



## **TRANSITION TOPIC:**

# **Selection Criteria for Successful DoD Leadership**

**TASK:** Review past pairings in the Department's senior leadership (i.e., Secretary/Chairman JCS, Secretary/Deputy, Deputy/Vice Chairman JCS, Secretary/Service Secretaries, and Service Secretaries/Service Chiefs) to identify the unique skills and expertise that make such pairs successful. Identify potential sources to recruit such civilian talent.

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# Defense Business Board

## **ISSUE:**

- DoD's strength is the functional pairings that drive the Department's deployed and support operations; therefore special attention must be given to the necessary /desired competencies for each pairing.

## **IMPORTANCE:**

- Wartime environment will require greater-than-ever efforts by the Secretary to recruit A-talent.
- Wartime environment requires strong leadership with the necessary skills and experience to address the DoD's top strategic issues.
- Complementary skill sets and experience for each functional pair will be even more critical in a time of budget constraints and wartime decisions.
- Selecting the "right people" with the "right skills" at the "right time" to lead DoD will have significant impact on the Department's ability to sustain focus necessary to achieve its goals.
- DoD does not have all skill sets and experiences written down for top senior leadership positions; and where they may exist, they are not specific.



## DISCUSSION:

- Many of DoD's key leadership positions are structured in pairs: e.g. Service Secretary and Chief both are necessary accomplish it's organization mission as individuals and teams.
- Crisis driven wartime environment at DoD changes the abstraction of job descriptions and necessitates a greater reliance on these functional pairings among the Department's top leaders.
- Senior political leaders of the DOD team come from diverse backgrounds; embody wide-ranging personal styles, skills, temperaments and experiences; and bring differing managerial styles – coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetting and coaching, etc. (see appendix A)
- Wartime environment necessitates that the DOD's senior leadership team be committed to leading and managing with a sense of urgency. It will critical for senior leaders to:
  - Establish mutual credibility and trust early-on
  - Quickly learn the organizational landscape
  - Build relationships up, down and across the defense community
  - Work effectively with the Congress, the media, and other constituencies
- Most successful organizations – large and small, public and private – do not wait for people to “apply.” They are always proactively on the lookout for “A” talent – whether or not a formal position exists.



## Where To Look and How to Find “A” Talent

- **Enlist the services of the top executive search firms with successful experience in recruiting for high-level government positions.**
- **Other Sources of Candidates and Advice**
  - CEO's, COO's, CFOs, Senior Operating Executives and Board members of Fortune 500 companies, leading financial institutions and auditing firms
  - Cabinet-level appointees in previous administrations
  - Current and previous members of the DoD Federal Advisory Committees (Defense Business Board, Defense Science Board and Defense Policy Board), Chief Naval Operations Executive Panel, Service Secretaries Boards and Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services
  - Alumni of the White House Fellows Program, Congressional Fellows Program, etc.
  - Minority alumni associations from leading business schools, law schools and schools of government; minority professional organizations, e.g. Executive Leadership Council ( senior-most African Americans in corporate America) and Latinoleaders.com (national magazine of successful Latino Americans)



## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Secretary must leverage individual experience and qualifications to promote complementary pairings that enhance collective individual effectiveness and ensure the team stays focused on the most strategically important objectives.
2. Align authority, responsibility and accountability of these pairings
3. Recommend the Secretary:
  - a) Identify and agree on the most senior level pairings: Chairman JCS, Secretary/Deputy, Deputy/Vice Chairman, Secretary/Service Secretaries, and Service Secretaries/Service Chiefs
  - b) Identify the most pressing issues and challenges that will impact organizational climate and use them to guide the selection of core competencies necessary to meet those challenges
  - c) Exploit the pairing of the most senior positions to ensure the skills and experience needed are filled by one of those pairings. Key considerations should be given to making sure that there is a balance in the pair of those skills and experience
4. Require all Deputies within the Department to have prior government management experience



## APPENDIX A: SKILL PROFILE & CRITICAL EXPERIENCES

### **SKILL PROFILE**

- Integrity (e.g. “speaking truth to power”)
- Leadership vision
- Financial acumen
- Innovative thinking
- Superb people skills
- Achievement orientation
- Problem solving
- Strategic communications skills
- Strategy formulation & execution
- Strategic/tactical balance
- Toughness (calm “under fire”)
- Talent management and cross-cultural understanding
- Emotional intelligence
- Knowing which “balls to keep in the air”

### **CRITICAL EXPERIENCES**

- Effectively managing in a crisis environment
- Wartime experience (war-fighter or policy level)
- Working with Congress
- Military or civilian procurement/acquisition
- Selecting and recruiting top talent
- Leading a senior executive team
- Leading reinvention/change management
- Budgeting for a large, complex organization
- P&L management
- Communicating with diverse constituencies
- Integrating new technologies