

DRAFT



NOAA Corps

Leadership Development Education (LDE)

April 26, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Beginning in the year 2000, the NOAA Corps Leadership Development Framework was conceived and developed to provide a conceptual model that lays the foundation for how to promote effective leadership within the NOAA Corps. The Framework identified a model for technical, management, and leadership development that is expected of an officer throughout a NOAA Corps career. It also identified the thirty core leadership competencies that should be exhibited by effective NOAA Corps officers. Figure 1 illustrates the Framework and associated Core Competency groups.



Figure 1.

NOAA Corps Leadership Development Education (LDE) is a systematic plan to address leadership development needs for officers as they progress throughout their commissioned careers. The purpose of LDE is to lay out a structured plan that addresses core leadership development needs of all officers, yet flexible enough to adapt to the emerging and variety of needs of a diverse Officer Corps.

Several other Uniformed Services offer Professional Military Education (PME) for their officers. PME is typically programmed in stages for an officer's career, and includes warfighting, military doctrine, and leadership. For example, Naval officers typically take Surface Warfare Officers School (or other combatant training) early in their careers, College of Naval Command and Staff at the mid-career point, and the College of Naval Warfare as senior officers. Some PME coursework is offered in residence, and some is offered in correspondence.

This document describes NOAA Corps Leadership Development Education in the various stages of an officer's career. Some elements of leadership training and development in this document already exist. New ideas are being proposed to supplement and improve existing education opportunities. The focus of the LDE is on **leadership**. Although there is increased interest in

strengthening the technical development of officers (through a qualification process for hydrographers, fishery officers, and oceanographers), such discussions are beyond the scope of this document. In the same way, thoughts about how to improve the management effectiveness of officers, particularly regarding the “how-to’s” of management (i.e., time and attendance, personnel issues, etc.), must be addressed elsewhere.

NOAA Corps Leadership Development Education is made up of various training courses, events and opportunities as shown in Figure 2. Darker green boxes represent core training that is required of all officers and that assists in reinforcing the leadership culture that the Corps is establishing. Lighter green boxes signify “elective” options to give officers an opportunity to choose courses that best fit their developmental needs. Two training programs marked with a white star are intended to focus on leadership and management issues specific to the shipboard operational environment (including topics like labor relations). Aviators could be invited to attend those training sessions, or alternatively, develop comparable training that addresses the leadership challenges unique to aviation operations.

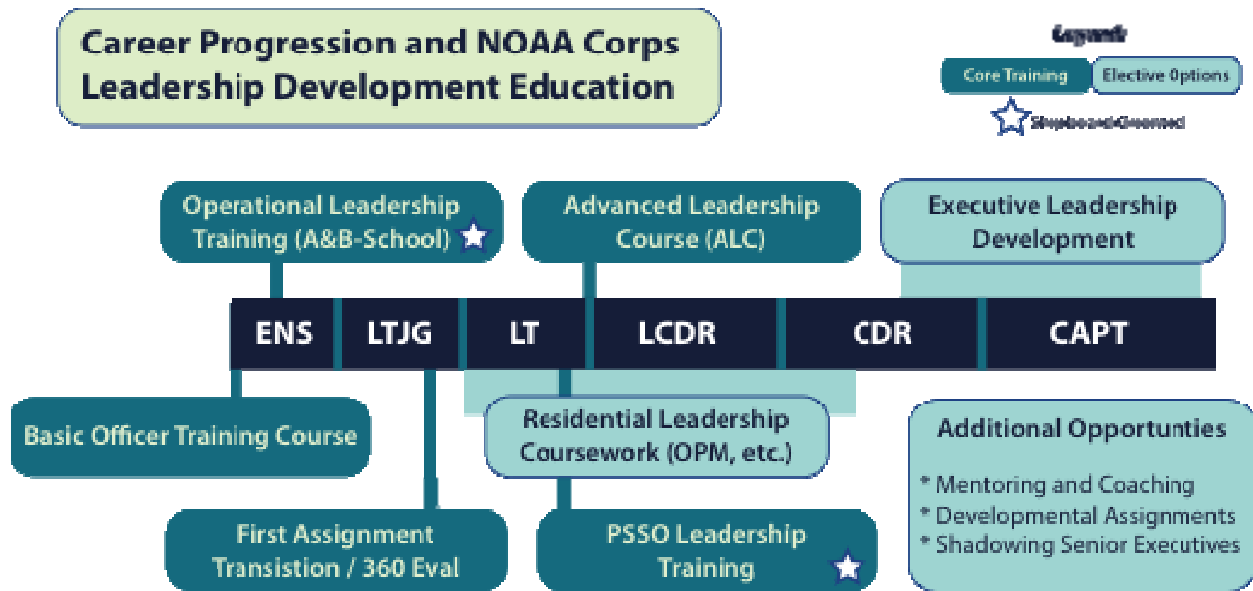


Figure 2.

Junior and mid-grade officers have often asked, “What must I do to be promoted?” Because some of the requirements for promotion to the junior and middle ranks include taking courses or satisfying other requirements (i.e., OOD letters), officers can get the idea that they need to make sure they “check all the boxes” needed for promotion. There are very few formal “boxes” for promotion to commander and captain, but the perception remains that promotion boards are still looking for officers to satisfy some, perhaps unnamed, requirement. Confusion about what those “boxes” might be is what sometimes makes the promotion process frustratingly ambiguous for officers being considered for promotion.

Performance is, and always has been, the single most important factor in selection for promotion, because it is the best indicator of the ability to handle the responsibilities of the next higher grade. All the other factors that boards consider for selecting officers are secondary to performance, and may become important when a board has to make a choice between two otherwise equally qualified candidates.

Leadership Development Education should be viewed less as a series of “boxes” to be checked along the progression of a NOAA Corps career, and more as a series of “bricks” that lay the foundation and help facilitate the leadership development of officers, which should lead to increased **performance**. Particularly as officers emerge into positions of leadership, performance will be increasingly related to the ability to influence, persuade, and develop others to accomplish organizational goals. The purpose of LDE is to begin to catalyze leadership development of officers early in their careers, and in so doing improve the potential performance of officers throughout their careers and across the ranks.

ELEMENTS OF NOAA CORPS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

This section specifies the seven proposed elements of NOAA Corps Leadership Development Education. These elements are chosen and designed to address the gaps that have been identified to improve officer leadership development, cultivate uniformed service identity, and promote esprit-de-Corps. NOAA Corps LDE maintains a clear focus on the development of core leadership competencies. Figure 3 illustrates the seven elements of LDE and their relationship to the core competency groups mentioned in the Leadership Development Framework. Each element of leadership training focuses specifically on one or two groups of core competencies, while also reinforcing the broader suite of competencies. As an officer progresses through a career, increased responsibilities demand that the officer develop more advanced leadership skills while maintaining strength in the competencies already developed. Therefore, although the focus of more advanced leadership training shifts to organizational performance, the scope of that training still addresses and supports the more fundamental individual leadership competencies that are key to the ability to influence and bring about organizational change.

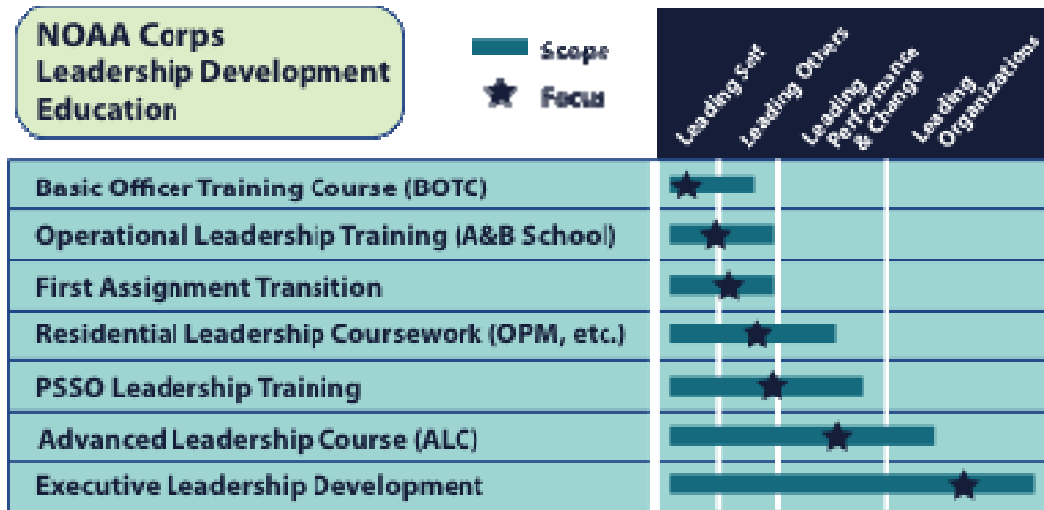


Figure 3.

Element 1: Basic Officer Training Course

Focus the Basic Officer Training Course on developing new commissioned officers, and make A-School maritime instruction a separate training course.

The purpose of the NOAA Basic Officer Training Course (BOTC) has traditionally been to develop effective sea-going deck officers. While elements of leadership development and uniformed service culture have been an integral part of that training, the need to satisfy the operational requirements of the NOAA fleet has typically driven the curriculum to focus on shipboard operations and has not placed adequate emphasis on introducing officers to the distinctive privileges and responsibilities of being a uniformed commissioned officer.

Comparable commissioning programs in the other uniformed services dedicate one to three months of training in leadership development, military customs and ceremonies, effective communications, and officership. Comparison of those other programs suggests that one month is a minimum amount of time required to effectively integrate a new group of civilians into the unique environment and culture of a uniformed service.

It is vitally important to address the role that commissioned officers play as leaders within NOAA even in their initial role as ship junior officers. Although most junior officers will not be assigned formal supervisory responsibilities during their first sea tour, JOs often have opportunities to exercise informal leadership of people through execution of projects, survey sheets, and other activities where coordination and cooperation of others is required. Officers departing BOTC should understand themselves to be emerging leaders who seek out opportunities to develop leadership skills in informal contexts.

Under this proposal, BOTC is restructured into a four-week training program that strengthens existing leadership coursework that is currently an element of A-School with additional training that is focused on the core competencies found in the “Leading Self”¹ and “Leading Others”² categories. Faculty members would be selected from the US Merchant Marine Academy, US Coast Guard Academy Leadership Development Center, instructors associated with the Federal Executive Institute or the OPM Management Development Centers, as well as select senior NOAA Corps officers. Restructuring BOTC to focus on leadership development and uniformed service culture would facilitate the opportunity to have new aviators (inter-service transfers³ or direct appointments) attend the same core leadership training as new sea-going officers.

BOTC Curriculum Areas:

Leadership Studies

New officers receive instruction on the fundamentals of leadership and team building; leadership styles, management principles, time management, goal setting, scientific problem solving, group dynamics, counseling skills, accountability, and ethics. Threaded throughout the course are lectures and exercises that introduce and reinforce the principles of officership, authority and responsibility of officers, the Honor Code, standards of conduct, and NOAA Corps Core Values.

Professional Knowledge

This curriculum area emphasizes the skills and knowledge unique to commissioned service. Topics include dress and appearance, customs and courtesies, special and additional duties, military law, professional and unprofessional relationships, education opportunities, pay and allowances, survivor and retirement benefits, officer evaluations and career progression, and

¹ Leading Self: Core Values & Conduct, Health & Well being, Responsibility, Followership, Accountability, Interpersonal Skills, Continuous Learning, Technical Proficiency

² Leading Others: Listening, Speaking, Writing, Team Building, Leveraging Diversity, Influencing Others, Developing Others

³ As is the common practice in several other commissioning programs, BOTC might be structured in such a way to allow officers transferring from other services to be exempt from the initial phase of the program that addresses uniformed service culture.

such social actions issues as managing diversity, equal opportunity and treatment, sexual harassment/assault, and substance abuse.

Communication Skills

Communication skills classes are designed to develop the prospective officer’s ability to speak more effectively, write more clearly and listen more efficiently. The communication curriculum includes communication skills foundations, writing for results, and briefing techniques.

NOAA and the Federal Executive Branch

Every officer is expected and required to have a broad knowledge of NOAA. Such knowledge includes origin and development, mission and purpose, doctrine, organization, position within DoC and the federal government. This curriculum area is designed to provide students with a basic knowledge of NOAA and NOAA Corps history and heritage, the nature and laws concerning the environment, major science policy issues affecting NOAA (climate change, sea-level rise, fisheries management, ocean exploration, etc.), the organization and function of the Department of Commerce and NOAA, and strategic issues of the 21st century.

Leadership Instruction and Application

Each trainee is given the opportunity to apply leadership theory and techniques throughout the program. This is accomplished through team-building exercises including a specialized obstacle/high-ropes course where small groups of students practice handling stress in situations that test their ability to reason quickly and lead effectively, regular participation in drill and ceremonies, and emphasis on uniform standards, military customs and courtesies. Regular participation in physical fitness training and assessment tests would be part of this curriculum area.

Separating A-school from BOTC will enable the Corps to establish and reinforce a culture of leadership excellence, engender increased pride in the heritage and history of NOAA and the Corps, and place additional emphasis on the privileges and obligations of wearing the uniform of the United States. Figure 4 shows how early officer training might be structured for both new deck officers and new aviators⁴.

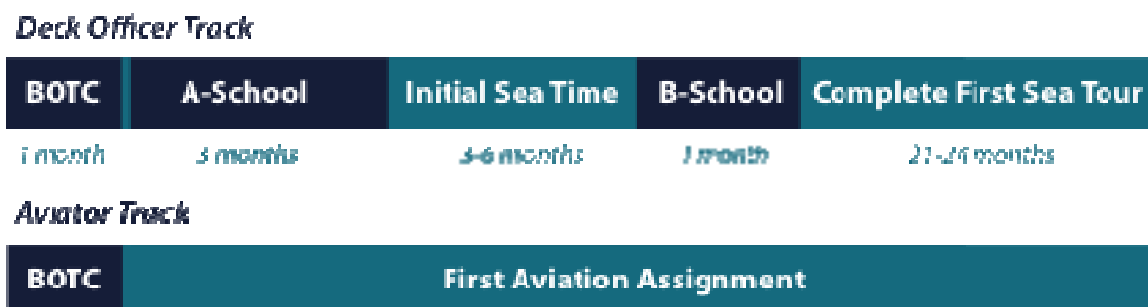


Figure 4.

⁴ Direct commissioned pilots are assumed to hold appropriate licenses and therefore would not require *ab initio* flight training. New NOAA Corps officers with prior commissioned officer service would attend the later phases of BOTC training that focus on leadership development, Corps history and culture, and NOAA’s mission.

Element 2: A-School and B-School Operational Leadership Training

Add forty hours each to A-School and B-School focusing on Leadership training with an emphasis on the operational ship environment.

A-School Operational Leadership Training will be forty class hours of coursework integrated into the whole A-School curriculum focused on the particular leadership challenges for officers on NOAA Ships. Topics will include the role of junior officers onboard, collateral duties, opportunities to exercise informal leadership, and an introduction to managing and relating to a union workforce.

The B-School concept was added to the BOTC training curriculum in recognition that officers may learn advanced seamanship topics more effectively after a brief period of actual sea experience. In the same way, certain leadership training elements are best utilized after an officer has had the opportunity to experience the unique operating environment of a NOAA Ship, and reflect on his or her own capacities as a leader. The purpose of the forty class hours of leadership training embedded into B-School is to leverage the experiences gained in the first few months at sea and begin the practice of self-assessment that is key to effective leadership. This leadership training begins to move the focus of core competencies into the “Leading Others” category, and would include the following kinds of activities:

- Leadership Case Studies presented by junior officers based on their recent ship experience
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) – to improve self-assessment and self-awareness
- Team Building Exercises and Skills Development
- Leadership Development classes
- Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
- Developmental Assignments and Shadowing
- NOAA Corps Mentoring opportunities

Element 3: First Assignment Transition

Create an intentional process of assisting junior officers as they transition from their first sea assignment to their first shore tour, and provide a leadership assessment gained from the experience of the first sea tour.

The transition that junior officers make from their first sea tour to their first land assignment can be very disorienting and confusing, particularly if the officer is assigned to a remote location where there are few, if any, NOAA Corps officers to provide support. Also, supervisors of junior officers are sometimes unaware of the career development needs of officers under their supervision. Finally, the end of a three-year sea assignment provides the first opportunity for officers to receive confidential and helpful feedback concerning their own leadership skills. This Assignment Transition is intended to address each of these challenges with the following proposals:

- ***End-of-sea-tour 360-degree Leadership Assessment***

One of the most effective tools for leadership development today is the 360-degree leadership assessment. Such an instrument provides the opportunity for officers to receive confidential, and mostly anonymous, feedback from a variety of people during their first sea assignment, including supervisors (CO, XO), peers (other JOs), and shipmates (civilian crewmembers). During the last six months of their first sea tour, junior officers, working with their XO, would be encouraged to select crewmembers on their ship to participate in this assessment process. The entire process is handled online, and the officer only knows the scores received from direct supervisors. The results of this 360 degree leadership assessment would be briefed to the officer by an independent civilian counselor during the beginning of the first land assignment. The assessment is for the officer's own use exclusively in improving their own self-awareness and ability to relate with others. Results of the assessment would NOT in any way be incorporated into OERs or entered into the officer's OPF.

- ***Similar Opportunity for Aviation Officers.*** Direct commission and inter-service transferred aviators would be provided the same opportunity to engage in a 360-degree leadership assessment at about the three-year point in their first flight assignment.

- ***Transition Assistance Officer***

In order to support the transition of a junior officer during their move into a first shore assignment, a Transition Assistance Officer would be assigned by the Assignment Liaison of the Line Office receiving the officer for assignment. The purpose is to ensure that the junior officer makes the transition into the first shore assignment and has a contact to call for the first year of the assignment. This might be particularly helpful if the officer's supervisor is a civilian. Transition Assistance Officers should be at least lieutenant commanders and have assignments within the line office that last for one year after the junior officer's arrival. Assignment Liaisons may also assume this role, and Corps officers who serve as the junior's supervisor can also serve in this capacity. Assignment Liaison's should oversee this process for their own line offices. Among the responsibilities of this officer:

- Meet with the junior officer and his/her supervisor, either in person (preferably) or over the phone, to address initial tasks and responsibilities for the officer in their new assignment. This should include a review of the completed Officer Support Form.
- Communicate to the supervisor the importance of career leadership development of junior officers, including the support for leadership coursework, postgraduate education, and participation in NOAA Corps activities.
- Address with the supervisor the importance for junior officers to be given opportunities to develop and demonstrate leadership skills and abilities, even if the officer is not in a supervisory billet. Team and project lead positions can often serve this function.
- Serve as an informal mentor to the junior officer for the first year of their land assignment, contacting them occasionally to check in on how they are doing.

Element 4: Residential Leadership Training

Eliminate all e-learning correspondence training required for promotion, and provide financial support for all officers to attend three one-week residential leadership courses (OPM courses or approved equivalents) to satisfy promotion requirements.

Correspondence courses were instituted years ago as an inexpensive way to provide leadership instruction for promotion, given the limitations of the federal budget. Correspondence courses have evolved into the e-learning courses of today. The courses required for promotion are regarded by some junior officers as providing little added value, and requiring little time to complete. It is common for officers to complete much of the e-learning coursework required for promotion to lieutenant commander even before they leave BOTC. A preferred alternative is to offer the opportunity for officers to reflect on leadership in a larger group of federal employees (in the case of OPM courses) or private sector companies (in the case of privately-offered courses) where one can learn from the experiences of others. CPC would maintain a list of approved OPM and private-sector courses, and pay for all costs involved. Residential courses required for promotion would be as follows:

- For promotion to LTJG – no requirement (the renewed emphasis on leadership at BOTC would satisfy; also, officers assigned to ship may have difficulty attending residential courses)
- For promotion to LT – one residential leadership training week (35 class hours)
- For promotion to LCDR – two residential leadership training weeks (70 class hours)

Residential courses allow the officer the opportunity to choose from among a number of elective courses which to take. This allows for addressing particular developmental needs an officer may have discovered during MBTI, the 360-degree assessment, and their own leadership experience. Selection of these courses should be driven primarily by the officer's own needs and not necessarily the natural preferences that individuals may have (that also may reflect their strengths). Officers can take advantage of the flexibility of choosing courses more suited for their own career enhancement.

Element 5: Prospective Senior Ship Officer (PSSO) Leadership Training

Provide one week of leadership development “refresher” training during PSSO School, to address issues of leadership in the ship operational environment.

This training would provide a review of the overall NOAA Corps Leadership Development Framework, the Leadership Development Education process, and select leadership issues. Topics of leadership could be rotated to suit the immediate needs of officers attending and the circumstances of the Corps at the time, but would include mentoring, leading civilian mariners, etc. The focus of the training is on the role of the CO and XO as leaders of officers and crew on NOAA Ships.

Element 6: Advanced Leadership Course (ALC)

Create a two or three week residential leadership development program for all officers selected for lieutenant commander in the previous year.

As an officer advances to higher ranks, a shift takes place regarding the focus of responsibility for leadership development. During the first stages of an officer's career, most of the elements of the Leadership Development Education program are mandatory and standard for all officers (with the exception of Residential Training). As a career progresses into the senior officer ranks, developmental needs change and diverge, and no officer's path is the same as another's. The flexibility in leadership development that officers receive after promotion to lieutenant commander implies additional responsibility for guiding their own development. The Advanced Leadership Course focuses on this shift of taking on more responsibility for one's leadership development.

Much in the same way that other Uniformed Services offer residential PME courses, ALC provides an opportunity for all recently-selected lieutenant commanders to gather in one place to reflect on their own leadership practices and receive some core leadership curriculum that is appropriate for that specific stage in an officer's career. The focus of the program would be on the core competencies found in "Leading Performance and Change"⁵. The most likely locations for this program are the Federal Executive Institute (FEI) in Charlottesville, Virginia, the Eastern Management Development Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, or the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) in Greensboro, North Carolina. NOAA Corps would likely depend on the resident and adjunct faculty of any of these centers for core leadership instruction. Many of these faculty members have extensive experience leading classes for NOAA's Leadership Competencies Development Program (LCDP).

Possible curriculum elements for this program include:

- NOAA Administrative Practices (budget, PPBES, executive)
- Emotional Intelligence
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
- 360-degree Leadership Assessment
- Advanced Union Issues/Bargaining Agreements
- Mentoring and Coaching
- Maximizing the use of Individual Development Plans
- Developmental Assignments/Shadowing
- Problem Solving Assignment
- Team Building exercises
- Performance Management (using OERs and OSFs effectively)

The following tables illustrate one way that Advanced Leadership Course could be organized.

⁵ Leading Performance and Change: Execution, Decisiveness, Problem Solving, Conflict Management, Customer Focus, Entrepreneurship, Vision, Creativity & Innovation

**NOAA Corps Advanced Leadership Course (DRAFT PROPOSAL)
Week One**

Sunday January 3	Monday January 4	Tuesday January 5	Wednesday January 6	Thursday January 7	Friday January 8	Saturday January 9	
<i>Travel</i>		Fitness Class 6:00 – 7:00	Stretching 6:00 – 7:00	Fitness Class 6:00 – 7:00	Fitness Class 6:00 -7:00		
	Breakfast (FEI Dining Room) 7:00-8:00						
	8:15-12:00 MBTI Interpretation	8:15-12:00 Benchmarks 360 Results	8:15-12:00 Emotional Intelligence	8:15-12:00 Leadership Competencies: Enhancing Group Commitment	8:15-12:00 Leadership Competencies: Enhancing Group Commitment	8:15-12:00 Performance Management (using OSFs and OERs effectively)	
	Lunch 12:00-1:00					Bag Lunches Only	
	1:30-3:00 Fitness/Reading/Study Time						
3:00-5:00 Arrival & Registration	3:00-5:30 Leadership Discussions with NOAA Corps Director, senior NOAA civilians	3:00-5:30 Intro to NOAA Administrative Practices (budget, PPBES, etc.)	3:00-5:30 Leadership Competencies: Enhancing Group Commitment	3:00-5:30 Leadership Competencies: Enhancing Group Commitment	3:00-5:30 Leadership Competencies: Enhancing Group Commitment	<i>Free Time</i>	
Executive Interaction 5:30-6:00 Dinner 6:00-7:00	Executive Interaction 5:30-6:00 Dinner 6:00-7:00				Dinner 6:00-7:00		
7:15 - 8:45 Welcome, Setting the Context, Group Formation	7:15-8:45 Leadership Challenge: Problem Solving Assignment from the NC Director	7:15-8:45 Leadership Challenge	7:15-8:45 Leadership Challenge	7:15-8:45 Leadership Challenge	Unscheduled Evening	<i>Free Time</i>	

NOAA Corps Advanced Leadership Course (DRAFT PROPOSAL)

Week Two

Sunday January 10	Monday January 11	Tuesday January 12	Wednesday January 13	Thursday January 14	Friday January 15
	Fitness Class 6:00 – 7:00	Fitness Class 6:00 – 7:00	Fitness Class 6:00 – 7:00	Fitness Class 6:00 – 7:00	Fitness Class 6:00 – 7:00
Breakfast (FEI Dining Room) 7:00 – 8:00					
<i>Free Time</i>	8:15-12:00 Coaching Skills	8:15-12:00 Maximizing the use of Individual Development Plans	8:15-12:00 The Science of Leadership (team building)	8:15-12:00 Development Outside of the Box: finding creative opportunities (developmental assignments, shadowing)	8:15-12:00 What Have I Learned? What Is Next For Me? Wrap Up
Bag Lunches Only	Lunch 12:00-1:00				
Fitness/Reading/Study Time 1:00-3:00					
<i>Free Time</i>	3:00-5:30 Coaching Skills	3:00-5:30 Advanced Union Issues/Bargaining Agreements	3:00-5:30 The Science of Leadership (team building)	3:00-5:30 Presentation of Leadership Challenge to NOAA Corps Director	<i>Fair Winds and Following Seas!</i>
Executive Interaction 5:30-6:00				Graduation Dinner 6:00-7:00	
Dinner 6:00-7:00					
7:15-8:45 Reconvene and Reconnect The Week Ahead	7:15-8:45 Leadership Challenge	7:15-8:45 Leadership Challenge	7:15-8:45 Leadership Challenge (if necessary)	Command Appearance with the NOAA Corps Director and senior officers	

Element 7: Executive Leadership Development**Provide funded opportunities for senior officers to engage in executive-level leadership development opportunities.**

The final element of NOAA Corps LDE is to provide a variety of opportunities for senior officers to receive leadership development education and experiences through formal coursework and developmental assignments. There are no coursework requirements for promotion to commander and captain; yet, for continued career and leadership development, it is essential for officers to find developmental opportunities that match their own leadership development needs. The federal government and private sector provide a number of leadership courses that focus on the core competencies at the “Leading Organizations” level.⁶ This kind of leadership development education would include:

- Federal Executive Institute – “Leadership for a Democratic Society” program
- Brookings Institution courses on executive and legislative operations
- Kennedy School of Government – “Senior Executive Fellows” program
- Long-term developmental assignments (6-12 months) at corporate NOAA, Commerce, White House, and Capitol Hill

⁶ Leading Organizations: Human Capital Management, Financial Management, Technology Management, External Awareness, Political Savvy, Strategic Thinking, Partnering

OTHER PROPOSALS

1. Developing a Culture of Mentoring in the Corps

A working group of junior and mid-grade officers is currently developing a proposal to promote and develop a mentoring culture within the NOAA Corps. The group's consensus is that the most pressing immediate need concerning mentoring is making a voluntary mentoring program available to our most junior officers (ensigns and lieutenants, j.g.). To be successful, this mentoring program must have the following key elements:

- Completely voluntary. There is no obligation to serve as a mentor, nor is there any expectation that junior officers participate unless they want to.
- Mentee driven. The entire process of selecting and working with a mentor is in the hands of the mentee. The mentee sets the terms of the agreement, and if the mentor agrees with the terms, the mentor's role is simply to support the mentee as agreed. The mentee may change the nature of the relationship at any time.
- Confidential. Mentors are expected to protect the confidentiality of the mentoring relationship. The mentoring working group must still address the possibility that a mentor might one day be on an Officer Personnel Board that includes a mentee for consideration of a personnel action. OPB's routinely have officers in the membership who have personal knowledge concerning an officer being considered for personnel action. Perhaps the most important thing to do is to reiterate to junior officers the limitations of discussion content during OPB proceedings.
- Supported by NOAA Corps leadership. Experience of other federal agencies strongly suggests that a voluntary mentoring program succeeds only in so far as the program is supported by organizational leadership. Furthermore, the point is not to create a new program to be supported and administered by CPC. The central purpose of the program is to facilitate mentoring relationships and foster a culture within the organization that values the role that mentoring can play in developing emerging leaders and providing necessary support to more junior officers.

Three things must be done to get the mentoring program off the ground:

1. Recruit a cadre of officers (initially lieutenant commanders through captains) who are willing and motivated to offer themselves as mentors.
2. Find a means for matching of mentors and mentees. The Department of Commerce currently supports a web-based application (www.mentoringconnection.com) which has the capability to provide matching between mentors and mentees. The software appears to be completely adequate to provide the services the NOAA Corps would require for matching junior officers with senior officers. The software provider has agreed to make a minor change to the software code to allow NOAA Corps mentees to restrict their search to only NOAA Corps mentors.
3. Promote the importance and value of voluntary mentoring among all junior officers. The working group recommends limiting mentee participation during the initial phase of the program to officers below the rank of lieutenant. As the program matures, opportunities would expand for all officers to participate if they choose.

The final conclusions of the mentoring working group will either be formulated into a new mentoring document or incorporated into this document.

2. Developmental Assignments

NOAA recognizes developmental and rotational assignments as a key means to expose federal employees to a cross-section of NOAA's activities and help to promote employees' own leadership and professional development. The NOAA Rotation Assignment Program is a formal mechanism to temporarily place civilian employees in assignments outside of their normal responsibilities. There is a great deal of flexibility in the NOAA Corps assignment process to support developmental assignments, a flexibility which is currently quite under-utilized. With supervisor concurrence, officers can request a temporary developmental or rotational assignment at any point in their career.

Employees often most take advantage of developmental assignments when they are an element in a formal leadership development program (i.e., LCDP, ELDP, etc.). However, there is no reason that officers cannot take the initiative to seek out developmental assignments that they believe would enhance their professional and leadership development. Recommendations for developmental assignments can be considered by the Director as long as the officer's supervisor agrees concurs with the assignment and the assignment is clearly related to meeting developmental goals mentioned in the officer's Individual Development Plan (IDP). In other words, having a realistic and well written IDP is a central requirement for supporting requests for developmental or rotational assignments.

3. Shadowing Senior Officers and Executives

Shadowing opportunities allow officers one or more days to observe how senior officers or senior civilian executives approach their work as leaders and managers of federal organizations. This provides officers the chance to see how senior leaders interact with customers, stakeholders, peers, and subordinates. Shadowing can provide insight into the daily practices of executives, and may also allow for interaction and discussion between the participant and the shadowed official related to what the participant witnessed during the shadowing period. As with developmental assignments, there is no requirement to be part of a formal leadership development program to request the opportunity to shadow a senior officer or executive. Junior officers are encouraged to talk with their direct supervisors about potential senior officials they might be able to shadow. Obviously, as officers progress higher in rank, and take assignments in the DC area, the chance to shadow more senior officials can increase.

APPENDIX A. NOAA Corps Core Leadership Competencies

Leadership competencies are the core knowledge, skills and expertise NOAA's leaders must have to meet their mission responsibilities. NOAA's civilian leaders (the top one percent of NOAA's civilian employees) are classified as Senior Executive Service (SES). The core qualifications (competencies)



for the SES corps throughout the federal government are determined by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM, <http://www.opm.gov/ses/>). Admirals are equivalent in grade to SES and are expected to meet these core competencies.

The NOAA Corps Leadership Competencies are based on OPM's SES core competencies; however, the competencies have been organized into levels of maturity similar to the U.S. Coast Guard's competency model. The four ascending levels of maturity are as follows: Leading Self, Leading Others, Leading Performance & Change, and Leading Organizations. Within each level of maturity are several interdependent competencies for effective leadership. The higher levels of leadership maturity are built on the bases of the lower or more fundamental competencies. When an officer meets all the NOAA Corps Leadership Competencies, they will have met the core competencies required of the SES corps. To this end, the NOAA Corps has developed thirty leadership competencies, which are shown on the next few pages and summarized in the figure to the left.

Leading Self

Core Values & Conduct - NOAA Corps leaders understand the relevance of their Core Values of Honor, Respect and Commitment. They can communicate their meaning; hold peers and subordinates accountable to these organizational merits; and use them to guide performance, conduct and decisions—every day. Leaders show consistency in their words and actions.

Health & Well Being - Leaders consider the environment in which they and their people work, attending to safety and well-being. They effectively identify and manage stress. They set a personal health example with emphasis on a program of

physical fitness and emotional well being.

Responsibility - NOAA Corps officers are accountable to effectively organize and prioritize tasks, and efficiently use resources. They work within the chain of command and comply with established regulations and guidelines.

Followership - NOAA Corps officers are followers. Followers look to leaders for guidance and feedback, expecting challenging tasks to both learn and exercise competencies. They have the responsibility to work with leaders towards mission accomplishment.

Adaptability - Leaders are open to change. They adapt their behavior and work methods in response to new information or unexpected obstacles. They remain optimistic and persistent, even under adversity, and recover quickly from setbacks.

Interpersonal Skills - Leaders treat others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. They consider and respond appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations.

Continuous Learning - Leaders understand professional development is a life-long journey and constantly work to improve knowledge, skills and expertise. They seek opportunities for self-learning and development, including asking for candid feedback on their strengths and weaknesses. Leaders seek out mentors for themselves.

Technical Proficiency - Leaders understand and appropriately apply principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to their expertise. They keep current on technological advances in their professional areas.

Leading Others

Listening - Leaders are active listeners, asking questions to clarify information. They are receptive to the messages conveyed through body language and tone of voice. Leaders respect speakers by being patient and nonjudgmental.

Speaking - Leaders express facts and ideas succinctly and logically and facilitate an open exchange of ideas. They welcome robust dialogue, field questions, confidently communicate with the media and other external entities, and distinguish between personal communication situations and those as a NOAA representative.

Writing - Leaders write in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience. They realize their writing represents themselves and the organization.

Team Building - Leaders inspire, guide and create an environment that motivates others toward accomplishment of group goals. They recognize and contribute to group processes; encourage and facilitate cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; and build commitment, team spirit, and strong relationships.

Leveraging Diversity - Leaders create an environment that supports diverse perspectives, approaches and thinking, fairness, dignity, compassion and creativity. They demonstrate sensitivity to cultural diversity, race, gender, background, experience, and other individual differences in the workplace.

Leaders guide and persuade others to see the value of diversity, building and maintaining a healthy working environment.

Influencing Others - Leaders possess the ability to persuade and motivate others to achieve a desired outcome. They persuade by communicating, directing, coaching, and delegating, as the situation requires. Successful leaders understand the importance and relevance of professional relationships; develop networks; gain cooperation and commitment from others; build consensus; empower others by sharing power and responsibility; and establish and maintain rapport with key players.

Developing Others - Leaders advise and develop others in the competencies needed to accomplish current and future goals. They provide objective feedback about leadership and career development, and help identify professional potential, strengths and areas for improvement. They ensure fair, equitable treatment; project high expectations for subordinates and/or their teams; express confidence in abilities; and recognize efforts.

Leading Performance & Change

Execution - Leaders get things done. They demonstrate the ability to plan, organize, and prioritize realistic tasks and responsibilities for themselves and their people. They use goals, milestones, and control mechanisms for projects. Leaders monitor and evaluate progress and outcomes produced by current processes; ensure continuous improvement through periodic assessment; and are committed to improving products, services, and overall customer satisfaction.

Decisiveness - Leaders make well-informed, effective, and timely decisions, even when data are limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences. They involve others in decisions that affect them, generate promising solutions, and consistently render judgments with lasting, positive impact.

Problem Solving - Leaders identify and analyze problems; use facts, input from others, and sound reasoning to reach conclusions; explore various alternative solutions; distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information; and make recommendations or commit to actions.

Conflict Management - Leaders encourage creative tension and differences of opinions. They anticipate and take steps to prevent counter-productive confrontations. Leaders manage and resolve conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner.

Customer Focus - Leaders know who their customers are, and make every possible effort to find out their customers' needs. Leaders understand the importance of measuring and monitoring the degree to which their customers' needs are met or exceeded, and continually strive to improve. Leaders understand the distinction between "customer" and "boss" and act accordingly to balance competing demands.

Entrepreneurship - Leaders seek and identify opportunities to develop and market new products and services within or outside of NOAA. Leaders take reasonable risks, and learn from the inevitable mistakes that accompany prudent risk-taking—and they apply this same thinking to those who work for them.

Vision - Leaders see a preferred future for their units and functions, setting this picture in the context of NOAA's overall vision, missions, strategy and driving forces. They establish and communicate

organizational objectives; promote wide ownership; initiate action; and provide structure and systems to achieve long-term goals.

Creativity & Innovation - Leaders develop new insights into situations and apply innovative solutions to make unit and functional improvements. They question conventional approaches and encourage new ideas.

Leading Organizations

Human Capital Management - Leaders understand and support the civilian and uniformed service staffing systems, and assess current and future staffing needs based on organizational goals and budget realities. They ensure employees are appropriately recruited, selected, developed, assigned, evaluated, and rewarded. They take corrective action when needed. Leaders serve as mentors.

Financial Management - Leaders must demonstrate broad understanding of the principles of financial management and marketing expertise necessary to ensure appropriate funding levels for their areas of responsibility. They prepare, justify, and/or administer the budget for the unit or program; use cost-benefit thinking to set priorities; and monitor expenditures in support of programs and policies. Leaders seek and identify cost-effective approaches, and manage procurement and contracting appropriately.

Technology Management - Leaders fully appreciate the impact of technological changes on the organization. They use efficient and cost-effective approaches to integrate technology into the workplace and improve program effectiveness. Leaders develop strategies using new technology to enhance decision-making.

External Awareness - Leaders identify and keep up to date on key national and international policies and economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization. Leaders understand near-term and long-range plans and can determine how best to position the organization for scarce federal resources.

Political Savvy - Leaders identify the internal and external politics that influence the work of NOAA and the Department of Commerce. Leaders approach issues with a clear perception of organizational and political reality, and recognize the impact of alternative courses of action.

Strategic Thinking - Leaders must formulate objectives and priorities, and implement plans consistent with the long-term interests of the organization. They must consider multiple time horizons and very complex interactions- a systems view of the global environment. They capitalize on opportunities and manage long-term risk to the organization.

Partnering - Leaders must develop networks and build alliances, engaging in cross-functional activities where it makes sense. Leaders collaborate across boundaries, find common ground with a widening range of stakeholders at the local and national level, and use their contacts to build and strengthen internal bases of support.

APPENDIX B. Key Recommendations from Offsite Meeting in November 2008

In November 2008, a group of twelve NOAA Corps officers and NOAA civilians gathered at the Eastern Management Development Center in Shepherdstown, WV, to discuss approaches to implementing, in practical ways, the vision for leadership development laid out in the NOAA Corps Leadership Development Framework. Participants were selected to ensure diversity of perspective, rank, gender, and NOAA program. After a day and a half of fruitful discussion, the group made the following recommendations, which are the basis for how the Leadership Development Education plan is structured.

1. Develop a leadership development course/program for recently selected LCDRs

A Mid-Career Leadership Development Program would be a two or three week residential program for all officers selected for lieutenant commander in the previous year. The program would be held at one of the federal government's residential training facilities, and would include leadership training focusing on the needs of officers at the ten-year-point in their careers.

2. Improve the leadership development coursework and opportunities at A, B, and D schools, and courses required for promotion

While some leadership training is offered during initial officer training, there is a need for more intentional efforts to integrate core leadership education during initial and refresher officer training. The training would be scheduled in a way to facilitate the participation of aviators who have entered the Corps through inter-service transfer and aviators whose time-in-service matches those returning to sea and attending D school. Also, there is a need to improve the quality of coursework that is currently required for promotion to the junior ranks.

3. Utilize assessment instruments (i.e., MBTI, 360-degree surveys) to improve interpersonal awareness

As many educators of leadership principles will attest, self-awareness is the foundation of effective leadership. Providing several opportunities throughout an officer's career to receive confidential and useful feedback about leadership styles and behavior is essential to the growth and development of officers.

4. Develop a voluntary mentoring program for all ranks

Facilitating strong and professional relationships between officers of different ranks can improve the leadership effectiveness of all officers. Providing a voluntary mentoring program can help initiate helpful relationships that provide transfer of knowledge, experience, and wisdom. Recommend fostering a culture of mentoring within the NOAA Corps that encourages formal or informal mentoring relationships in a variety of contexts throughout a career.

5. Provide opportunities for junior officers (ENS thru LT) to meet annually at December in-port

As is the case with the annual meetings scheduled for executive officers (Fleet Administrative Management Seminar) and commanding officers (Command Seminar), an

annual or bi-annual gathering of junior officers (LT and below) might help to facilitate improved communication between junior and senior officers and provide the opportunity to present issues that might otherwise not arise.