PART I

Competencies of a Presidential Appointee

The purpose of this handbook is to share with you as new presidential appointees the experiences of others who have held these appointments before you. The first part details six areas of competence that former presidential appointees have found to be essential for effective performance. The second part presents a set of documents that will constitute essential reference material throughout your tenure in office.

The six competencies addressed in this book are

—Leading for results
—Managing change and innovation
—Providing technical knowledge and ability
—Leading others
—Leading yourself
—Maintaining global awareness

Any list is arbitrary to some extent, and this one is no exception. Some analysts might include more competencies; others, fewer. For example, the Office of Personnel Management identifies five executive core qualifications as requirements for entry to the senior executive service: leading change, leading people, results driven, business acumen, and building coalitions. These core qualifications are further broken down into twenty-two subcompetencies, such as strategic thinking, team building, and financial, human capital, and technology management.[1]

The decision to focus on the six competencies listed above is based on both a careful review of various competency frameworks and conversations with many presidential appointees about the skills that were critical to their ability to do their jobs. While this framework does not include every aspect of competencies that all experts have identified, it highlights the most important behaviors that presidential appointees must master in order to perform effectively. Presidential appointees come to their office with strong backgrounds and skills. The competencies presented here provide a road map for the journey you are about to take. The road map will remind you of where you are going and may provide some good directions on how to get there.

Themes

Four major themes emerge from this handbook. These themes, as in music or art, recur and lend continuity to the work. They are

—Commitment and conflict
—Character, competence, and courage
—Continual learning
—Informed behavior

Commitment and Conflict

As a presidential appointee, you are here because you have answered a call to serve. Whatever your motivation, you are undertaking a commitment that will involve you in the most important questions facing the nation. In some cases, the policies and the direction of the administration will be fully consistent with your own views. At other times you will challenge these policies and test them against your own ideals and codes of behavior. In either case, you will need a firm commitment to engage in the honest work before you.

It will not always be easy to reconcile your personal ideals and views with those of the administration in which you serve. The history of government service by presidential appointees is replete with stories of these conflicts of conscience. Sometimes the only course is to resign. More often,

you will seek to shape the policies in a way that seems most beneficial to the future of the nation as you see it. In any case, loyalty to the president must be weighed with loyalty to the country you serve and to your own convictions. You can be sure that in your administration, conflicts and commitments will clash in a public way. The media and critics of the administration are always looking to magnify honest differences of opinions into open hostilities. Your own behavior must be guided by your honest beliefs and by a code of conduct that embraces civility while not ignoring your conscience.

Character, Competence, and Courage

To answer the call to service and to have an informed commitment that enables you to deal with the challenges inherent in the conflicts you will face, you will need character, competence, and courage. Your character has been developed over your entire lifetime and will continue to be molded in your current assignment. While it is difficult to change the habits of a lifetime, it is possible to learn new elements of behavior—called *competencies* here—that are needed to respond to new challenges. A competency is "an underlying characteristic of a person in that it may be a motive, trait, skill, aspect of one's self-image or social role, or a body of knowledge which he or she uses."[2] This definition combines two aspects of competency—behaviors and skills—into a single set of characteristics. As the competency scholar Mary Ellen Joyce notes, "While competencies are meant to denote effective *behaviors,* many models include knowledge, expertise . . . and other managerial characteristics. There is a great need for the field to more clearly define and explain competency modeling."[3] This handbook uses the broader definition throughout. You already possess competency in behavior and skills or you wouldn't be here. The handbook is designed to enhance your skills and inform your behaviors.

The third element in this theme is courage. Often this consists of "speaking truth to power," a phrase attributed, variously, to the Quakers, to Islam, and to the Torah. In the context of your job as a presidential appointee, this kind of courage will require you to bring forward information that you believe is most relevant to dealing with the issue at hand

regardless of whether those around you want to hear it. Challenging the conventional wisdom and testing the views of others is an element of courage that you must exhibit. This does not mean that you must continually be contrarian. Philosophers have stressed the need to have an ability to accept the things that cannot be changed, the courage to change the things that can be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference. Although often quoted, this is good advice for the appointee. This handbook will provide information about behaviors that can help you gain this wisdom.

Continual Learning

John Gardner says,

> Exploration of the full range of our own potentialities is not something that we can safely leave to the chances of life. It is something to be pursued avidly to the end of our days. We should look forward to an endless and unpredictable dialogue between our own potentialities and the claims of life—not only the claims we encounter, but the claims we invent. And by potentialities I mean not just skills, but the full range of our capacities for sensing, wondering, learning, understanding, loving, and aspiring.[4]

This definition of continual learning reflects the journey rather than the destination in acquiring new knowledge, skills, and abilities that mold our behavior. This handbook illuminates those competencies that have been important to other presidential appointees, gives you some perspective from people who have studied the issues carefully, and demonstrates why these competencies should be important aspects of your own behavior. However, it presupposes your commitment to being open to change and willing to foster positive change in your environment.

Informed Behavior

The handbook seeks to help you change your behavior by providing information on what you might need to serve the president and the nation. No

book can give you everything you need to be successful. No book can give you motivation. If this handbook succeeds, it will give you some new ideas and help you use the documents and information contained here.

The Six Competencies

In part 1 of this handbook, a separate chapter is devoted to each of the six competencies listed at the beginning of this introduction. These chapters are designed to inform you about why the behavior in the competency is important, give you some advice from experts and people who have been in your position, and tell you how you might use the information to inform your own behavior.

There is a fine line between simply providing information and encouraging you to use it to change your behavior. During the administration of Lyndon B. Johnson, Joseph Califano was chosen to serve in the vitally important role of special assistant for domestic affairs. Given the fact that President Johnson intended to create a "Great Society," Califano was front and center in a major policy and legislative development effort. "It was my first time on the South Lawn of the White House, 1 a.m. on Tuesday July 13, 1965," remembers Califano. "As the President said good bye, he smiled. 'They tell me you're pretty smart, way up in your class at Harvard. Well, let me tell you something. What you learned on the streets of Brooklyn will be a damn sight more helpful to your president than anything you learned at Harvard.'"[5] Johnson was encouraging Califano to model his behavior on the rough and tumble world of Brooklyn rather than the academic setting of Cambridge. Califano thought enough of this advice to use it as the opening of his memoir.

While you may not get information about how to behave directly from the president, others who have served in prior administrations have given their views on the importance of the six competencies listed above. Throughout the handbook you will find their stories and lessons learned.

ONE

Leading for Results

As a presidential appointee you have come to Washington to get results—results that the president has promised the American people, results that the American people expect. Your job in achieving these results is, above all, leadership. You must inspire others. You must also help others set goals, track their progress toward meeting those goals, and measure their achievement.

To help you accomplish these tasks, a framework for management is essential. This framework will allow you to relate goals to measurable results. The process of measuring specific results has been refined and developed by many departments and agencies. The purpose of these efforts is to collect information that is useful for operating the agency, useful for overall management, and useful for meeting external reporting requirements.

The components of the leading for results competency are

—an accountability environment

—a method for measuring results, customer service, enablers, and public acceptance

—promotion of entrepreneurship and strategic thinking.

Accountability Environment

Forming an accountability environment in government is hard. Given government's perceived lack of a bottom line, program outputs or outcomes

may not appear to be measurable. This perception is less true today than it was before the passage of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) in 1993 and the introduction of the program assessment rating tool (PART).

While the executive branch has the primary responsibility for creating an accountability environment, under the Constitution, Congress has an important role to play in overseeing executive program accountability. Your agency environment should be designed to provide you useful information to manage and at the same time meet congressional oversight requirements simply and easily. Congress works through specific authorizing and oversight committees, using the hearing process to inform itself about the performance of specific programs and agency activities. Committees use this information both to encourage agencies to achieve better performance and to help them design legislation to make performance easier to achieve. At times oversight by Congress or by its accountability arm, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), may seem meddlesome or oppressive, but establishing a good relationship with the clerks of the relevant committees and with the GAO official in charge of your agency can smooth your path. And it is well to remember that the Constitution decrees that the Congress oversee executive activity.

In addition to congressional oversight and authorizing committees that are specific to your agency, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform have oversight government-wide of management areas such as civil service, accounting, procurement, reorganization of the executive branch, and information management.

The budget process—preparation, justification, and execution—is one of the most important management tools of the federal government and a central element in an accountability environment. In the budget process the work of the appropriations subcommittees often highlights accountability. Some agencies work with their appropriations subcommittees to align their legislatively required agency strategic planning process with the budgeting process. Where this alignment has happened, results have been brought into even clearer focus and duplication of agency efforts has been avoided.

The audience for results is not just those inside the government seeking to improve performance or having formal oversight responsibilities. For many public organizations there are also advocacy, lobbying, and interest groups that seek to examine the dealings and performance of government. Increasingly, transparency regarding results is being demanded by these groups. The media are continuously engaged in reviewing government action and results. Members of the general public are also keen to ensure responsiveness to their particular interests. It is clear that a successful leader must be able to respond to multiple constituencies with multiple instruments to demonstrate a command of an agency and its results.

An additional characteristic of accountability is the nature of agency responses to the analyses of independent parties such as the agency's inspector general and the GAO. The GAO continually monitors "high-risk areas," and agencies on this high-risk list are thought to be vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.

In government, the integrity with which results are achieved is often as important for accountability as the results themselves. For example, on June 18, 2008, the GAO ruled that the $35 billion award to Northrop Grumman and the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EAD) to build 179 midair refuelers to replace the current fleet had "a number of significant errors that could have affected the outcome of what was a close competition." The GAO further asserted that the Air Force had conducted "misleading and unequal discussions with Boeing."[1] Although the GAO did not formally comment on the substance of the decision, its commentary on the flawed process was an embarrassment to the Air Force and provides an important lesson in proper procurement procedure. In response, the Air Force has decided to rebid the contract, which will result in delay for the program.

An additional difficulty in measuring results is the question of what constitutes success. Unlike a *Fortune 500* CEO, who can demonstrate to shareholders and to the stock market that a firm's valuation is reliable and rising, a public servant cannot point to such measures, because there is no universal understanding in government of what success looks like. Often, the process seems more important than the results. Harvard

scholar Graham Allison suggests that there are nine major differences between public and private organizations:[2]

—Time perspective: government managers have relatively short time horizons.

—Duration: tenure is relatively shorter for government managers.

—Measurement of performance: fewer standards exist for measuring performance.

—Personnel constraints: civil service systems, union contracts, and other regulations complicate personnel matters.

—Equity and efficiency: government places greater emphasis on equity among constituencies.

—Public versus private processes: governments tend to be exposed to more public scrutiny.

—Persuasion and direction: government managers mediate decisions in response to outside pressure.

—Legislative and judicial impact: government is more subject to scrutiny by legislative and judicial entities.

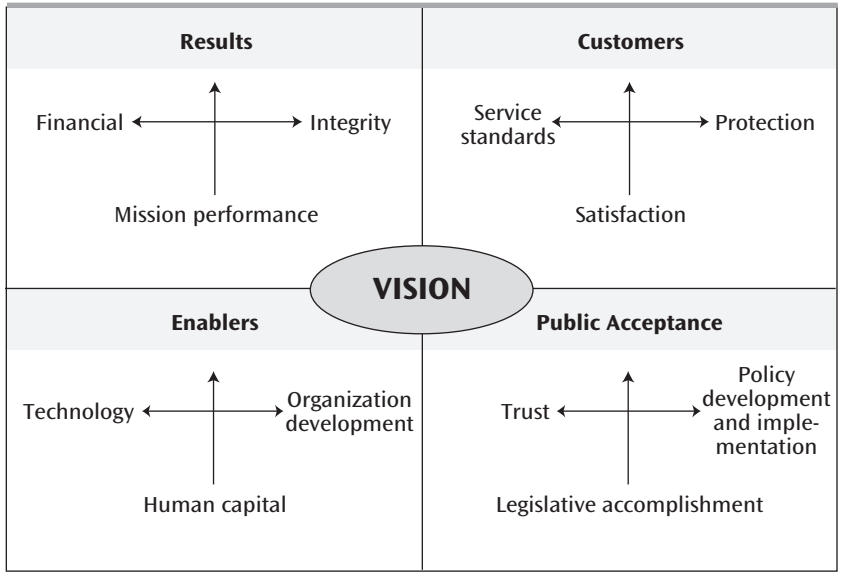
—Bottom line: government managers rarely have a clear bottom line.

However, some aspects of accountability in government are dominant: for example, there is an emphasis on the proper use of financial resources, on the ethical conduct of officials, and on fairness in business practices. To these must be added the broader concern of public support for government programs. As is well known, the public's opinion of the federal government has fallen in recent years, from 64 percent favorable in 2002 to 37 percent favorable in 2008.[3] Although this decline in public trust is often not about the results of government but about the actions of individuals, it has an overall corrosive effect.

Measuring Results: The Balanced Scorecard for Government

In the private sector the elements of an accountability environment are often tied together by a measurement framework called the balanced scorecard, which highlights the financial results that shareholders care about. The creators of the balanced scorecard describe these perspectives as follows:

FIGURE 1-1. Balanced Scorecard for Government



> The balanced scorecard retains traditional financial measures. But financial measures tell the story of past events, an adequate story for industrial-age companies for which investments in long-term capabilities and customer relationships were not critical for success. These financial measures are inadequate, however, for guiding and evaluating the journey that information-age companies must make to create future value through investment in customers, suppliers, employees, processes, technology, and innovation.[4]

The version of the balanced scorecard I have designed for the public sector is divided into four perspectives: results, customers, enablers, and public acceptance (figure 1-1). Within each of the four perspectives three metric categories allow both the manager and the public to know how the agency is doing. These twelve metric categories allow for internal communications, particularly about operational issues, and external communications, particularly about meeting goals. All perspectives are informed by their relationship to the overall vision of the agency. The vision is the end state, the future that managers are trying to achieve.

The four perspectives address the following questions:

—Results: Is our agency achieving its mission in a cost-effective manner and without waste, fraud, and abuse?

—Customers: Are customer service standards being met and are they producing satisfied customers while protecting even customers unaware of their status as customers?

—Enablers: Are the workforce and the technological tools being used in a context of a modern learning organization that adapts to challenges? These are described in more detail in chapter 3, "Providing Technical Ability."

—Public acceptance: Is the government able to develop and implement coherent policies and get needed legislation passed in a timely fashion? Does the public trust the government to do the right things and to do them well?

The key to successful management in the public arena is to demonstrate to all stakeholders that each of the four quadrants is being continuously optimized in terms of achieving the agency's vision. But just defining and demonstrating success is not enough. The public has to accept that the vision is relevant to them and that the measures of success are things they care about. This acceptance requires simultaneous success in each of the four quadrants. One cannot be attended to at the expense of another.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management describes an effective public leader as one who "has the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations." Inherent in this qualification "is the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks."[5] These high-quality results require working with your team to set clear goals and to define such results. The definition of results is often described in terms of activities undertaken, outputs produced, and outcomes achieved. James Q. Wilson describes these three categories as follows:

> Can the activities of their operators be observed? Can the results of those activities be observed? The first [question] involves *outputs*—what teachers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, police officers, and grant-givers do on a day-to-day basis. Outputs consist of the work the agency does. The second [question] involves *outcomes*—how, if at all, the world changes because of the outputs. Outcomes can be thought of as the results of agency work.[6]

Results Perspective

Some public managers are reluctant to be measured in terms other than activity and input. They argue that extraneous circumstances can affect outputs and outcomes; for example, meeting targets for clean outdoor air might be compromised by wildfires. However, although such extraneous circumstances do complicate outputs, the manager should allow for these circumstances. More often, managers fear that there will be negative actions taken if they fail to meet performance targets (especially if the failure is outside of their control). This fear makes it especially important to involve all managers in the development of goals, objectives, and measures.

All large agencies and many smaller ones in the federal government create strategic plans consistent with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. These plans are a good example for new appointees to follow when creating their own performance measures. Even though new policies from a new administration will mean the development of a new strategic plan and new measures of results, current strategic plans are helpful in the understanding of the overall form.

The current Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) strategic plan, for example, is an excellent template to follow.[7] The EPA has five broad goals: clean air, clean and safe water, land preservation and restoration, healthy communities and ecosystems, and environmental stewardship. Each of the goals has a set of objectives. The objectives for the first goal, for example, are healthier outdoor air, healthier indoor air, protection of the ozone layer, reduction of radiation, reduction of greenhouse gases, and enhanced scientific research. Table 1-1 shows a hypothetical performance report for the EPA goal for clean air and global climate change. Such a report is helpful to line managers and to their counterparts at regional and headquarters offices. For example, a detail from this hypothetical report regarding healthier outdoor air may show that South Florida monitoring stations report significantly higher ozone counts than usual. A resulting status risk is that the month's reading will lower the annual actual results. The following status issue arises: Can the wildfire monitoring station readings be removed to normalize the data?

A related objective to healthier outdoor air is a reduction in population-weighted ambient concentration of ozone. The long-term target is a

TABLE 1-1. Hypothetical Report, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Goal 1, Second Quarter, Fiscal Year 2008, by Stoplight Code

Objectives for Goal 1	*Green*	*Red*	*Yellow*	*Total*
Healthier outdoor air	1	1	0	2
Healthier indoor air	2	0	0	2
Protection of ozone layer	1	0	1	2
Reduction in radiation	2	0	0	2
Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions	2	0	0	2
Enhanced science and research	2	0	0	2

Detail from hypothetical "red" stoplight status report:
Name: 5/20 status&actual measurement
Date: 5/20/2008
Related objective: Objective 1.1: healthier outdoor air
Related target: FY 2008 population-weighted ambient ozone concentration in all monitored counties.
Target value: –8%
Actual value: –3%
Variance to target: 0.625
Description: South Florida monitoring stations are reporting ozone counts that are significantly higher than usual. This is likely due to wildfires in this part of the state.
Risks: There is a possibility that this month's reading will lower the annual actual results.
Issues: Can the wildfire monitoring station readings be removed to normalize the data?

reduction in this concentration by 14 percent by 2015. For the year measured in table 1-1 the target is 8 percent. How are we doing? Not so well: the actual reduction is only 3 percent. Wildfires in Florida have caused an increase in ozone, which is throwing off the aggregate results.

Thus data useful to line managers are collected and sent to more senior managers, where they are aggregated and used to measure progress on the objectives and goals of the agency. This kind of bottom-up, top-down approach involves all levels of management and creates a common frame of reference for performance. Robert Shea, former associate director of the Office of Management and Budget, has noted that the success of efforts like PART and ExpectMore will depend on the ability of the career staff at OMB to work with the next administration in refining and extending the reach of performance management.[8]

Financial integrity is another measure of results. Staying within budget and accounting for funds is extremely important. Deviations from budgets require an arduous reprogramming or legislative process that can be time consuming and subject to conflict. Similarly, failure to demonstrate that you have spent funds according to the budget and that you can account for the materials, supplies, and equipment that these funds purchased will create significant problems for your agency.

The same caveats exist for integrity in following the appropriate processes in both programs and administration. Such integrity could be considered another measurement of results. The public administration scholar Robert Behn argues that dependence on objective measurements has resulted in an accountability bias, putting a premium on financial accounting and ethics laws to the detriment of exceptional performance.[9] Poverty of ambition can develop, he says, which is a deterrent to risk taking in the interests of improving service and performance. As a presidential appointee, you will be asked to achieve results the administration cares about while ensuring that no process violations detract from these results. This balance is difficult to achieve.

Customer Service Perspective

For our purposes, the customers of government are those individuals or groups who have direct interaction with government. These individuals and groups range from Social Security beneficiaries to foreign corporations sending goods to the United States. In each case, there is a direct interaction—determining benefit eligibility, regulating lead content in toys—that should be governed by clearly understood standards of service.

Critical to providing good customer service are conducting surveys of customers' levels of satisfaction and using the results of these surveys to inform the way an agency is run. Starting in 1999 federal agencies were added to the University of Michigan's American Customer Satisfaction Index.[10] In 2007 the federal government had an ACSI score of 68; a sampling of agencies that scored well follows:

—Those responsible for interment, opinion of the National Cemetery Administration in the Veterans Administration: 95

—Inpatients opinion of TRICARE Medical Centers, Department of Defense: 89

—Retirees opinion of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation: 88

—Users of the cancer information service of the National Cancer Institute, opinion of the National Institute of Health: 86

—Buyers of numismatic and commemorative coins, opinion of the U.S. Mint: 86

While these scores reflect only the attitudes of direct customers regarding particular federal programs, they provide valuable insights into how customer satisfaction measures can be used by government. Many agencies conduct their own analyses of customer attitudes and use them to redeploy resources or to change the process for delivering program activities.

For example, the Internal Revenue Service's survey of customer satisfaction, which measures many areas of its interaction with the public, has found a significant improvement in the satisfaction of paper filers.[11] Nonetheless, these filers' satisfaction lags in comparison to the satisfaction of electronic filers. Based partly on this kind of information, the IRS has made expanding the number of electronic filers a strategic objective.

Protection is another major area of customer service. Some individuals may be customers of the federal government but may not choose their time and place of interaction. Indeed, they may not be aware that they are customers. The intelligence community, for example, according to John McConnell, director of national intelligence, certainly views the public as its customer, particularly in regard to preserving civil liberties and privacy. We are "a unified enterprise of innovative intelligence professionals whose common purpose is defending American lives and interests, in advancing American values," he says, adding that the community performs its duties "under law in a manner that respects the civil liberties and privacy of all Americans."[12]

Public Acceptance Perspective

One of the most difficult things that governments do is measure public acceptance of the services that agencies provide. Finding effective and innovative ways to engage the public and ways to understand its acceptance of and even enthusiasm for a particular program or policy improves the public's trust in government. Trust is the essential ingredient for building overall support for the goals and objectives of an agency. Without trust, resources are more difficult to acquire, voluntary compliance is eroded, and internal morale suffers.

Much of the decline in public opinion of the federal government is related to public acceptance of the policies of an administration and the popularity of the president. For the individual agency, however, public

acceptance is more related to the public's perception of the importance of the mission of the agency to their lives and the belief that the mission is being well executed. One of the keys to executing your agency's mission is to secure a strong legislative and regulatory framework and to keep that framework up to date.

For example, the Homeland Security Act of 2002 established the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and made the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) a part of it. This legislative framework for FEMA has been both praised and criticized, especially in regard to the federal response to the Katrina disaster. In reaction to these and other criticisms, Congress, DHS, and FEMA created legislation and a set of policies and regulations governing disaster response. The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 made the administrator of FEMA responsible for the management, maintenance, review, and revision of what was then called the National Response Plan. Part of this responsibility was exercised by the National Response Framework of 2008. Despite the problems of the past, the GAO recommended "that FEMA develop policies and procedures that guide how future revision processes will occur, particularly for collaborating with nonfederal stakeholders."[13]

Entrepreneurship and Strategic Thinking

David Osborne and Ted Gaebler subtitled their 1992 book on reinventing government, *How the Entrepreneurial Spirit Is Transforming the Public Sector*.[14] So the entrepreneurial spirit in government is not a new idea. But how does it work? Entrepreneurship in government involves developing innovations to existing management methods and administration to enhance an agency's performance. To this end, a leader may need to suspend long-standing operating procedures, give subordinates more leeway in management, and develop networks of cross-functional teams.

One proposal for achieving entrepreneurial vision was advanced by Harvard professor Mark H. Moore in his 1995 book *Creating Public Value*. Moore argues that public leaders should not simply carry on business as usual but should constantly review their mission and objectives and promote the maximum return on investment for the public. "Reflecting the winds of change in managerial thought," he says, "the managerial

imagination strays beyond [its] traditional mandate, beyond [its] instinct for bureaucratic entrepreneurship . . . in imagining what could be done."[15] Imagining what could be done may involve creating new business processes, new partnerships, new client bases, and new methods. It may involve creating a way to measure the performance of an agency in terms of achieving change and the way these changes affect service quality and public satisfaction.

Strategic thinking is different from strategic planning. It is a cognitive approach that comes naturally for some but must be learned by others. One of the most creative and comprehensive definitions of strategic thinking is from the author Ingrid Bonn, who posits three attributes of a strategic thinker:[16]

—A holistic understanding of the organization and its environment, recognizing the linkages and complexity of the various substructures and relationships.

—The creativeness to rework old ideas and invent new ones.

—The ability to envision the future of the organization.

The five-star framework used by the University of Maryland's Burns Academy is one tool to help you think strategically about your organization and its effectiveness.[17] It consists of 125 questions, similar to those used in the Malcolm Baldridge National Quality Award, grouped into five areas:

—Analysis: Has the agency analyzed the hurdles to achieving its mission?

—Alignment: Are the agency's vision and strategy aligned?

—Action: Are the agency's plans for action helped by its organization and program structure?

—Accountability: What outcomes have been achieved? Are they consistent with the agency's objectives, goals, budget, and integrity?

—Acceptance: Do stakeholders value these outcomes? Do stakeholders agree with the agency policies that led to these outcomes?

A primary benefit of this survey is to start an organized dialogue among managers and co-workers that allows them to diagnose the current state of the agency and to prepare multiple prescriptions for dealing with weaknesses. The survey approach is sometimes called systems thinking, which

Peter Senge defines as "a discipline for seeing wholes . . . for seeing interrelationships rather than things, for seeing patterns of change rather than static 'snapshots.'"[18]

An example of systems thinking in government occurred early in the process of reinventing the Internal Revenue Service. Stung by harsh criticism from Congress, Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin resolved to improve customer service at the IRS as part of a multidimensional effort to improve the agency's overall performance. Employee acceptance of change was critical to this improvement. Working with the National Treasury Employees Union, the Treasury working group ascertained that employees believed that the configuration of their computer desktops were inadequate for the task of answering inquiries quickly and adequately. While computer reconfiguration was not on its agenda for change, Treasury responded to this feedback from employees and altered desktop configurations. Two results occurred. First, employees felt they were consulted, which by itself improved performance. Second, the new desktop configuration resulted in quicker and more satisfying responses to customers.

One example of the power of strategic thinking comes from the period of the cold war, when the doctrine of mutual assured destruction formed the cognitive basis for the policies of the United States and its allies as well as for the policies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Thomas Schelling began to look at this doctrine to see if it could be put to a positive use. The 2005 Nobel Prize announcement tells the tale: "Schelling took on the complementary task of deducing the equilibria for interesting classes of games and evaluating whether these games and their equilibria were instructive regarding actual economic and social interaction. He did this against the background of the world's first nuclear arms race and came to contribute greatly to our understanding of its implications."[19] It has been said that Schelling's creation of a cognitive shift helped to stabilize the cold war.

Schelling's accomplishment might be called the epitome of leadership for results. As a presidential appointee, can you provide such leadership? Could this leadership stem the tide of non-state-sponsored terror? Combat the spread of AIDS? Solve the problems of urban crime?