominations received does not exceed the number of slots available.**

USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

FSA provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis.

The work of candidates while on official time, performing labor relations representational functions, **must** be viewed with neutrality.

D Labor-Management Obligation

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested at the extent allowed by applicable statutes. Where contract language already addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

3 Selection Process (Continued)

E Program Costs

Tuition for FY 2008 EPP is \$5,895 per participant. Items **not** included in the \$5,895 include travel, meals, and lodging costs. Travel, meals, and lodging costs are FSA's responsibility.

Note: Tuition, travel, lodging costs, and per diem for GS employees shall be coded to the originating office. Upon notification that candidates have been selected, the originating office may request an increase in their travel allotment up to \$10,000 per participant. State Offices will be responsible for funding any additional travel costs over \$10,000 within their travel budgets. Requests shall be submitted to BUD.

F Selection Notification

HRD, TDB will notify employees whose names are forwarded to Graduate School, USDA for consideration. Graduate School, USDA will send participants written notification of their acceptance.

G Accommodations

By COB, **December 28, 2007**, persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend and/or participate in EPP should contact Brian Marincic, FFAS/EPP Coordinator, HRD, TDB by e-mail to brian.marincic@wdc.usda.gov or telephone at 202-401-0353.

Description of EPP

The Executive Potential Program is a yearlong competency-based leadership program designed to develop senior-level public service employees into more effective leaders. The Program is based on the Office of Personnel Management's **Executive Core Qualifications** (ECQ's) and the Graduate School, USDA's Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (LEI).

Participants engage in classroom discussions, group exercises, learning teams and independent studies. According to Walt Besecker, SES Faculty Coach for the Graduate School, USDA, "The EPP provides participants with the keys to self-awareness and the tools to refine their leadership skills. The program challenges its participants to step outside their comfort level, to sample new environments and to stretch, grow, contribute and make a difference." With a curriculum based on experiential learning and supported by classroom instruction, the individual components include:

- 360-Degree Feedback Assessment Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (LEI)
- Leadership Development Plan
- Experiential Learning Teams/Projects
- Senior Executive Mentor
- Four One-Week Residential Sessions
- Developmental Work Assignments
- Senior Executive Interviews and Shadowing Assignments
- Benchmarking

The Leadership Effectiveness Inventory

The Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (LEI) is a systematic assessment tool designed to measure competency and determine developmental needs for organizations and individuals in public service. The LEI assesses individual proficiency levels in over 100 specific leadership tasks and activities against the 28 competencies that comprise the Leadership Effectiveness Framework. The participant, his/her supervisor and five peers complete the LEI to eliminate perceptual biases inherent in most assessment tools. The participant is then able to develop an effective leadership development plan based on objective data.

Experiential Learning Teams/Projects

During orientation, participants are assigned to a Learning Team. Each team will obtain sponsorship from a senior level manager and act as consultants researching a current sponsoring organization issue. Upon project completion each team gives a report and presentation to the Graduate School and the sponsor. Experiential Learning Projects strengthen leadership and interpersonal skills, and encourage participants to become more self-directed, action-oriented and visionary. They also provide a forum for exploring issues facing federal leaders and for practicing leadership techniques. SES executives-in-residence offer coaching and mentoring to experiential learning teams at each residential session.

Description of EPP (Continued)**Residential Sessions**

Participants attend four intensive one-week residential sessions. The orientation session focuses on individual developmental needs, team building, leadership skills, experiential learning, project identification and project planning. Program requirements, policies, expectations and opportunities are also outlined. The remaining three residential sessions will concentrate on the following ECQ's:

- Leading Change
- Leading People
- Managing for Results
- Building Coalitions/Communication

Expert consultants from the federal and academic community conduct workshops and half-day seminars where participants learn effective techniques and methods for exercising essential leadership competencies related to the ECQ's. Formal and informal discussions continue into the evening. Residential sessions are held outside of the Washington, D.C. area.

Developmental Assignments

Participants must complete two 60-day developmental assignments away from the current position. During these assignments, participants learn to adapt and successfully lead in a new position and culture by utilizing the techniques and methods presented at residential sessions. In addition, each participant must conduct five senior executive interviews and complete a three-day assignment shadowing a high-level official. These assignments provide exposure and visibility at the highest levels of agency leadership as well as critical knowledge for long-term career planning.

Benchmarking

The Executive Potential Program uses benchmarking processes to identify outstanding leadership practices in public service, business, industry and academia.

Participants will have an opportunity to visit federal, state and local governments, major corporations, universities and nonprofit organizations and dialogue with "best practice" leaders. Through benchmarking, Executive Potential Program participants become skilled at using dialogue to gain insight beyond their individual understanding, an essential skill for leaders responsible for strategic planning.

Program Time Requirements

Participants are expected to be away from current positions for a minimum of six months over the course of the program. Participants may schedule developmental activities to minimize disruptions of their normal workflow.

AD-2005

The following is an example AD-2005.

This form is available electronically.

AD-2005
(12-05-07)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency

2008 EXECUTIVE POTENTIAL PROGRAM FOR FSA FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

NOMINATION FORM

Note: Deadline December 28, 2007

Important Notice: Supervisors shall contact the FSA Budget Division to insure that funding is available to support the nominee. If funding is not available do not submit the nominee for consideration to participate in this program. Travel/lodging costs will be funded by the employee's office travel budget.

PART A – GENERAL INFORMATION

1. If completed by field office, employees should enter name of State and County of Applicant:

STATE: _____ COUNTY: _____

2. Applicant's Name and Home Address (Include ZIP Code)	4. Division/Staff (Include Office Address and ZIP Code)	5. Room No. and STOP Code
3. Home Telephone No. (Include Area Code)	6. Work Telephone No. (Include Area Code)	7. Work FAX No. (Include Area Code)
8. Title of Present Position	9. Grade (GS)	10. Are you a Career Employee? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

11. Supervisory signature is **required** before submitting your name for consideration for this training. Supervisor shall sign to indicate that they have reviewed your nomination package.

NOTE: Union officials on 100% official time do not need supervisory concurrence and signature.

11A. Supervisor Print Name	11B. Supervisor's Signature	11C. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)
11D. State Executive Director Print Name (Required for all FSA State and County Federal and Non-Federal Employees)	11E. State Executive Director's Signature	11F. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

AD-2005 (Continued)

AD-2005 (12-05-07) page 2

PART B - INSTRUCTIONS

12. Required information to be included with this nomination form:

A. Provide a written statement 1 page minimum addressing how the following abilities or competencies are supported in your current position (*Note: When providing the written statements, address the following abilities or competencies individually*):

- Leadership
- Initiative
- Interpersonal Communication (People Skills)
- Oral Communication
- Written Communication
- Technical Competence

Your written statement must be signed by your first line supervisor.

B. (*PART C*) A business case 1 page minimum written and signed by your first line supervisor or the appropriate Agency official stating how the program will benefit the employee and their agency. The business case should also assess the applicant's potential and need for this training and development experience.

C. Current OF-612 or resume signed and dated by the applicant with current home address.

D. List of all formal training courses taken in the last 5 years.

Please submit this nomination form and information listed in Part B through Part C including the original and three (3) copies. All completed nomination packages must be received in the Training and Development Branch by **COB December 28, 2007**.

PART C - BUSINESS CASE

The business case must be 1 page minimum written and signed by the applicant's first line supervisor or the appropriate Agency official stating how the program will benefit the employee and their agency. The business case should also assess the applicant's potential and need for this training and development experience.

Statements for the Business Case are as follows:

1. How will this program benefit the applicant?
2. How will the applicant's completion of this program benefit your office?
3. How will the applicant's completion of this program benefit the agency?

13A. Supervisor Print Name	13B. Supervisor's Signature	13C. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)
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14. Please send the original and three (3) copies of the completed nomination package using either of the methods listed below:

If sending by Regular U.S. Mail, send to:

Brian Marincic
 USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB
 STOP 0574
 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
 Washington, DC 20250-0574

If sending by Special Delivery, hand carry or FEDEX, send to:

Brian Marincic
 USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB
 1280 Maryland Ave, SW 4th Floor Suite 490
 Washington, DC 20024

OR

NOTE: FAXED COPIES ARE NOT ACCEPTED.

Graduate School, USDA EPP Application

The following is an example Graduate School, USDA EPP Application.

			
<p>Executive Potential Program Application (To Be Completed by the Applicant)</p>			
Name			
Home Address <i>(Kept confidential upon request)</i>			
Work Address			
Work Phone	Work Fax	Home Phone	
E-mail			
Title	Series	Grade	
Social Security Number	Education	<input type="checkbox"/> HS	<input type="checkbox"/> AA <input type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input type="checkbox"/> Masters
Years of Government Service			
Immediate Supervisor's Name			
Supervisor's Title		Telephone Number	
E-mail			
Supervisor's Mailing Address			
Agency Program Coordinator			
Telephone Number		Fax Number	
E-mail			
Agency Program Coordinator Address			

Graduate School, USDA EPP Application (Continued)

Purpose for Applying
(To Be Completed by the Applicant)

Part A: Please state your purpose for applying. How will your participation in the Executive Potential Program support your career goals?

Evaluation of Performance
(To Be Completed by the Supervisor)

Narrative Evaluation of the Applicant's Performance: Please provide a written narrative of the applicant's current performance.

Supervisor's Signature

Supervisor's Title and Telephone Number

*All application materials must be submitted to the Graduate School, USDA through the appropriate agency channels and must be accompanied by an SF-612, 171 or resume and an approved agency training form such as an SF-182, 1556 or 350. Letters of recommendation will also be accepted.