



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Friday, March 11, 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: ACTING DIRECTOR, BETH F. COBERT

Subject: Executive Order – Strengthening the Senior Executive Service: Guidance on Qualifications Review Board Submission Methods

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is issuing the attached guidance to agencies on Qualification Review Board (QRB) submission methods, as required by the Executive Order (EO) - "Strengthening the Senior Executive Service," issued on December 15, 2015, (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/12/15/executive-order-s...>). This EO mandates a number of actions over the next three years to improve the management of the Senior Executive Service (SES). Section 3(a)(iii) of the EO specifically requires OPM to evaluate the current QRB process and issue guidance to agencies about materials acceptable for QRB consideration, including those that will provide an alternative to the traditional Executive Core Qualifications (ECQ) narrative statement commonly used by agencies for QRB submissions. The EO also requires OPM to issue guidance on ways agencies may streamline their initial application requirements for SES positions.

At this time, OPM has completed an evaluation of the QRB and is hereby issuing this guidance to agencies about submission methods and materials that will be acceptable for QRB consideration. The guidance includes information and tools for agencies to implement hiring and QRB submission methods that will serve as alternatives to the traditional methods commonly applied by agencies. The guidance also provides information to agencies on streamlining their initial hiring processes. The guidance further highlights for agencies a number of valuable opportunities for training, partnering, and piloting of additional assessments. The guidance provides a framework and multiple options to address a variety of agency needs and preferences, while empowering agencies with appropriate flexibility to determine and implement the most effective solutions for each agency's successful SES hiring and mission accomplishment. OPM will provide additional support to agencies through SES hiring/QRB forums, development of new leadership assessment solutions, and other tools and resources.

Additionally, Section 3(a)(iv) of the EO requires heads of agencies with SES positions to examine their hiring processes and make improvements within 120 days of the issuance of this guidance, and as agencies begin that effort, OPM will be concurrently designing and testing additional innovations to improve the SES hiring process and the QRB process. These innovations will include the development of enhanced leadership assessment methods, as well as alternative methods of documenting executive qualifications during the agency hiring process (e.g., video-based documentation) that could be used to satisfy the needs of QRB assessors, all of

which could enable the selection of SES members without a traditional heavy reliance on written materials.

OPM is urgently seeking agency partners on this effort to test and inform the design and implementation of these innovations; agencies that are willing to pilot these new solutions are asked to immediately volunteer via e-mail at SERS@opm.gov. Once these new SES hiring and QRB submission methods have been validated and released for Governmentwide use, OPM will update the attached QRB guidance to include information and instructions on the use of the new methods.

If you have questions about this guidance or require any assistance, please contact any of the following OPM officials by telephone (202-606-8046) or by e-mail: Steve Shih, Deputy Associate Director, Senior Executive Services and Performance Management (Stephen.Shih@opm.gov); Laura Lynch, Manager, Senior Executive Resources Services (Laura.Lynch@opm.gov); or Nicole Wright, Team Lead, Senior Executive Resources Services (Nicole.Wright@opm.gov).

Attachment: Guidance on Qualifications Review Board Submission Methods (See PDF below)

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers, and Human Resources Directors