

SES CDP: Skills

There are several skills and experiences that I think a future person would need in order to successfully encumber the position I have now as the Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Human Resources, and those include a strong foundation in budget primarily. I'd say that's the first and foremost. That's a grounding that I think nearly everyone in the Senior Executive Service should have, but particularly anybody who's going into an administrative capacity overseeing the budget function. Budget is not necessarily an intuitive process, and so it's really important for somebody coming in to know what the processes are, what the gains are, and there are plenty of little tricks in the budget arena. There are ways of justifying budget requests and of justifying and defending decreases in the budget, so those are things that would be very difficult for somebody coming in to my position to learn on the job. It would be a very tall order. The second area that I think is important to have some experience in is any area of scientific methodology such as methodological design, statistical analysis, understanding some fundamental principles of statistics, and I have had that because I had previously also before government had been a psychometrician, and so I basically was a statistician, and that was, I would say it wasn't critical 10 years ago when I started this position, but now it is because we're in such a high accountability era and because planning and performance management has become integral to this position. Thirdly I would say that I had a lot of good experience as a collateral duty Equal Opportunity Counselor when I worked in the Department, and that gave me some understanding of what managers can and cannot ask people, should or shouldn't do, so beyond just my

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instincts and my intuition about what managers should and shouldn't do, I learned not to ask the wrong questions in interviews innocently, and I learned about rules and regulations covering management of the federal workforce.

Some of the same skills that are required today will continue to be needed in the future. I think strategic thinking will be a very important characteristic and attribute of future leaders. I think that the change in demographics in the country are gonna demand different skills, different sensitivities, our workforce is gonna be changing, the pool that we're gonna be drawing from will be changing, the issues that we face as a country are gonna continue to change and they're gonna reflect some of that change in diversity and the demographics both in culture as well as age, so I think that skills and being able to respond to those kinds of things and being sensitive to it will be much needed. I think data is gonna continue to be a challenge. We're gonna have huge amounts of data with the way that technology is evolving, both digital and other media forms, and having an awareness and an understanding of how technology can help further advance the mission of the agency, whether it's science or resource management, will be important to our leaders. I would also say the social media that we're beginning to see emerge is gonna, I think, invite a demand from the public to be engaged in part of the governance process. We're seeing it more and more now where we have the ability to share information over the internet with local community groups, and that's sort of a one-way process where we're sharing information. I think it's just a matter of time before they demand to

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provide input and to be a part of the governance process, and I think some of the social media tools that are emerging will be an important part of making that a reality.