# **NOAA Commissioned Corps Leadership Development Framework**

November 2024



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### **Foreword**

Good leadership is the cornerstone of success in any organization. It is the driving force that propels teams forward, sparks innovation, and identifies the best track line through challenges. As leaders, we need to show up in ways that are consistent with the culture we want to create - we need to cultivate a learning mindset. The NOAA Corps core values of *Honor*, *Respect*, and *Commitment* apply throughout an officer's career. This framework is a *Commitment* to continuous growth and learning as we matriculate through the ranks.

The NOAA Corps Leadership Development Framework provides a roadmap for our leaders to gain insight into key experiences and development opportunities commissioned officers need to grow. Research suggests that additional leadership capabilities that focus on connection - the leader's ability to connect, person-to-person, both within and across their organization's changing ecosystem - is a critical skill for navigating the future as a team.

This year brings one of the most active recapitalization efforts in our history as we begin construction on four purpose-built ships, two piers, and the acquisition of multiple aircraft. We are increasing the size of the NOAA Corps by 45% and rapidly evolving the technology to conduct missions. This is a defining moment for our organization as tremendous resources are being invested in our portfolio. These tools fuel the critical leadership skills we provide the nation to allow for sustainable fisheries, categorization of the deep sea, safe navigation, protection from hurricanes, soil moisture measurement for flood prediction, and many other critical environmental observations. Leaders in the NOAA Corps from Ensigns to Admirals must continuously learn from and refine the competencies identified in this framework to meet this historic call for action.

Cultivating broad capabilities, such as self-awareness and resilience, are necessary to adapt to dynamic and evolving challenges. Assume command of your career journey by setting annual goals or utilizing tools such as an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to plot how you will acquire essential skills. Embrace challenging roles and experiences that expand your horizons. Build a solid foundation to lead effectively, both now and in the future.

NOAA Corps officers play a crucial role in NOAA's mission and our nation's success. I am committed to ensuring we are well-prepared to meet current and future national needs. This framework outlines a clear path to developing the competencies for a robust, resilient, high-performing NOAA Corps.

RADM Chad M. Cary Director, NOAA Corps

# **Leadership Development Framework Purposes**

The original NOAA Commissioned Corps Leadership Development Framework was developed in 2008 and for many years provided a solid foundation and guideline for officers to understand and progress along the building blocks of leadership development.

In 2024, the challenges of our work and the needs of our workforce have changed. This 2024 updated Leadership Development Framework intends to reflect the required competencies and development needs of the next generation of NOAA Corps leaders. It is a living framework that will be updated over time as the changing environment and associated leadership challenges necessitate.

The new NOAA Corps Leadership Development Framework assumes that each officer can lead every day. Brené Brown, research professor and author of <u>Dare to Lead</u> defines leadership as: *Anyone who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes and has the courage to develop that potential.* There are leadership opportunities at every level, rank, position, and assignment in the organization.

This NOAA Commissioned Corps 2024 Leadership Framework assumes that all officers, across all ranks, are leaders. It is based on the principle that building skills in these inter-related competency areas begins as a junior officer and progresses through Flag Officers.

The competencies of this Framework are based on the Office of Personnel Management Senior Executive Service Competencies and those found in other military services, private sector, and academia best practices. The Framework provides a solid foundation of competency skills and expectations for NOAA Corps officers that are worked on throughout an officer's career and development. A mix of training opportunities, mentoring, coaching and targeted assignments will allow officers to develop and deepen their skills to meet mission challenges.

The purposes and intended applications of the NOAA Commissioned Corps Leadership Framework are:

- To provide every Commissioned Corps officer a roadmap for high performance leadership through career progression.
- To inform training and assignment decisions necessary for leadership competencies as officers progress through the ranks.
- To foster proactive career management by each officer role in their career and leadership development.
- To provide a diversity of resources within NOAA, online, and externally for individual professional and leadership development. A representative sample of training opportunities, videos, articles, and books are provided in the Index of Resources at the end of this document.
- To enable each NOAA Corps Officer to maximize their service to the nations as an officer and leader.

Leadership Development for NOAA Corps officers is achieved through career planning, formal training, challenging assignments, and opportunities to lead. NOAA is committed to providing the resources for each officer to pursue and realize their leadership potential. Each officer must take responsibility for their development through the continual building of skills, competencies, and performance as effective leaders in service to NOAA and the nation.

### **Core Values**

Personal and organizational values are two critical factors that influence leadership. The NOAA Corps Core Values align these two sets of values, forming the basis for Corps officers to build trust and confidence in the organization and each other.

The core values of honor, respect, and commitment are foundational to leadership. Strong interpersonal skills are essential for developing relationships that drive organizational health. Self-awareness, knowing oneself, and commitment to continuous learning are also foundational and underpin all competencies.

The Core Values are more than NOAA Corps rules of behavior; they reflect the value of the NOAA Corps to the nation. NOAA Corps officers are expected to live these values in their professional and personal activities.

The Core Values provide the foundation for building leadership and professional competencies.

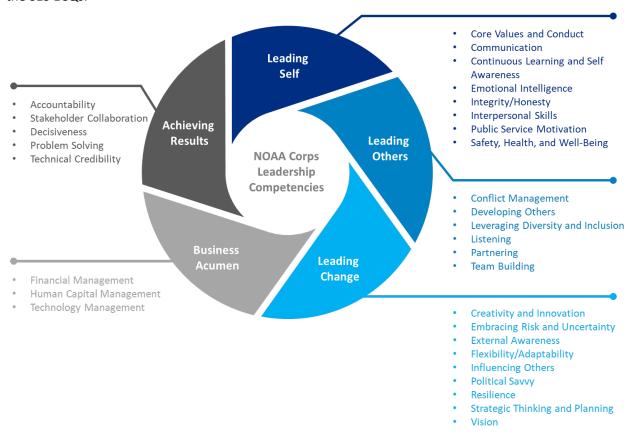
Honor	Abide by an uncompromising code of integrity. We will conduct ourselves in the highest ethical manner in all relationships and actions. We will take responsibility for our actions and be accountable for our professional and personal behavior. We will do what is right at all times.
Respect	Treat individuals with human dignity. We act with inclusiveness and tolerance, respecting diversity of expression while maintaining unity of purpose. We cultivate an environment where all have the opportunity to excel.
Commitment	Commit and dedicate ourselves to the nation and NOAA. We will serve our nation effectively and efficiently with knowledge, skill, loyalty, and perseverance. We will be mindful of the resources entrusted to us and will ensure they are used in an honest, intentional, and efficient manner

# **Leadership Competencies**

Leadership competencies are the core knowledge, skills, and expertise NOAA leaders must develop and demonstrate. The NOAA Commissioned Corps Leadership Competencies are rooted in the OPM's Senior Executive Service (SES) competencies. The leadership competencies are based on the current SES competencies and elements derived from five external programs (Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies, Public Service Model, United States Air Force, United States Coast Guard, and United States Marine Corps), insights from OMAO Flag Officers, and an assessment of experiences from a representative cross section of officers from all ranks.

The competencies are organized into categories of skills built throughout an officer's career. The five areas are: <u>Leading Self</u>, <u>Leading Others</u>, <u>Leading Change</u>, <u>Business Acumen</u>, and <u>Achieving Results</u>. Each includes interrelated and interdependent competencies that are required for effective leadership. These competency areas can be correlated to developmental steps throughout a career. Officers can reference the graphic below for an illustration of how competency development parallels the responsibility of officers as they progress through their career. Officers should seek training opportunities to supplement career development as necessary for continued developmental progress.

NOAA's Senior Executive Service (SES) are civilian leaders comprise the top one percent of NOAA's civilian employees. The Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) for the SES cadre throughout the federal government are determined by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Admirals are equivalent in grade to SES and are expected to demonstrate these core competencies required for executive leadership. The NOAA Commissioned Corps Leadership Competencies prepare officers to demonstrate the SES ECQs.



# **Leading Self**

### Core Values and Conduct

NOAA Commissioned Corps leaders embody the core values of honor, respect, and commitment. They can communicate their meaning; hold themselves, 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, more importantly, their actions.

### Communication

The ability to be an effective communicator in each of the following areas is essential.

### Speaking

Leaders express facts and ideas succinctly and logically, and facilitate a productive exchange of ideas. They welcome differing viewpoints, robust dialogue, field questions, and confidently communicate with the media and other external entities. NOAA Corps officers serve 24/7; their words reflect on the organization in their personal and professional capacities and must be above reproach.

### Writing

Leaders write in a clear, concise, organized, and convincing manner for the intended audience, while remaining cognizant of extended audiences. Their writing represents the organization, and they bring credit to the organization through their written communications.

### Nonverbal communication

Leaders must be adept at observing and interpreting expressions and body language, and use this information to inform communication strategies and complement written or verbal communication. Being aware of these cues, and using them to drive more effective communications, is essential.

### Continuous Learning and Self Awareness

Leaders understand professional development is a life-long journey and constantly strive to improve knowledge, skills, and expertise. They seek opportunities for self-learning and development, including asking for candid feedback on their strengths and weaknesses and approaching life with a learning mindset. Leaders seek mentors for themselves and consistently grow and learn.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

Leaders recognize their own emotions and observe those of others. They use this information to effectively manage their own reactions and inform their behaviors.

### Integrity/Honesty

Leaders follow moral and ethical principles. They are honest, fair and consistent in words and actions, even when it is difficult to do so.

### Interpersonal Skills

Leaders treat others with respect, and humility. They seek input and consider others' perspectives. They prioritize building trust with others and understand relationships are a foundation for leadership.

Public Service Motivation

NOAA Commissioned Corps are committed to public service; they commit to the nation through the oath of office. They inspire trust with their actions and seek the needs of the public good before their own interests. Their actions meet public needs, aligning organizational objectives and practices with public interests. They are stewards of the taxpayer dollars and committed to serving the public.

### Safety, Health, and Well-Being

Leaders consider the environment in which they and their teams serve. Safety and well-being are paramount. They effectively manage stress and recognize the importance of work life balance. They establish and adhere to a program of physical and mental fitness, and emotional well-being, through practices that keep them grounded and fit to serve.

### **Leading Others**

### **Conflict Management**

Leaders encourage creative tension and diverse perspectives. They anticipate and pro-actively address counter-productive activity. Leaders manage conflicts and resolve disagreements in a constructive manner.

### **Developing Others**

Leaders develop and mentor others in the competencies required for current and future performance. They provide objective feedback, and advise on professional development, strengths, and opportunities for improvement. They ensure fair, equitable treatment; project high expectations for subordinates and/or their teams; recognize good performance; and encourage strengths.

### Listening

Leaders are active, empathetic listeners. They use all available input to develop greater understanding. They are receptive to all forms of communications, including body language and tone of voice. Leaders respect others through active listening.

### Partnering

Leaders develop networks and build alliances, engaging in cross-functional activities where practicable. Leaders collaborate with traditional and non-traditional partners, find common ground with a widening range of stakeholders across all sectors, and use their contacts to build mutually beneficial partnerships.

### **Team Building**

Leaders inspire, guide, and create an environment that motivates others toward accomplishment of goals. They recognize and contribute to group processes, encouraging and facilitating cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity. They build commitment, team spirit, and strong relationships. As they

evolve in their leadership, they leverage collaboration to the extent possible.

# **Leading Change**

### Creativity and Innovation

Leaders continually take in available information to formulate and implement innovative solutions. They encourage process improvements and creative solutions.

### **Embracing Risk and Uncertainty**

Leaders understand how to identify and mitigate risks and uncertainty, and teach others when and where to tolerate risk. Leaders are not deterred by failure and seek to continually teach others to learn from mistakes. They can identify uncertainty as possibility, and focus to control what can be controlled. Leaders serve as an inspiration to others, take calculated risks, engage in difficult conversations, and continue to adapt and grow.

### **External Awareness**

Leaders are abreast of key national and international policies and economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization. Leaders understand, formulate, and communicate near-term and longrange plans. They position the organization for success and adjust tactics and resources as external information shifts.

### Flexibility/Adaptability

Leaders are nimble. They adapt their priorities and tactics in response to new information and obstacles. They remain optimistic and persistent, even under adversity, and recover quickly from setbacks. They embrace uncertainty and use it to develop new opportunities.

### Influencing Others

Leaders persuade and motivate others to achieve the desired outcome. They direct, coach, or delegate, as the situation requires. Successful leaders understand the importance of professional relationships, the ability to develop networks, gain cooperation and commitment from others, build consensus when possible, empower others by sharing power and responsibility, establish and maintain rapport with key players, and make decisions with the best available information in the time required.

### Political Savvy

Leaders identify the internal and external politics that influence the work of NOAA, the Department of Commerce, and the nation. Leaders approach issues with an informed perspective of organizational and political reality and identify the impacts of alternative courses of action.

### Resilience

Leaders remain constructive and persistent despite the pressures of operations, administrative, financial or policy challenges. They recover quickly from setbacks, serving as a model for others.

### Strategic Thinking and Planning

Leaders formulate objectives and priorities and implement plans consistent with the long-term interests and vision for the organization. They consider multiple time horizons and very complex interactions; a systems view of the global environment. They capitalize on opportunities and manage short-term and

long-term risk to the organization.

### Vision

Leaders develop and communicate the preferred future state for their units, nesting the strategy in the context of NOAA's vision, missions, strategy and driving forces. They establish and communicate organizational objectives, promote ownership, initiate action, and provide structure and systems to achieve long-term goals.

### **Business Acumen**

### Financial Management

Leaders demonstrate a broad understanding of the principles of the organization's financial management practices, including budget formulation and execution. They prepare, justify, and/or administer the budget for the unit or program, use cost-benefit analysis to set priorities, and monitor expenditures in support of programs and policies. Leaders seek and identify cost-effective approaches and manage procurement and contracting effectively and appropriately.

### **Human Capital Management**

Leaders understand and support the multiple personnel systems for civilian and uniformed service officers, and understand the specific systems, tools, and requirements of each system. They leverage those systems and resources to drive recruitment, retention, performance, and workforce morale including workforce development, evaluations, and recognition. They understand personnel management and apply corrective actions, as required. They assess current and future staffing needs and balance requirements with organizational goals and budget realities. Leaders serve as mentors and actively support the development of their workforce. They understand the importance of retention to maintain a high-functioning organization.

### **Technology Management**

Leaders fully appreciate the impact of technological changes on the organization. They work with their team to stay abreast of new tools, emerging technologies, and IT practices. They prioritize technology-related requirements and 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.

# **Achieving Results**

### Accountability

NOAA Corps officers organize and prioritize tasks and leverage partnerships for the efficient use of resources. They work within the chain of command and comply with applicable laws, policies, and procedures. Leaders take responsibility for their actions and those of their teams.

### Stakeholder Collaboration

Leaders know their stakeholders. They learn stakeholders' interests and priorities and leverage common resources to the extent possible. Leaders define metrics, track progress towards achieving results, and continually strive to strengthen collaborations and deliver positive impact.

### Decisiveness

Leaders make well-informed, effective, and timely decisions based on the best available information and data, even when data or time are limited. They involve others in decisions, generate innovative solutions, and execute decisions with lasting, positive impact on the organization.

### **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 commit to actions. When necessary, the problem solver restarts the process and adapts the approach. They use creativity and innovation to identify options, and assess risk and mitigate responsibly.

### **Technical Credibility**

Leaders develop credibility through experience in specific fields and duties related to the organization. They understand the context of their experience and apply it to bring credibility to the organization and inform prudent solutions and actions. They apply their technical expertise to operationalize science, and most efficiently align government, industry, academia, and congressional resources in support of the organization and the nation.

# **Individual Development Plans**

Officers are expected to compile an Individual Development Plan (IDP) as a roadmap for developing their leadership competencies. Supervisors are responsible for working with their direct reports to develop a thoughtful and effective IDP. Please refer to the <u>IDP</u> and <u>IDP User Guide</u> provided by the Commissioned Personnel Center.

# **Summary and Conclusion**

The NOAA Corps Leadership Development Framework provides an updated construct for the development of officers. The framework begins with a solid foundation of core values. Exposure and opportunities are essential throughout an officer's career to build leadership competencies at all levels.

A robust, research-based training program must facilitate building these competencies. Officers are required to create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) that provides a roadmap to build these competencies. This Framework offers a list of competencies to inform choices in career paths and specific competencies to develop through assignments along career progression. Overall, the NOAA Corps Leadership Development Framework enables officer growth and continued development as leaders to meet increasing requirements for the nation.

### **Index of Resources**

# **Leading Self**

Core Values and Conduct

- American Management Association (Course): <u>Leadership Strategies for Creating a Respectful</u>
   Workplace
- Forbes (Article): Why Core Values Matter (And How To Get Your Team Excited About Them)
- Simon Sinek (Video): <u>Lead with Your Values | Simon Sinek</u>

### Communication

- American Management Association (Course): <u>Business Writing Made Simple</u>
- American Management Association (Course): <u>How to Communication with Diplomacy, Tact and</u>
   Credibility
- Harvard Business Review (Article): Nail Your Presentation Even When Your Time Is Cut Short
- Harvard Business Review (Video): <u>Take Control of Your Nonverbal Communication</u>

### Continuous Learning and Self Awareness

- Harvard Business Review (Article): How Busy People Can Develop Leadership Skills
- Harvard Business Review (Article): What Makes a 360-Degree Review Successful?
- Harvard Business Review (Article): What Self-Awareness Really Is (and How to Cultivate It)
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Continuous Learning
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Self-Reflection

### **Emotional Intelligence**

- Center for Creative Leadership (Articles, Podcasts, Webinars): <u>Content About Emotional</u> Intelligence & Empathy
- Harvard Business Review (Article): How Emotional Intelligence Became a Key Leadership Skill

- Harvard Business Review (Article): Why Emotional Intelligence Is Important in Leadership
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): <u>Emotional Intelligence</u>
- Shortform (Book Summary): Emotional Intelligence, by Daniel Goleman

### Integrity/Honesty

- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Authenticity
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Integrity

### Interpersonal Skills

- American Management Association (Courses): <u>Interpersonal Communication Skills Training</u>
- Center for Creative Leadership (Article): Boost Your Interpersonal Savvy

### Public Service Motivation

• Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Public Service Leadership Model

### Safety, Health, and Well-Being

- American Management Association (Course): Improving Employee Well-Being in Your Organization
- Center for Creative Leadership (Article): What Is Psychological Safety at Work? How Leaders Can Build Psychologically Safe Workplaces
- Center for Creative Leadership (Articles and Resources): (Better) Leadership Resources for Leading With Compassion, Wellbeing & Belonging
- Center for Creative Leadership (Webinar): How to Promote Wellbeing at Work
- Harvard Business Review (Article): Managers Are Burned Out. Here's How to Help Them Recharge.
- NOAA Mindfulness (Resources): Mindful NOAA
- NOAA Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights (Policies, Resources, Programs, and Contact Information):
   Equal Employment Opportunity, Individuality, Synergy, and a Model Workplace Across NOAA

# **Leading Others**

### **Conflict Management**

- American Management Association (Course): <u>Responding to Conflict: Strategies for Improved</u>
   Communication
- Harvard Business Review (Article): 4 Types of Employee Complaints and How to Respond
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Conflict Management

### **Developing Others**

- Center for Creative Leadership (Article): Create (Better) Culture: <u>Start With Compassionate</u> Leadership
- Center for Creative Leadership (Article): <u>Today's Top Leadership Tensions & How to Address</u>
  Them
- Center for Creative Leadership (Articles, Podcast, and Webinars): <u>Content About Coaching Skills</u>
   <u>& Coaching Conversations</u>
- Harvard Business Review (Article): How to Help Superstar Employees Fulfill Their Potential
- Harvard Business Review (Article): <u>How to Talk to Your Team About Their Career D</u>evelopment

Harvard Business Review (Article): <u>Where Women's Leadership Development Programs Fall Short</u>

### Listening

- Center for Creative Leadership (Webinar): <u>How to Practice Authentic Communication in a Virtual</u> Space Through the Power of Listening
- Harvard Business Review (Article): Are You Really Listening?
- Harvard Business Review (Article): What's Your Listening Style?

### Partnering

Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Resources): <u>Roadmap for Renewing Our Federal</u>
 <u>Government</u>

### **Team Building**

- Center for Creative Leadership (Article): How to Lead a Collaborative Team
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Empowering Others
- Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (course): <u>Leadership and Teamworking</u> Skills

# **Leading Change**

### Creativity and Innovation

- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): <u>Building a Culture of Innovation in</u> Government
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Innovation and Creativity

### Embracing Risk and Uncertainty

- American Management Association (Course): Managing Risk and Uncertainty in Projects
- Harvard Business Review (Article and Video): Don't Learn the Wrong Lessons from Failure
- Harvard Business Review (Article and Video): How to Navigate and Thrive Through Uncertainty
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Embracing Risk and Uncertainty
- TED (Video): Why Good Leaders Make You Feel Safe | Simon Sinek
- The Tonight Show (Video): Brené Brown Reveals Which Four Skill Sets Make the Best Leaders

### **External Awareness**

Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): <u>Systems Thinking</u>

### Flexibility/Adaptability

- American Management Association (Course): <u>Building a Culture of Innovation for Hybrid and</u> Virtual Teams
- Harvard Business Review (Article): It Takes Versatility to Lead in a Volatile World
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Adaptability

### Influencing Others

- American Management Association (Course): <u>Leading Change How to Rise to the Challenge</u> and <u>Inspire Others</u>
- American Management Association (Course): <u>The Voice of Leadership How Leaders Inspire</u>, Influence and Achieve Results
- CBS This Morning (Video): Brené Brown on Power of Vulnerability, Bravery and New Netflix Special
- Center for Creative Leadership (Article): How to Be a Successful Change Leader
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Influence

### Political Savvy

- Center for Creative Leadership (Article): <u>Creating Tomorrow's Government Leaders An</u>
   Overview of Top Government Leadership Challenges
- Center for Creative Leadership (Book): <u>Developing Political Savvy</u>
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Article): <u>Policy Basics Introduction to the Federal</u> Budget Process
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Reports and Articles): Federal Budget

### Resilience

- American Management Association (Course): Building a Resilient Mindset
- Harvard Business Review (Article): What Leaders Get Wrong About Resilience

### Strategic Thinking and Planning

- American Management Association (Course): <u>Moving from an Operational Manager to a Strategic</u> <u>Leader</u>
- American Management Association (Course): Strategic Planning
- American Management Association (Course): Strategic Thinking

### Vision

• Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Vision Setting

### **Business Acumen**

### Financial Management

- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Article): <u>Policy Basics Introduction to the Federal Budget Process</u>
- Management Concepts (Course): Federal Financial Management Overview
- USAGov (Article): <u>The Federal Budget Process</u>
- Washington Post (Infographic): A Guide to the Federal Budget Process

### **Human Capital Management**

Center for Creative Leadership (Article): Can People Analytics Revolutionize Your Organization?

- NOAA Office for Human Capital Resources (Resources): OHCS Google Site
- U.S. Office of Personnel Management (Articles and Resources): <u>Human Capital Framework</u>

### **Technology Management**

- Partnership for Public Service (Article): In the Public AI
- U.S. Department of Commerce (Strategies): Digital Strategy
- U.S. General Service Administration (Resources): Government IT initiatives

### **Achieving Results**

### Accountability

- Culture Partners (Article): Responsibility vs. Accountability
- Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (course): <u>Leadership and Managerial</u> Skills
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Accountability

### **Customer Collaboration**

- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Collaboration
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): <u>Customer Experience</u>

### Decisiveness

• Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Evidence-Based Decision-Making

### **Problem Solving**

- Harvard Business Review (Article): 3 Strategies for Making Better, More Informed Decisions
- Harvard Business Review (Article): In Uncertain Times, Embrace Imperfectionism
- Harvard Business Review (Article): The Two Traits of the Best Problem-Solving Teams

### **Technical Credibility**

- AACSB (Article): <u>Developing Tech-Savvy Leaders</u>
- Partnership for Public Service (Articles and Videos): Tech Savviness