



# Strategies and Best Practices for Career Executives: Managing the Transition to a New Administration



# The Role of Career Executives in Transition: What to Expect and What to Begin to Do Now

**May 18, 2016**

First in a Webinar Series with the Support of The Distinguished Executives Advisory Network - “The DEAN’s List”



## Moderators

**Carol Bonosaro,**  
President  
Emeritus, Senior  
Executives  
Association

**Jan Lane,**  
President/CEO,  
VISIO Consulting;  
Retired DHS SES

## Panelists

**Daryl Kade,** Director, Center for Behavioral Health  
Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration, HHS

**Bob Knisely,** Director of Project Next Generation, SEA;  
Retired SES with roles at DOT, DOE, DOC, CPSC, DOE  
and the White House

**Beth McGrath,** Director, Deloitte LLP; Former Deputy  
Chief Management Officer, Department of Defense

**Karl Schneider,** Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the  
Army (Manpower & Reserve Affairs), Department of the  
Army



# Impetus for Holding Transition Webinars

- Most think tanks are focused on the policies and management agenda of the next Administration and/or on preparation of new political appointees
- Many career executives have not lived through a Presidential transition while serving in SES positions
- Some agencies aren't preparing for transition as the current Administration presses to maintain focus on its goals



# Transition Webinars Series Schedule

- **Webinar 1 - May 18, 2016** - What to expect during the year, the role of the SES in the transition, and what executives can and should begin to do right now to prepare themselves and their agencies for the transition.
- **Webinar 2 - July 20, 2016** - What to expect during the transition and what executives can do before the election to prepare for transition teams, including advice for those in acting political positions.
- **Webinar 3 - October 5, 2016** - What to expect from transition teams and the next Administration, and determining and integrating information relevant to candidates' policies and commitments.
- **Webinar 4 - December 7, 2016** - How to engage effectively and support new political leadership after arrival.



# Goals

- Inform career SES's on the Transition process, what to expect, and how to navigate it
- Creation of a compact handbook of Strategies and Best Practices for career executives managing through a Presidential Transition to include:
  - Transition Checklists
  - References to valuable resources
  - Lessons learned from Distinguished Executives



# The Impact of Transition

- Over 4000 political appointee positions will turn over with a new Administration
- 50% of the incoming appointees will likely not have a background in government
- The new Administration and political appointees will be bringing in their new agendas and priorities for Federal agencies



# Key Provisions of the New Presidential Transitions Improvement Act of 2015

- Beginning in May, the President must establish a White House Transition Coordinating Council and Agency Transition Directors Council
- GSA must appoint a Federal Transition Coordinator for managing across agencies, and to chair the ATDC (Tim Horne has been appointed)
- Agencies must designate senior career transition executive in May
- MOU's with each candidate by Nov 1 to ensure access to agency personnel, facilities and documents
- Training resources made available to appointees throughout 1st and 2nd terms
- If election is contested, GSA to provide services to candidates until election outcome is determined





# The Phases of Transition: A Timeline

- **May 1, 2016:** Deadline for agencies to designate career SES for the transition
- **July 2016:** Nominating conventions
- **July – November:** Transition teams are created
- **November 8:** The Presidential election
- **November-January:** Transition teams are at work at agencies, budgets and priorities are defined, appointees are identified and vetted
- **January 17, 2017:** Inauguration Day
- **January – May 2017:** New leadership moves into agencies, new initiatives begin to take shape
- **June 2017 and Beyond:** Political appointees continue to move into place while career executives may remain in charge beyond the anticipated transition timeline



# Revised FY 2018 Budget Process

- Per 4/29/16 OMB Memorandum, the FY 2018 Budget will be submitted by the next President
- Budget database with current services baseline to be developed
- No budget request or Performance Plans to OMB in September; no Director's Review; no Passback in the fall
- Agencies to proceed with internal review procedures to develop program-level current services estimates for submission to OMB in September
- Revised OMB Circular A-11 with new budget guidance to be issued in June



# The Role of the Career SES in Presidential Transition

- Assessing what needs to be done during all phases of the transition period
- Conducting transition planning focused on transition strategy, preparation for and participation in agency reviews, and the first 100 days and beyond
- Identifying programs which are most vulnerable to change
- Preparing the workforce for change and helping to minimize stress
- Knowledge transfer to new appointees
- Enabling the new political leadership, and their agencies, to be successful



# Key Considerations

- Is our agency working in an area that is highly politicized or featured in campaign rhetoric?
- Are candidates promising “reform” that could positively or negatively impact our agency?
- Are candidates advocating for new policies that could create new programs for our agency?
- Are we working on any initiatives that are over / under budget, behind / ahead of schedule, or have failed to meet or significantly exceeded their expected value?
- Are any defunct agency initiatives eligible for revival based on candidate’s positions? How can we support the revival efforts?
- Are we prepared to present the agency budget and programs to the transition team during the review process?



# What should career executives begin doing right now to prepare for the transition?

- Balance the need of incumbents to continue working their agendas with the need to prepare for new leadership
- Continuously evaluate current state of communications and operations along the continuum of change
- Start early to:
  - Assess what needs to be done during all phases of the transition
  - Begin the transition planning process including developing the transition strategy
  - Identify which programs are most vulnerable to change
  - Prepare the workforce for change
  - Determine what knowledge needs to be transferred



# What should career executives begin doing right now to prepare for the transition? (continued)

- Begin to outline an internal “Agency 101” briefing book and briefing papers to assist in knowledge transfer, to include:
  - The mission of the organization (including specific laws, authorities and delegations affecting the work and objectives of your organization)
  - Performance trends relevant to your organization’s programs
  - Lessons learned (what has been tried, what has worked well, and what has not)
  - Agency assets (people, programs, budget/current services baseline)
  - Key deadlines for the next four years with more detail on the first year
  - A directory of agency leadership with photos and a short resume for each leader



## What should career executives begin doing right now to prepare for the transition? (continued)

- Develop a concise, complete and understandable Executive Summary to accompany the Agency 101 briefing book
- Have your career leadership team independently review your “101” briefing
- List the issues that need to be addressed during the first month, the first 6 months, the first year
- Think about how to help the new appointee set and communicate priorities.
- Stay focused on the goal of enabling the new political leadership, and your organization/agency, to be successful



# Panel Discussion

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# Helpful References

- Presidential Transition Act of 1963  
[http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/admin/Presidential\\_Act\\_of\\_1963.pdf](http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/admin/Presidential_Act_of_1963.pdf)
- Pre-Election Presidential Transition Act of 2010  
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/senate-bill/3196>
- Presidential Transitions Improvement Act of 2015:  
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1172>
- Partnership for Public Service Transition Center website  
<http://presidentialtransition.org/about/index.php>
- Partnership for Public Service Transition Guide which includes roles for federal agencies: <http://presidentialtransition.org/timeline/agencies/index.php>
- Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal\\_Vacancies\\_Reform\\_Act\\_of\\_1998](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Vacancies_Reform_Act_of_1998).
- Guidance on Application of Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998  
<https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/olc/opinions/1999/03/31/op-olc-v023-p0060.pdf>



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Senior Executives Association  
77 K Street, NE, Suite 2600  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
202.971.3300  
[www.seniorexecs.org](http://www.seniorexecs.org)