

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

Below is a sample set of questions executives should ask and get answers for to better understand the agency and their role in contributing to the organization. The process of asking and ultimately answering these questions should enable the executive to quickly understand the organization and perform basic job functions; know the correct individuals or departments who can provide assistance and answer questions; perform job tasks in compliance with agency and Government policies; and access key information about leadership resources and development opportunities. *Note: The number of questions is not important, but the substance and relevance of the questions to the success of the executive is important.*

Questions leaders need to:

Ask themselves and/or their mentor	Ask other leaders	Ask manager and/or key stakeholders	Ask direct reports	Ask others in order to access information about available training resources
What is the agency vision and mission?	What are the 3 things we should be very proud of as an organization, and why?	Who are our customers?	What is a recent management decision you did not understand?	How can I advance in the organization?
How are my goals and objectives tied to the vision?	What are the unspoken norms?	Why do customers do business with us?	What does the leadership team do that gets in the way of you doing your job?	How do I request training?
What does the end state look like?	Where do the great ideas come from in your organization?	How and when have we made it hard for them to do business with us?	How can we communicate management decisions more effectively?	How do I register for training?
What is the state of the talent within my group?	How is personal success measured?	What do our customers need from us now?	How do you feel at the start of the workweek?	How and when can I initiate a leadership assessment process?
What are the organization norms regarding dress and appearance?	How do you encourage others to communicate the “core values”?	What will our customers need from us in the future?	How do you feel at the end of the workweek?	Which organizations provide professional development opportunities for

				SES members?
What are the organization norms regarding punctuality?	How do you help a new employee understand the culture of the organization?	What gets in the way of us doing our job?	What are the key metrics to track progress and success?	With whom should I discuss development opportunities?
What is the process for requesting and documenting leave?	When faced with two equally qualified candidates how do you determine whom to hire?	What are the expectations for my role as a leader?	What are the short term priorities?	How do I find out about required training?
Are there any quick wins?	How do I locate information about agency departments and offices?	How is departmental success measured?	What tools are used to manage schedules (appointments)-paper, outlook?	How can I access available leadership training resources?
What support do I need to achieve success for my organization?	What is one mistake you witness leaders making more frequently than others?	What are the organizational taboos?	What is my role in emergency evacuation?	Where can I find recommended reading materials?
Where can I go to find the most recent Employee Viewpoint Survey (or other employee opinion survey) results for my organization?	What is the one behavior or trait you have seen derail more leaders' careers?	What are some of the challenges that previous incumbents in this position have encountered?	Where is the alternate operating location?	When and where is the next SES Orientation Briefing? How do I register?
What is my role in COOP?	Why do people stay in this organization?	Where can I find information about the current administration's priorities?	What process is used to collect our customers' needs and measure their satisfaction?	Are there any organizational leadership tools I should be aware of?
What strategic relationships and internal networks should I be aware of?	What motivates senior management?	What key policies should I be aware of in the first month and which ones do I own?	What are the short term priorities for the organization and my office?	What are a few resources you would recommend to someone looking to gain insight into becoming a better leader?
What do I want to be remembered for?	What are the organizational norms about travel (not the GSA/official rules)?	Who are my key partners and what do they do/provide?	What are the results of the most recent third-party inspection (IG, GAO, etc.)?	What are you doing to ensure you continue to learn and grow as a leader?

What are the major risks associated with my position-to me, to my organization?	In my first twelve months, what can I do to help you and your staff be successful?	What are the results of the most recent employee morale survey?	What are 3 capabilities we have that are under-developed or under-utilized and what should we do about that?	What is one characteristic you believe every leader should possess?
How does the work I do contribute to the overall success of the organization?	Who are the "power players"?	What is the current and future year budget outlook?	What are the three things you would change around here and why?	What skills do I need to be most effective?
What is the organization's commitment to telework and other work-life programs?	What is one thing you would change about the organization?	Which congressional committees are concerned with the organization's mission and funding?	What is the most pressing issue for me to address with our customers?	When should I complete my Executive Development Plan (EDP)?