# 2017
# SES Exit Report

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# Executive Summary

In April 2013, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued a new exit survey for standard distribution by all agencies across the Federal Government to departing members of the Senior Executive Service (SES). The SES Exit Survey is designed to capture valuable information regarding the circumstances under which senior executives leave the Federal Government and offer an opportunity for executives to provide candid feedback about their work experiences. The data presented are intended to support agency and Governmentwide recruitment, engagement, retention, and succession planning efforts for current and future executives. This Governmentwide report focuses on the analysis of survey responses collected from August 2015 to July 2016, as well as trend data from previous SES Exit reports.

## Key findings

- Retirement continues to be the most common reason SES are leaving their agencies. As in previous years, the majority of SES indicated they were leaving their agency due to retirement (61 percent).

- Executives are leaving with intent to continue working, in many cases for higher pay; an increasing number intend to work without any reduction in pay. A cross-year survey comparison of work schedule and salary expectations from Year 1 (2013-14) to Year 3 (2015-16) highlighted that an increasing percentage of departing SES intended to continue to work full-time without taking a cut in pay. And while the percentage of departing SES seeking an increase in pay has remained relatively stable between Year 1 and Year 3, the percentage expecting their pay to decrease has diminished by 8 percentage points.

- Agencies can influence whether or not an executive stays in the organization; however, factors may vary based on retirement eligibility status. Many executives who intend to keep working indicated they would stay for increased pay (39 percent), change in duties or responsibilities (28 percent), increased autonomy (27 percent), and better work-life balance (22 percent). Fewer retirement eligible executives indicated they would stay for these same factors. In addition, executives who leave their agencies to pursue opportunities that do not include retirement were more likely to indicate that the lack of advancement opportunities and recognition contributed greatly or very greatly to their decisions to leave (48 percent vs 34 percent), while executives who retired were more likely to attribute exit decisions to personal reasons (63 percent vs 54 percent).

- Work environment issues continue to be the highest contributing factors in an executive's decision to leave. Overall, work environment issues such as the "political environment" (42 percent), "organizational culture" (42 percent), and "senior leadership" (40 percent) contributed the most to executives' decisions to their leaving the agency.

- Formal succession planning is not the norm for senior-level roles. A majority of departing SES (61 percent) said their agencies had no formal succession planning efforts for executives, and more than half (56 percent) said their agency made no efforts to involve them in preparing their successor.

## Background

OPM, in partnership with other agencies, designed the SES Exit Survey to capture valuable information regarding the circumstances under which senior executives leave the Federal Government and offer an opportunity for executives to provide candid feedback about their work experiences and their perspectives of their agencies. The information will enable Federal agencies to have increased awareness of their executives' work environments and to inform their continued efforts to successfully recruit, manage, and retain their senior leadership workforce. Specifically, this report provides insight on:

- SES separations trends

- Stay factors

- Factors influencing decisions to leave

- Succession management

- Performance management

- Compensation

- Executive perceptions of the Senior Executive Service and agency

## Methodology

### Data Sources and Response Rate

Data for the OPM SES Exit Survey were gathered via an online survey (see Appendix 5 for the SES Exit Survey). Each agency appoints an agency-wide Point of Contact (POC) who is responsible for distributing the common survey link to departing executives. The survey link is available on an ongoing basis for an indefinite period of time.

This Governmentwide report focuses on the analysis of survey responses collected from August 2015 to July 2016, as well as trend data from the previous reports, covering April 2013 to July 2014 and August 2014 to July 2015. Year-to-year comparisons of results are available in Appendix 2.

A total of 212 members of the SES who were in the process of leaving their agencies responded to the survey. The response rate is difficult to calculate because OPM does not directly distribute the individual surveys to departing executives. OPM conservatively calculated a response rate of 21 percent.[1] Since it may not be possible for every member of the SES who leaves an agency to receive the survey link, the actual response rate is expected to be higher than the approximated response rate provided in this report.

**Collection Period**

## August 2015 - July 2016

**Number of Participants**

# 212

**Response Rate**



21%

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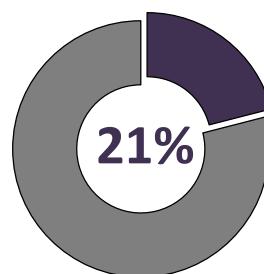
1 The response rate calculation relies on agencies to voluntarily submit data on the number of SES who left the organization and the number of SES who were provided the Exit Survey link between August 2015 and July 2016. Any data that is not collected through the data call is filled in using EHRI separations data which covers the time period of the report.

## Analysis

Most of the data collected through the SES Exit Survey consisted of categorical information. OPM used common statistical methods such as frequencies, percentages, and cross-tabulations to analyze these survey items. In some cases, results from previous surveys were used to assess changes over time. Additionally, as described below, OPM grouped some response categories to simplify presentations.

Agreement Items: These items requested the respondent to choose an answer on an "agreement" scale comprised of the following options: "Strongly Agree"; "Agree"; "Neither Agree nor Disagree"; "Disagree"; and "Strongly Disagree." The results were then grouped into the categories displayed in the table below.

| Response Option | Grouped Category |
|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | Positive |
| Agree | |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | Neutral |
| Disagree | Negative |
| Strongly Disagree | |

Extent Items: These items asked the respondent to choose an answer on an "extent" scale comprised of the following options: "Not at all"; "To a Small Extent"; "To a Moderate Extent"; "To a Great Extent"; and "To a Very Great Extent." The results were then further grouped into the categories displayed in the table below. Graphs in this report reflect the grouped "To a Great Extent/To a Very Great Extent" category.

| Response Option | Grouped Category |
|---|---|
| Not at all | Not at all/To a Small Extent |
| To a Small Extent | |
| To a Moderate Extent | To a Moderate Extent |
| To a Great Extent | To a Great Extent/To a Very Great Extent |
| To a Very Great Extent | |

The SES Exit survey also included open-ended questions which gave SES the opportunity to provide candid feedback about their experiences. OPM analyzed open-ended survey responses using a systematic coding scheme to identify themes.

# SES Separations Trends

## Who participated?

A total of 212 members of the SES who were in the process of leaving their agencies responded to the survey. Respondents represented 23 agencies (see Appendix 3 for participation by agency). Participants tended to be older than 50 (79 percent), were career SES (95 percent), and a majority of the respondents indicated their race as White (79 percent). The majority of participants were appointed to their senior positions from a Federal service position (81 percent), and almost half had worked in the agency from which they were separating for more than 20 years (49 percent). Participant demographics are further summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Participant Demographics**

| Demographic Category | Percentage | Demographic Category | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Age (N=210)** | | **Agency tenure (N=208)** | |
| Under 30 | 1% | Less than one year | 4% |
| 30-39 | 3% | 1-3 years | 12% |
| 40-49 | 17% | 4-5 years | 9% |
| 50-59 | 17% | 6-10 years | 15% |
| 60 or older | 39% | 11-20 years | 11% |
| | | More than 20 years | 49% |
| **Demographic Category** | **Percentage** | **Demographic Category** | **Percentage** |
| **Race/Ethnicity* (N=201)** | | **Appointment type (N=209)** | |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 2% | Career | 95% |
| Asian | 3% | Non-Career | 4% |
| Black or African American | 17% | Limited Term | 1% |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 1% | Limited Emergency | 0% |
| White | 79% | | |
| Hispanic/Latino | 10% | | |
| **Demographic Category** | **Percentage** | **Demographic Category** | **Percentage** |
| **Years in Senior Executive Service (N=186)** | | **Appointed from… (N=197)** | |
| Less than one year | 10% | Federal service position | 81% |
| 1-3 years | 18% | Private sector | 7% |
| 4-5 years | 21% | State/local government | 2% |
| 6-10 years | 30% | Military service | 4% |
| 11-20 years | 17% | Academia | 1% |
| More than 20 years | 5% | Reinstatement | 1% |
| | | Other | 7% |
| *Respondents were able to select multiple categories | | | |

## Why are they leaving?

Shown in Figure 1, the majority of the executives indicated they were leaving to retire (61 percent), and almost all were doing so voluntarily (98 percent). These percentages have remained relatively stable across all three years of the SES Exit Survey (see Appendix 2 for year-over-year comparisons).

### Figure 1. Circumstances Under which SES are Leaving
**Retirement was the most commonly cited reason for SES departure**

| | Retiring | Resigning | Transferring | Accepting non-SES position within another agency | Leaving involuntarily | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2013-14 | 59% | 11% | 12% | 2% | 1% | 14% |
| 2014-15 | 56% | 17% | 16% | 5% | 1% | 6% |
| 2015-16 | 61% | 10% | 18% | 4% | 1% | 5% |

## Where are they going?

More departing executives reported they are leaving the workforce permanently than in previous years. The number of members of the SES who indicated they would not be working for pay (31 percent) was higher this year than in previous administrations of the survey (27 percent in 2013-14 and 20 percent in 2014-15). In contrast, 30 percent of the members of the SES departing this year indicated they would be working for pay after leaving their agencies; 15 percent intended

### Figure 2. SES Intentions to Work for Pay
**A majority of departing SES were considering working for pay after leaving their agencies**



Undecided, 24%
Yes, 30%
No, 31%
No, but I intend to look for employment in the near future, 15%

*\* Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100%*
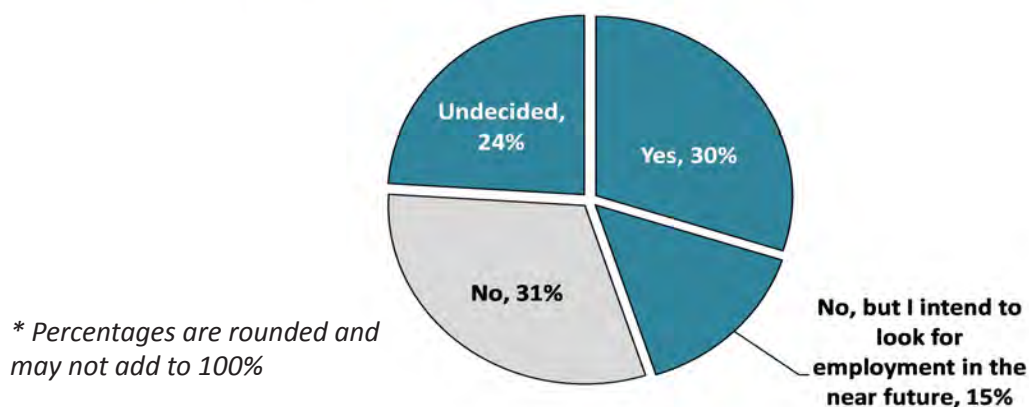
to look for work in the near future; and 24 percent were undecided (see Figure 2).

The executives who intend to work in the future responded they are unlikely to pursue Federal employment, even though a large portion (69 percent) indicated they would be willing to work for their agencies in the future either full-time (26 percent) or part-time (20 percent). Thirty-five percent indicated they planned to work for the private sector (not Government contractors), 14 percent planned to work for themselves, and 14 percent planned to work in the not-for-profit sector (see Table 2).

**Table 2**

| Organizations for Which Departing SES Intend to Work | Percentage of Departing SES |
|---|---|
| Private company, not a Government contractor | 35% |
| Non-profit organization | 14% |
| Self-employed | 14% |
| Government contractor | 7% |
| Not sure* | 7% |
| State or local government | 6% |
| Academia* | 6% |
| Another Federal agency* | 3% |
| Military* | 1% |
| Work as a reemployed annuitant for a Federal agency | 1% |
| Other | 6% |

*N=72; only includes those who indicated they would be working or would be looking for work*

*Percentages were calculated from an analysis of written "Other" responses*

## Work Intentions and Pay

Over half of the departing executives indicated they would be working for increased pay (57 percent), and, in comparison to previous years, more departing executives intend to work full-time (81 percent this year vs 71 percent in 2014-15) without decreasing their salary ( 18 percent this year vs  26 percent in 2014-15). Figure 3 shows a cross-year comparison of work schedule and salary expectations among departing members of the SES who intended to seek work. While the percentage of departing members of the SES seeking an increase in pay through other opportunities has remained relatively stable from 2013-14 to 2015-16 (over half), those expecting their pay to stay the same has increased by 10 percentage points, and those expecting a decrease has declined by 8 percentage points.

**Figure 3. Changes in SES Work Schedule and Salary Expectations Over Time**
**More departing SES intend to work full-time without taking a cut in pay**
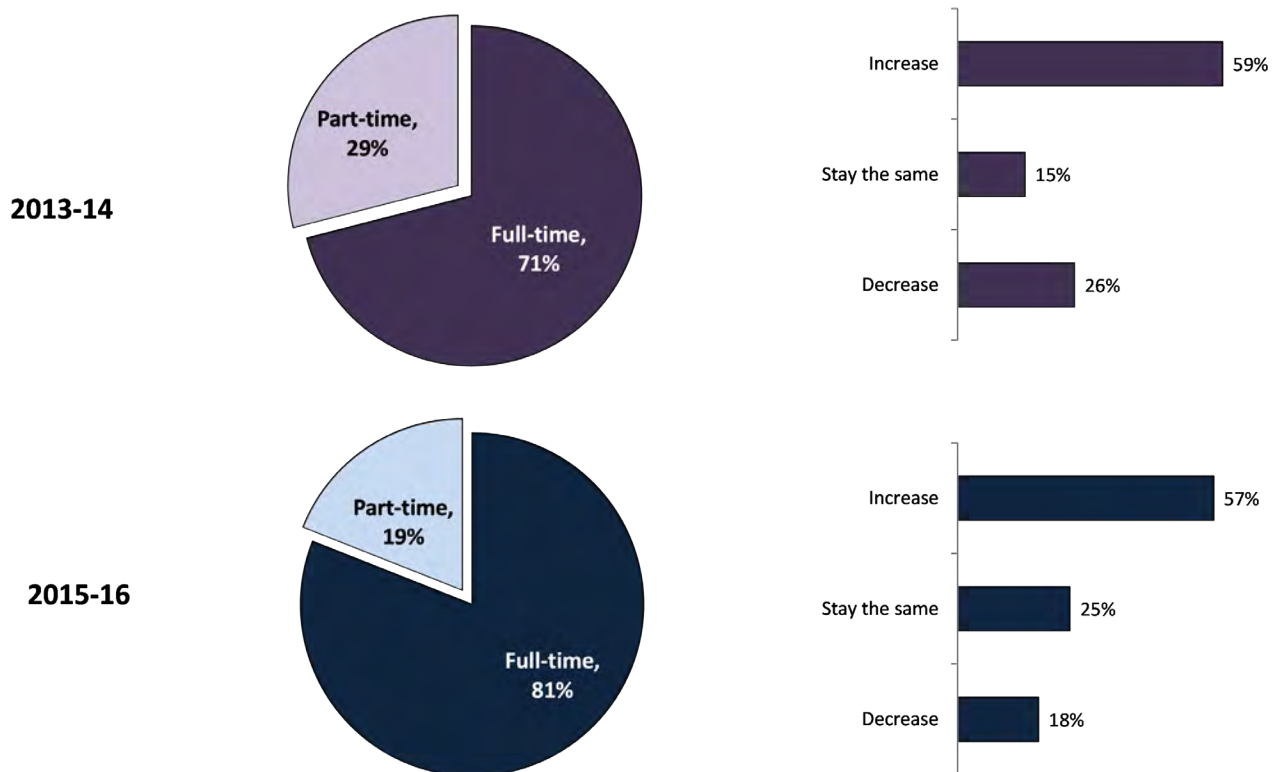
# SES Retention Considerations

Federal agencies continue to have opportunities to better understand and find ways to retain their senior executives. As noted above, a majority of the departing senior executives indicated they were considering or definitely planning to work; only one-third definitively indicated they were not seeking employment (Figure 1). Agencies have less opportunity to persuade retiring members of the SES to stay. Literature on organizational withdrawal often considers separations due to retirement distinct from other types of voluntary turnover[2] -- retirees want to reduce their commitment to employment in general, and place more emphasis on other life roles.[3] However, the other executives (non-retirees) are leaving with the intent to continue working, and it would benefit agencies to explore ways to retain those employees.

## Stay Factors

As agencies explore ways to retain the members of the SES who intend to work after leaving, they should consider stay factors that are rated highly. Stay factors represent hypothetical changes in work-related circumstances that, if offered, might encourage an executive to stay in their current role. Overall, "increase in pay" was the most frequently endorsed stay factor (34 percent). Non-retirees indicated "change in duties or responsibilities" (28 percent), "increased autonomy" (27 percent), and "better work-life balance" (22 percent) as important stay factors. Retirees indicated "retention incentives" (25 percent) and "verbal encouragement to stay based on value to the organization" (22 percent) as top reasons they would have stayed. Considering that almost three-fourths of departing SES (71 percent) said no efforts were made to encourage them to stay, agencies should not underestimate the value of stay interviews as a first step in the process of retaining top executive talent. See Figure 4 for additional comparison results.

However, agencies should not get frustrated if their efforts are not entirely successful because thirty-two percent of departing SES indicated that nothing would have encouraged them to stay, a higher percentage than the previous two years of the survey. Among members of the SES who selected this response option, 69 percent were retiring, 8 percent were resigning, 15 percent were transferring to another agency, and 3 percent were accepting a non-SES position within another Federal agency. These departing executives were also provided the opportunity to explain their answer, and a summary of response themes can be found in Table 3.

**Table 3**

| Summary of Open Ended Responses – Reasons SES Said "Nothing Would Have Encouraged Them to Stay" | Number of Comments |
|---|---|
| Ready to retire | 23 |
| Pursuing other career interests | 11 |
| Work environment issues | 4 |
| Personal reasons | 3 |
| Poor leadership | 3 |
| Disrespectful treatment | 2 |
| Better compensation | 2 |

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2  See, for example:
Cho, Y. J. and Lewis, G. B. 2012. "Turnover Intention and Turnover Behavior: Implications for Retaining Federal Employees." *Review of Public Personnel Administration, 32: 4-23.*
*Partnership for Public Service & Booz Allen Hamilton. (2010). Beneath the Surface: Understanding Attrition at Your Agency and Why It Matters. Washington, DC: Partnership for Public Service*

3  Schmidt, J. and Lee, K. 2008. "Voluntary Retirement and Organizational Turnover Intentions: The Differential Associations with Work and Non-Work Commitment Constructs." Journal of Business and Psychology, 22: 297-309

Figure 4. Stay Factor Comparisons By Retirement Status

# Compensation and Benefits

## Retirees

| | Non-Retirees |
|---|---|

28% — Increase in Pay — 39%

25% — Retention Incentive — 15%

18% — Performance/Other award — 20%

10% — Dual compensation waiver*

1% — Student loan repayment — 5%

1% — Benefits — 5%

# Increased Authority/Support

## Retirees        Non-Retirees

22% — Verbal encouragement to stay — 20%

19% — Increased autonomy in decision making — 27%

17% — Greater engagement from senior leadership — 19%

12% — Increased funding/resources — 19%

8% — Increased support dealing with poor performers — 15%

6% — High level position — 20%

6% — Increased delegation of authority — 14%

2% — Greater scope of responsibility — 15%

## Retirees

# Work-Life Balance

## Non-Retirees

14% — Flexible/part-time schedule — 4%

14% — Better work-life balance — 22%

13% — Relocation to another geographical location — 14%

10% — Increased telework opportunity — 3%

10% — Change in duties/responsibilities — 28%

2% — More comprehensive eldercare — 1%

# Development Opportunities

## Retirees        Non-Retirees

10% — Sabbatical — 4%

10% — Reassignment to new job within agency — 15%

5% — Executive development training — 1%

4% — Mobility assignment — 5%

1% — Coaching — 3%

*Participants were able to select multiple responses*

# Factors Influencing Decisions to Leave

Work environment issues (e.g., political environment, organizational culture, senior leadership, lack of autonomy) continue to be the most influential reasons for leaving. Departing executives rated the extent to which various elements contributed to their reasons for leaving their agency, and regardless of retirement status, a majority of executives indicated at least one work environment element contributed to their decision to leave "to a great extent" or "to a very great extent" (see Figure 5). Other reasons for leaving tended to vary based on retirement status. Executives indicating they were going to continue to work (non-retirees) were generally more likely to rate advancement and recognition (48 percent vs 34 percent), and executives who intended not to work (retirees) generally rated personal reasons (63 percent vs 52 percent) as important factors.

## Figure 5. Comparison of Reasons for Leaving Categories by Retirement Status
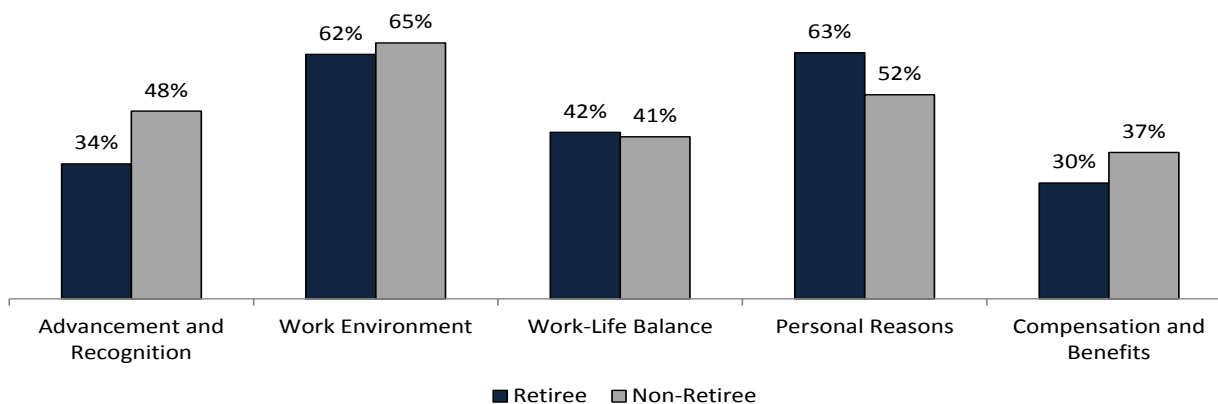


The results reinforce the importance of engaging in open and candid conversations with departing executives, as SES in different career stages appear to be leaving for different reasons. Figure 6 provides a more detailed comparison of the factors that had the most impact on the two departing SES subgroups. The largest percentage point gaps were observed for the following reasons: "desire to live life without work commitments" (retirees – 41 percent, non-retirees – 1 percent), "more attractive job offer elsewhere" (non-retirees – 50 percent, retirees – 13 percent), "lack of opportunities for development" (non-retirees – 36 percent, retirees – 10 percent), and "desire to leave the workforce" (retirees – 22 percent, non-retirees – 1 percent).

# Figure 6. Comparison of Reasons for Leaving by Retirement Status

## Work Environment

| Reason | Retirees | Non-Retirees |
|---|---|---|
| Political environment | 40% | 46% |
| Organizational culture | 38% | 49% |
| Senior leadership | 38% | 44% |
| Lack of autonomy | 27% | 39% |
| Relationship with supervisor | 18% | 31% |
| Job duties/responsibilities | 13% | 21% |
| Supervisory duties | 8% | 14% |
| Relationship with colleagues | 2% | 11% |

## Advancement and Recognition

| Reason | Retirees | Non-Retirees |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of recognition for accomplishments | 30% | 36% |
| Performance evaluations | 18% | 21% |
| Lack of opportunities for advancement | 10% | 36% |
| Lack of opportunities for development | 6% | 26% |

**Figure 6 (continued)**

## Personal Reasons

**Desire to enjoy life without work commitments**
1% Non-Retirees — 41% Retirees

**Desire to leave the workforce**
1% Non-Retirees — 22% Retirees

**Personal health reasons**
Non-Retirees 6% — 15% Retirees

**More attractive job offer elsewhere**
Retirees — 13% — Non-Retirees 50%

**Relocation**
Non-Retirees 7% — 13% Retirees

**Care for family member**
Non-Retirees 3% — 11% Retirees

**Desire to pursue education**
2% Retirees — 6% Non-Retirees

## Work-Life Balance

**Job stress**
Non-Retirees — 27% 29% Retirees

**Workload**
Non-Retirees — 14% 17% Retirees

**Long work hours**
Non-Retirees 8% — 14% Retirees

**Commute**
Retirees — 13% 16% Non-Retirees

**Work hours not flexible**
Retirees 7% 9% Non-Retirees

**Geographic assignment**
5% Retirees — 10% Non-Retirees

## Compensation/Benefits

**Lack of awards**
Retirees — 23% 27% Non-Retirees

**Insufficient pay**
Retirees — 20% 27% Non-Retirees

**Unsatisfactory benefits**
4% Non-Retirees 7% Retirees

# Succession Management

A majority of departing SES indicated their agencies have no formal succession planning efforts for executives (61 percent), and over half of departing members of the SES (56 percent) said their agencies made no efforts to involve them in preparing their successors (see Figure 7). Results for these items have been relatively stable across survey administrations (see Appendix 2). Succession management is critical to mission success and creates an effective process for recognizing, developing, and retaining top leadership talent. Agencies are required to develop a comprehensive management succession program to fill agency supervisory and managerial positions (5 CFR 412.101). The exit survey results indicate agencies should focus efforts to ensure smooth transitions in leadership.

**Figure 7. SES Succession Planning Efforts**
**Departing SES reported that their agencies...**

**Had no formal succession planning efforts for executives**

**61%**

**Made no efforts to involve them in preparing their sucessor**

**56%**
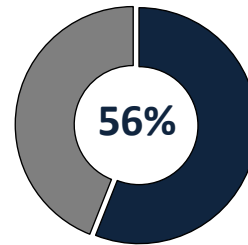
# Performance Management

Executive performance is evaluated on a pay-for-performance system where senior executives are rated each year on a combination of demonstrated leadership through the five Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) as well as measurable results. A majority of executives (79 percent) indicated they were rated either "Outstanding" or "Exceeds Fully Successful" on their most recent performance appraisal (see Table 4).
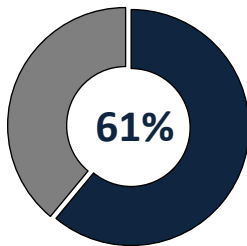
**Table 4**

| Departing SES Performance Ratings | Percentage of Departing SES |
|---|---|
| Outstanding | 46% |
| Exceeds Fully Successful | 33% |
| Fully Successful | 16% |
| Minimally Satisfactory | 0% |
| Unsatisfactory | 0% |
| I did not receive a performance rating | 5% |
| I prefer not to respond | - |

# Executive Perceptions of Senior Executive Service and Agency

In addition to capturing departing executives' separation motivations and employment intentions, the Exit Survey provides members of the SES an opportunity to share their perceptions of general aspects of their employment experiences.

# Ranking the Executive Core Qualifications

The Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) are leadership skills designated by OPM to evaluate individuals for entrance into the SES and to evaluate their performance. A chart summarizing each ECQ and its competencies can be found in Appendix 4. The survey asked executives to rank the ECQs in order of importance to achieve success in their position (5 = most important for success, 1 = least important for success). Table 5 shows that Leading People received the highest average ranking of the five ECQs, with an average ranking of 3.93. These ratings have remained stable across each iteration of the survey.

**Table 5. Departing SES Rankings of Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs)**

| Executive Core Qualification (ECQ) | Average Ranking | ECQ Description |
|---|---|---|
| Leading People (1) | 3.93 | This core qualification involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission and goals. Inherent in this ECQ is the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork and supports constructive resolution of conflicts |
| Results Driven (2) | 3.26 | This core qualification involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Inherent in this ECQ is the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems and calculating risks. |
| Leading Change (3) | 3.12 | This core qualification involves the ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. Inherent in this ECQ is the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment. |
| Building Coalitions (4) | 2.62 | This core qualification involves the ability to build coalitions internally and with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals. |
| Business Acumen (5) | 2.08 | This core qualification involves the ability to manage human, financial and information resources strategically. |

## Executives Recommend the SES

A majority of departing members of the SES recommend employment in the SES (63 percent) (see graph below). Departing executives were given an opportunity to explain their opinions, and a sample of positive, neutral, and negative themes are provided in Table 6.

**Perceptions of the Senior Executive Service**

| Positive, 63% | Neutral, 11% | Negative, 26% |
|---|---|---|

**Table 6. Open Comment Themes**

| Positive Comment Themes | Neutral Comment Themes | Negative Comment Themes |
|---|---|---|
| Rewarding job | Rewarding, but under compensated | Toxic political environment |
| Opportunity to make a difference | Has pros and cons | Insufficient pay for workload/ responsibilities |
| An honor to serve | Challenging and not for everyone | Unsupportive environment |
| Impactful work | | Too bureaucratic |

## Executives Recommend Their Agency

A majority of departing members of the SES would recommend their agency as a good place to work (63 percent). Departing members of the SES were given an opportunity to explain their opinions, and a sample of positive, neutral, and negative themes are provided in Table 7.

**Perceptions of the Agency**

| Positive, 63% | Neutral, 24% | Negative, 13% |
|---|---|---|

**Table 7. Open Comment Themes**

| Positive Comment Themes | Neutral Comment Themes | Negative Comment Themes |
|---|---|---|
| Important/worthwhile mission | Growing tensions between career and political appointees | Too political |
| Dedicated employees | Good agency, limited resources | Unfair treatment |
| Great place to work | | Lack of respect for SES |
| Rewarding work | | Poor organizational culture |

Departing members of the SES were also given the opportunity to describe what they liked best about working at their agency. Responses are summarized in Table 8.

**Table 8**

| Summary – Aspects departing SES liked most about their agencies | Number of comments |
|---|---|
| Mission | 43 |
| The employees | 36 |
| Positive impact of work | 19 |
| Colleagues | 14 |
| The work itself | 12 |
| Team-oriented environment | 6 |
| Supportive leadership | 5 |
| Sense of organizational commitment | 4 |
| Autonomy | 3 |
| Open communication | 2 |
| Work flexibility | 2 |
| Geographically dispersed workforce | 1 |
| Executive training | 1 |
| Agency size | 1 |
| Variety of work | 1 |
| Work-life balance | 1 |
| Opportunity to learn | 1 |
| Availability of resources | 1 |

## Conclusion

With SES retirement rates remaining high and steady, it is imperative for agencies to understand what they can do to engage and retain top-performing executives, while mitigating factors that cause executives to leave the Federal Government.

# Appendices

# Appendix 1: Figure Descriptions and Data

Figure 1. Circumstances Under which SES are Leaving

Retirement was the most commonly cited reason for SES departure

| Reason for Leaving | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Retiring | 59% | 56% | 61% |
| Resigning | 11% | 17% | 10% |
| Transferring to another Federal agency | 12% | 16% | 18% |
| Accepting non-SES position within a Federal agency | 2% | 5% | 4% |
| Leaving involuntarily | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Other | 14% | 6% | 5% |
| | N=217 | N=224 | N=210 |

Figure 2. SES Intentions to Work for Pay

A majority of departing SES were considering working for pay after leaving their agencies

| Will you be working for pay after you leave your agency? | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Yes | 30% |
| No, but I intend to look for employment in the near future | 15% |
| No | 31% |
| Undecided | 24% |

Figure 3. Changes in SES Work Schedule and Salary Expectations Over Time

More departing SES intend to work full-time without taking a cut in pay

| Year | Work Schedule | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 2013-14 | Full-time | 71% |
| | Part-time | 29% |
| 2015-16 | Full-time | 81% |
| | Part-time | 19% |

| Year | Salary Change | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 2013-14 | Increase | 59% |
| | Stay the same | 15% |
| | Decrease | 26% |
| 2015-16 | Increase | 57% |
| | Stay the same | 25% |
| | Decrease | 18% |

Figure 4. Stay Factor Comparisons By Retirement Status

| Category | Stay Factors | Percentage of Retirees | Percentage of Non-Retirees |
|---|---|---|---|
| Compensation Benefits | Increase in Pay | 28% | 39% |
| | Performance/Other award | 18% | 20% |
| | Retention Incentive | 25% | 15% |
| | Dual compensation waiver (If retiring) | 10% | |
| | Student loan repayment | 1% | 5% |
| | Benefits | 1% | 5% |
| Increased Authority/ Support | Greater engagement from senior leadership | 17% | 19% |
| | High level position | 6% | 20% |
| | Greater scope of responsibility | 2% | 15% |
| | Increased autonomy | 19% | 27% |
| | Increased delegation | 6% | 14% |
| | Increased funding/ resources | 12% | 19% |
| | Increased support dealing w/ poor performers | 8% | 15% |
| | Verbal encouragement to stay | 22% | 20% |
| Work-Life Balance | Relocation | 13% | 14% |
| | Increased telework opportunity | 10% | 3% |
| | Flexible/part-time schedule | 14% | 4% |
| | Change in duties/ responsibilities | 10% | 28% |
| | More comprehensive eldercare | 2% | 1% |
| | Better work-life balance | 14% | 22% |
| Developmental Opportunities | Mobility assignment | 4% | 5% |
| | Sabbatical | 10% | 4% |
| | Coaching | 1% | 3% |
| | Executive development training | 5% | 1% |
| | Reassignment to new job w/ in agency | 10% | 15% |

Figure 5. Comparison of Reasons for Leaving Categories by Retirement Status

| Category | Percentage of Retirees | Percentage of Non-Retirees |
|---|---|---|
| Work Environment | 62% | 65% |
| Advancement and Recognition | 34% | 48% |
| Personal Reasons | 63% | 52% |
| Work-Life Balance | 42% | 41% |
| Compensation and Benefits | 30% | 37% |

Figure 6. Comparison of Reasons for Leaving by Retirement Status

| Category | Reason for Leaving | Percentage of Retirees | Percentage of Non-Retirees |
|---|---|---|---|
| Work environment | Political environment | 40% | 46% |
| | Organizational culture | 38% | 49% |
| | Senior leadership | 38% | 44% |
| | Lack of autonomy | 27% | 39% |
| | Relationship w/ supervisor | 18% | 31% |
| | Job duties/responsibilities | 13% | 21% |
| | Supervisory duties | 8% | 14% |
| | Relationship w/ colleagues | 2% | 11% |
| Advancement/recognition | Lack of rec for accomplishments | 30% | 36% |
| | Performance evaluations | 18% | 21% |
| | Lack of opportunities for advancement | 10% | 36% |
| | Lack of opportunities for development | 6% | 26% |
| Personal reasons | Desire to enjoy life without work commitments | 41% | 1% |
| | Desire to leave workforce | 22% | 1% |
| | Personal reasons health | 15% | 6% |
| | More attractive job offer elsewhere | 13% | 50% |
| | Relocation | 13% | 7% |
| | Care for family member | 11% | 3% |
| | Desire to pursue education | 2% | 6% |
| W-L Balance | Job stress | 29% | 27% |
| | Workload | 17% | 14% |
| | Long work hours | 14% | 8% |
| | Commute | 13% | 16% |
| | Work hours not flexible | 7% | 9% |
| | Geographic assignment | 5% | 10% |
| Compensation/Benefits | Lack of awards | 23% | 27% |
| | Insufficient pay | 20% | 27% |
| | Unsatisfactory benefits | 7% | 4% |

Figure 7. SES Succession Planning Efforts

Departing SES reported that...

| Their agency had formal succession planning efforts for executives | Percentage |
|---|---|
| No | 61% |
| Yes | 39% |

| They were involved in preparing their successor | Percentage |
|---|---|
| No | 56% |
| Yes | 44% |

## Appendix 2: Governmentwide SES Exit Survey Results, Year-Over-Year Comparison

| Which of the following best describes the circumstances under which you are leaving your agency? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| I am retiring | 59% | 56% | 61% |
| I am resigning | 11% | 17% | 10% |
| I am transferring to another Federal agency | 12% | 16% | 18% |
| I am accepting a non-SES position within a Federal agency | 2% | 5% | 4% |
| I am leaving involuntarily | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Other | 14% | 6% | 5% |
| | *N=217* | *N=224* | *N=210* |

| I am retiring: | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Voluntarily | 97% | 93% | 98% |
| Involuntarily (Mandatory Retirement) | 2% | 5% | 1% |
| Involuntarily for reasons other than Mandatory Retirement | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| | *N=128* | *N=120* | *N=129* |

| Will you be working for pay after you leave your agency? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 35% | 37% | 30% |
| No, but I intend to look for employment in the near future | 14% | 19% | 15% |
| No | 27% | 20% | 31% |
| Undecided | 24% | 24% | 24% |
| | *N=169* | *N=160* | *N=158* |

| Which of the following best describes the type of organization you will be working for after you leave your agency: | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Government contractor | 10% | 14% | 7% |
| Private company, not a Government contractor | 33% | 33% | 35% |
| Self-employed | 21% | 13% | 14% |
| State or local government | 6% | 8% | 6% |
| Non-profit organization | 16% | 11% | 14% |
| Work as a reemployed annuitant for a Federal agency | 5% | 2% | 1% |
| Other | 9% | 20% | 24% |
| | *N=81* | *N=86* | *N=72* |

| Will you be working full-time or part-time? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Full-Time | 71% | 78% | 81% |
| Part-Time | 29% | 22% | 19% |
| | *N=111* | *N=125* | *N=118* |

| Will your compensation increase, decrease, or stay the same? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Increase | 59% | 60% | 57% |
| Decrease | 26% | 18% | 18% |
| Stay the same | 15% | 23% | 25% |
| | N=110 | N=124 | N=117 |

| If possible, would you work for this agency in the future as an employee or contractor? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes, part-time | 19% | 17% | 20% |
| Yes, full-time | 21% | 29% | 26% |
| Yes, for a short-term assignment | 26% | 17% | 23% |
| No | 35% | 38% | 32% |
| | N=168 | N=162 | N=209 |

| Does your agency have any formal succession planning efforts for executives? (e.g., interviews/debriefs that took place prior to your departure to ensure smooth transition of your duties) | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 40% | 28% | 39% |
| No | 60% | 72% | 61% |
| | N=158 | N=146 | N=195 |

| Have there been—or were there prior to your leaving—any efforts made to involve you in preparing for your successor? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 53% | 46% | 44% |
| No | 47% | 54% | 56% |
| | N=162 | N=144 | N=201 |

| Was any effort made to encourage you to stay? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 30% | 29% | 29% |
| No | 67% | 69% | 67% |
| No, I was asked or encouraged to leave | 3% | 4% | 4% |
| | N=195 | N=191 | N=204 |

| Stay Factor Categories | Stay Factors | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Compensation/Benefits | Increase in Pay | 37% | 41% | 34% |
| | Performance/Other award | 24% | 26% | 19% |
| | Retention Incentive | 20% | 23% | 22% |
| | Dual compensation waiver (if retiring) | 10% | 6% | 7% |
| | Student loan repayment | 2% | 3% | 3% |
| | Benefits | 5% | 4% | 3% |
| Increased Authority/Support | Greater engagement from senior leadership | 22% | 28% | 18% |
| | High level position | 12% | 14% | 12% |
| | Greater scope of responsibility | 12% | 16% | 7% |
| | Increased autonomy in decision making | 21% | 31% | 23% |
| | Increased delegation of authority | 14% | 20% | 9% |
| | Increased funding/resources | 17% | 16% | 15% |
| | Increased support dealing with poor performers | 10% | 19% | 11% |
| | Verbal encouragement to stay based on your value to the organization | 24% | 29% | 22% |
| Work-Life Balance | Relocation to a geographical location of your choice | 9% | 11% | 14% |
| | Increased telework opportunity | 9% | 9% | 7% |
| | Flexible/part-time schedule | 16% | 15% | 10% |
| | Change in duties/responsibilities | 15% | 17% | 17% |
| | More comprehensive eldercare options | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| | Better work-life balance | 23% | 24% | 17% |
| Developmental Opportunities | Mobility assignment | 9% | 7% | 5% |
| | Sabbatical | 9% | 8% | 8% |
| | Coaching | 6% | 8% | 2% |
| | Executive development training | 5% | 9% | 6% |
| | Reassignment to new job within agency | 10% | 14% | 12% |
| | | N=173 | N=167 | N=191 |

| Reasons for Leaving Categories | Reasons for Leaving | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work environment | Political environment | 42% | 42% | 42% |
| | Organizational culture | 38% | 37% | 42% |
| | Senior leadership | 38% | 43% | 40% |
| | Lack of autonomy in decision making | 26% | 33% | 32% |
| | Relationship with supervisor | 24% | 25% | 23% |
| | Job duties/responsibilities | 16% | 17% | 16% |
| | Supervisory duties/responsibilities | 14% | 9% | 10% |
| | Relationship with colleagues | 5% | 9% | 6% |
| Advancement/recognition | Lack of recognition for accomplishments | 34% | 35% | 32% |
| | Performance evaluations | 20% | 27% | 19% |
| | Lack of opportunities for advancement | 22% | 26% | 20% |
| | Lack of opportunities for development | 15% | 19% | 14% |
| Work-Life Balance | Job stress | 30% | 31% | 28% |
| | Workload | 17% | 20% | 16% |
| | Long work hours | 17% | 14% | 12% |
| | Commute | 17% | 13% | 14% |
| | Work hours not flexible | 12% | 10% | 8% |
| | Geographic assignment | 11% | 9% | 7% |
| Personal reasons | Desire to enjoy life without work commitments | 38% | 24% | 26% |
| | Desire to leave workforce | 19% | 13% | 14% |
| | Personal reasons/health | 9% | 12% | 11% |
| | More attractive job offer elsewhere | 30% | 34% | 28% |
| | Relocation | 20% | 14% | 11% |
| | Care for family member | 13% | 8% | 8% |
| | Desire to pursue education | 6% | 1% | 7% |
| Compensation/Benefits | Lack of awards | 27% | 25% | 24% |
| | Insufficient pay | 29% | 21% | 23% |
| | Unsatisfactory benefits | 6% | 5% | 6% |
| | | *N=146-161* | *N=149-160* | *N=165-186* |

| What performance rating (or equivalent) did you receive on your last performance appraisal? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Outstanding | 45% | 43% | 46% |
| Exceeds Fully Successful | 39% | 34% | 33& |
| Fully Successful | 11% | 13% | 16% |
| Minimally Satisfactory | 0% | 2% | 0% |
| Unsatisfactory | 0% | 1% | 0% |
| I did not receive a performance rating | 5% | 7% | 5% |
| I prefer not to respond | - | - | - |
| | N=179 | N=175 | N=212 |

| To what extent do you agree or disagree that this rating was a reflection of your performance? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Agree | 41% | 43% | 45% |
| Agree | 33% | 27% | 28% |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | 9% | 6% | 8% |
| Disagree | 9% | 10% | 9% |
| Strongly Disagree | 8% | 14% | 10% |
| I prefer not to respond | - | - | - |
| | N=170 | N=162 | N=199 |

| Please rank the following Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) in order of importance to achieve success in your position. (Ratings averaged; 5= most important, 1= least important) | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Leading Change | 2.99 | 3.12 | 3.12 |
| Leading People | 3.82 | 3.81 | 3.93 |
| Results Driven | 3.38 | 3.26 | 3.26 |
| Business Acumen | 2.05 | 2.17 | 2.08 |
| Building Coalitions | 2.79 | 2.7 | 2.62 |
| | N=169-171 | N=163-165 | N=198-201 |

| I would recommend employment in the Senior Executive Service to others. | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive | 62% | 54% | 63% |
| Neutral | 25% | 25% | 24% |
| Negative | 13% | 21% | 13% |
| | N=169 | N=163 | N=207 |

| I would recommend this agency to others as a good place to work. | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive | 63% | 57% | 63% |
| Neutral | 15% | 16% | 11% |
| Negative | 23% | 27% | 26% |
| | N=167 | N=160 | N=210 |

| How long have you worked in this agency? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Less than one year | 1% | 3% | 4% |
| 1-3 years | 13% | 14% | 12% |
| 4-5 years | 14% | 16% | 9% |
| 6-10 years | 12% | 11% | 15% |
| 11-20 years | 12% | 14% | 11% |
| More than 20 years | 47% | 44% | 49% |
| | *N=164* | *N=161* | *N=208* |

| How long have you been a member of the Senior Executive Service? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Less than one year | 11% | 7% | 10% |
| 1-3 years | 16% | 24% | 18% |
| 4-5 years | 13% | 19% | 21% |
| 6-10 years | 28% | 31% | 30% |
| 11-20 years | 23% | 11% | 17% |
| More than 20 years | 9% | 8% | 5% |
| | *N=159* | *N=140* | *N=186* |

| What is your age group? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under 30 | 2% | 1% | 1% |
| 30-39 | 4% | 8% | 3% |
| 40-49 | 9% | 16% | 17% |
| 50-59 | 42% | 34% | 40% |
| 60 or older | 43% | 42% | 39% |
| | *N=166* | *N=159* | *N=210* |

| What type of appointment do you hold? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Career | 88% | 87% | 95% |
| Non-Career | 10% | 10% | 4% |
| Limited Term | 3% | 3% | 1% |
| Limited Emergency | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| | *N=168* | *N=156* | *N=209* |

| From where were you appointed to your senior position? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| From a Federal service position | 83% | 76% | 81% |
| From the private sector | 6% | 9% | 7% |
| From State or local government | 1% | 3% | 2% |
| From military service | 2% | 6% | 4% |
| From academia | 3% | 1% | 1% |
| Reinstatement | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Other | 6% | 4% | 7% |
| | N=163 | N=146 | N=197 |

| Please select the racial category or categories with which you most closely identify *select all that apply | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 2% | 3% | 2% |
| Asian | 6% | 7% | 3% |
| Black or African American | 12% | 15% | 17% |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 0% | 2% | 1% |
| White | 82% | 79% | 79% |
| | N=162 | N=158 | N=201 |

| Are you Hispanic or Latino? | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 7% | 7% | 10% |
| No | 93% | 94% | 90% |
| | N=162 | N=154 | N=201 |

# Appendix 3: Participation by Agency

| Agency | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Department of Agriculture | 9 | 4% |
| Department of Commerce | 0 | 0% |
| Department of Defense | 14 | 7% |
| Department of Education | 1 | >1% |
| Department of Energy | 12 | 6% |
| Department of Health and Human Services | 3 | 1% |
| Department of Homeland Security | 33 | 16% |
| Department of Housing and Urban Development | 2 | 1% |
| Department of Justice | 14 | 7% |
| Department of Labor | 4 | 2% |
| Department of State | 3 | 1% |
| Department of the Interior | 7 | 3% |
| Department of the Treasury | 18 | 8% |
| Department of Transportation | 5 | 2% |
| Department of Veterans Affairs | 35 | 17% |
| Broadcasting Board of Governors | 0 | 0% |
| Environmental Protection Agency | 4 | 2% |
| Equal Employment Opportunity Commission | 5 | 2% |
| Federal Communications Commission | 3 | 1% |
| Federal Energy Regulatory Commission | 0 | 0% |
| Federal Trade Commission | 0 | 0% |
| General Services Administration | 8 | 4% |
| National Aeronautics and Space Administration | 0 | 0% |
| National Archives and Records Administration | 4 | 2% |
| National Labor Relations Board | 0 | 0% |
| National Science Foundation | 0 | 0% |
| Nuclear Regulatory Commission | 11 | 5% |
| Office of Management and Budget | 0 | 0% |
| Office of Personnel Management | 1 | >1% |
| Office of the U.S. Trade Representative | 0 | 0% |
| Small Business Administration | 1 | >1% |
| Social Security Administration | 0 | 0% |
| U.S. Agency for International Development | 1 | >1% |
| Railroad Retirement Board | 0 | 0% |
| U.S. Office of Government Ethics | 0 | 0% |
| National Transportation Safety Board | 0 | 0% |

*N=212*

| Do you work in an Office of the Inspector General? | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 10 | 5% |
| No | 196 | 95% |

# Appendix 4: Executive Core Qualifications and Competencies

**ECQ 1: Leading Change**

Definition: This core qualification involves the ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.

- **Creativity and Innovation** – Develops new insights into situations; questions conventional approaches; encourages new ideas and innovations; designs and implements new or cutting edge programs/processes.

- **External Awareness** – Understands and keeps up-to-date on local, national, and international policies and trends that affect the organization and shape stakeholders' views; is aware of the organization's impact on the external environment.

- **Flexibility** – Is open to change and new information; rapidly adapts to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.

- **Resilience** – Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks.

- **Strategic Thinking** – Formulates objectives and priorities, and implements plans consistent with the long-term interests of the organization in a global environment. Capitalizes on opportunities and manages risks.

- **Vision** – Takes a long-term view and builds a shared vision with others; acts as a catalyst for organizational change. Influences others to translate vision into action.

**ECQ 2: Leading People**

Definition: This core qualification involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts.

- **Conflict Management** – Encourages creative tension and differences of opinions. Anticipates and takes steps to prevent counter-productive confrontations. Manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner.

- **Leveraging Diversity** – Fosters an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the organization.

- **Developing Others** – Develops the ability of others to perform and contribute to the organization by providing ongoing feedback and by providing opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods.

- **Team Building** – Inspires and fosters team commitment, spirit, pride, and trust. Facilitates cooperation and motivates team members to accomplish group goals.

**ECQ 3: Results Driven**

Definition: This core qualification involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Inherent to this ECQ is the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge,

analyzing problems, and calculating risks.

- **Accountability** – Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost-effective results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.

- **Customer Service** – Anticipates and meets the needs of both internal and external customers. Delivers high-quality products and services; is committed to continuous improvement.

- **Decisiveness** – Makes well-informed, effective, and timely decisions, even when data are limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; perceives the impact and implications of decisions.

- **Entrepreneurship** – Positions the organization for future success by identifying new opportunities; builds the organization by developing or improving products or services. Takes calculated risks to accomplish organizational objectives.

- **Problem Solving** – Identifies and analyzes problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations.

- **Technical Credibility** – Understands and appropriately applies principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise.


## ECQ 4: Business Acumen

Definition: This core qualification involves the ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.

- **Financial Management** – Understands the organization's financial processes. Prepares, justifies, and administers the program budget. Oversees procurement and contracting to achieve desired results. Monitors expenditures and uses cost-benefit thinking to set priorities.

- **Human Capital Management** – Builds and manages workforce based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. Ensures that employees are appropriately recruited, selected, appraised, and rewarded; takes action to address performance problems. Manages a multi-sector workforce and a variety of work situations.

- **Technology Management** – Keeps up-to-date on technological developments. Makes effective use of technology to achieve results. Ensures access to and security of technology systems.


## ECQ 5: Building Coalitions

Definition: This core qualification involves the ability to build coalitions internally and with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals.

- **Partnering** – Develops networks and builds alliances; collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.

- **Political Savvy** – Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Perceives organizational and political reality and acts accordingly.

- **Influencing/Negotiating** – Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.

# Appendix 5:  SES Onboarding Survey Instrument

Dear Executive,

OPM is conducting a Governmentwide exit survey for all departing SES members. The survey will be used to capture information regarding the circumstances under which you are choosing to leave your agency, and offer an opportunity for you to provide candid and confidential feedback about your work experience. This information will be used to support agency and governmentwide retention and succession planning efforts for current and future executives.

The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary and your responses are anonymous. Only aggregated information will be reported.

Thank you for your participation. Your input is valued and appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact the OPM Training and Executive Development office at HRDLeadership@opm.gov.

This survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and your responses are anonymous. Only aggregated information will be reported.

As you complete the survey, a bar at the bottom of each page will indicate your progress. When navigating through the survey, please use the buttons on the bottom of the survey pages and not your browser Back or Forward buttons.

If you have any questions, please contact the OPM Training and Executive Development office at HRDLeadership@opm.gov.

1.  Which of the following best describes the circumstances under which you are leaving your agency?

    o   I am retiring.  *If they choose this answer, the next 3 options are provided for them to answer*

        o   Voluntarily

        o   Involuntarily (Mandatory Retirement). —*branch to #8*

        o   Involuntarily for reasons other than Mandatory Retirement. —*branch to #8*

    o   I am resigning.

    o   I am transferring to another Federal agency.—*branch to #4*

    o   I am accepting a non-SES position within a Federal agency.—*branch to #4*

    o   I am leaving involuntarily. —*branch to #8*

    o   Other.  Please specify: _____

2.  Will you be working for pay after you leave your agency?

    o   Yes

    o   No, but I intend to look for employment in the near future

o   No—*branch to #6*

o   Undecided—*branch to #6*

**3.**   Which of the following best describes the type of organization you will be working for after you leave your agency:

o   Government contractor

o   Private company, not a Government contractor

o   Self-employed

o   State or local government

o   Non-profit organization

o   Work as a reemployed annuitant for a Federal agency.  *If they choose this answer, the next 3 options are provided for them to answer*

   o   With a dual compensation waiver

   o   Without a dual compensation waiver

   o   Under phased retirement options

o   Other.  Please specify: _____

**4.**   Will you be working full-time or part-time?

o   Full-Time

o   Part-Time

**5.**   Will your compensation increase, decrease, or stay the same?

o   Increase

o   Decrease

o   Stay the same

**6.**   Was any effort made to encourage you to stay?

o   Yes.  Please explain: _____

o   No

o   No, I was asked or encouraged to leave—*branch to #8*

**7.**   What, if anything, would have encouraged you to stay? Select all that apply.

***Work-Life Balance***

- o   Relocation to a geographical location of your choice

- o   Increased telework opportunity

- o   Flexible or part-time schedule

- o   A change in job duties/responsibilities

- o   More comprehensive eldercare options

- o   Better work-life balance

### *Increased Authority/Support*

- o   Greater engagement from senior leadership

- o   Higher level position

- o   Greater scope of responsibility

- o   Increased autonomy in decision making

- o   Increased delegation of authority

- o   Increased funding/resources

- o   Increased support in dealing with poor performers

- o   Verbal encouragement to stay based on your value to the organization

### *Developmental Opportunity*

- o   Mobility assignment

- o   Sabbatical

- o   Coaching

- o   Executive development training

- o   Reassignment to a new job within the agency

### *Compensation and Benefits*

- o   Increase in pay

- o   Performance or other award

- o   Retention incentive

- o   Dual compensation waiver (if retiring)

- o   Student loan repayment

- o   Benefits


- o   Other.  Please specify: _____


- o   Nothing would have encouraged me to stay. Please explain:_____—*if selected, can't select anything else.*

**8.** To what extent did each of the following contribute to your reasons for leaving the agency?

Scale:

    *1 - Not at all*

    *2 - To a Small Extent*

    *3- To a Moderate Extent*

    *4 - To a Great Extent*

    *5 - To a Very Great Extent*

    *NA - Not Applicable*

*Advancement and Recognition*

- Lack of opportunities for development  1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Lack of opportunities for advancement  1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Lack of recognition for accomplishments    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Performance evaluations    1   2   3   4   5   NA

*Work Environment*

- Senior leadership    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Political environment    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Organizational culture    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Job duties/responsibilities    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Supervisory duties/responsibilities    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Relationship with supervisor    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Relationship with colleagues    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Lack of autonomy in decision making    1   2   3   4   5   NA

*Work-Life Balance*

- Geographic reassignment    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Long work hours    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Work hours not flexible    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Workload    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Job stress
- Commute    1   2   3   4   5   NA

*Personal Reasons*

- More attractive job offer elsewhere    1   2   3   4   5   NA
- Desire to pursue education    1   2   3   4   5   NA

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| o | Relocation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| o | Personal health reasons | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| o | Care for a family member | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| o | Desire to leave the workforce 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA | |
| o | Desire to enjoy life without work commitments | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |

***Compensation and Benefits***

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| o | Insufficient pay | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| o | Unsatisfactory benefits | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| o | Lack of Awards 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA | |

**9.** Please describe your most important reason for leaving. _____

**10.** What performance rating (or equivalent) did you receive on your last performance appraisal?

- o Outstanding
- o Exceeds fully successful
- o Fully successful
- o Minimally satisfactory
- o Unsatisfactory
- o I did not receive a performance rating—*branch to #12*
- o I prefer not to respond.

**11.** To what extent do you agree or disagree that this rating was a reflection of your performance?

- o Strongly Agree
- o Agree
- o Neither Agree nor Disagree
- o Disagree
- o Strongly Disagree
- o I prefer not to respond

**12.** Please rank the following Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) in order of importance to achieve success in your position? *1= Most Important for Success; 5 = Least Important for Success*

- o Leading Change

- Leading People

- Results Driven

- Business Acumen

- Building Coalitions

**13.** I would recommend this agency to others as a good place to work.

- Strongly Agree

- Agree

- Neither Agree nor Disagree

- Disagree

- Strongly Disagree

**13a.** Please explain your answer_____

**14.** I would recommend employment in the Senior Executive Service to others.

- Strongly Agree

- Agree

- Neither Agree nor Disagree

- Disagree

- Strongly Disagree

**14a.** Please explain your answer_____

**15.** If possible, would you work for this agency in the future as an employee or contractor?

- Yes, part-time.

- Yes, full-time.

- Yes, for a short-term assignment.

- No.

*The reporting of demographic information is optional and will only be reported to agencies in an aggregated format.*

**16.** What type of agency do you work for?  (**A list of agencies will be provided**)

- o Cabinet Level Agency

    - o <u>Please select your agency.</u>

- o Independent Agency

    - o Please select your agency.

**16a.** Do you work in an Office of the Inspector General?

- o Yes

- o No

**16b.** If you do not see your agency in the previous lists, please provide the name

of your agency below. _____

**17.** How long have you worked in this agency?

- o Less than one year
- o 1-3 years
- o 4-5 years
- o 6-10 years
- o 11-20 years
- o More than 20 years

**18.** How long have you been a member of the Senior Executive Service?

- o Less than one year
- o 1-3 years
- o 4-5 years
- o 6-10 years
- o 11-20 years
- o More than 20 years

**19.** What is your age group?

- o Under 30
- o 30-39
- o 40-49
- o 50-59

o   60 or older

**20.** What type of appointment do you hold?

- o   Career
- o   Non-Career
- o   Limited Term
- o   Limited Emergency

**21.** From where were you appointed to your senior position?

- o   From a Federal service position
- o   From the private sector
- o   From state or local government
- o   From military service
- o   From academia
- o   Reinstatement
- o   Other. Please specify:_____

**22.** Please select the racial category or categories with which you most closely identify (mark as many as apply).

- o   American Indian or Alaska Native
- o   Asian
- o   Black or African American
- o   Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- o   White

**23.** Are you Hispanic or Latino?

- o   Yes
- o   No

**24.** Does your agency have any formal succession planning efforts for executives? (e.g., interviews/debriefs that took place prior to your departure to ensure smooth transition of your duties)

- o   Yes
- o   No

**25.** Have there been—or were there prior to your leaving—any efforts made to involve you in preparing your successor?

  o Yes

  o No

**26.** If given the opportunity, what would you have changed at your agency, in the Federal Government, or the SES?

**27.** What did you like best about working in your agency?

**28.** Please provide any other comments:

**\*\* If you are interested in serving as a mentor after your departure from the organization, please contact OPM's Executive Resources office at 202-606-8046 or by email at HRDLeadership@opm.gov.**