



Developing a VA Career: Remaining Whole and On Track

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Objectives / Outline

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1. Identify formal and informal opportunities with VA for career/ leadership development
2. Describe steps for remaining whole and on track in the process
3. Understand how to develop and pursue personal career goals

Outline

1. Foundation/ Context
2. Career Opportunities
3. Career Development Tools
4. Putting It Together



by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein
in any departure from those divine attributes
which the believers in a living God always
ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope— fervent-
ly do we pray— that this mighty scourge of
war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God
wills that it continue, until all the wealth
piled by the bond-man's two hundred and
fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk,
and until every drop ^{of} blood drawn with the
lash, shall be paid by another drawn with
the sword, as was said ~~three~~ ^{thousand} years
ago, so still it must be said "the judgments
of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether"

With malice toward none;
with charity for all; with firmness in the
right, as God gives us to see the right,
let us strive on to finish the work we
are in; to bind up the nation's wounds;
to care for him who shall ^{have} borne the bat-
tle, and for his widow, and his orphan—
to do all which may achieve and cherish a just,
and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with ^{all nations} ~~the world~~.

1. Foundation / Context

- VA is a mission driven organization
- The work of government employees is known as Federal service
- VA Health Care: Defining Excellence in the 21st Century
- Without a commitment to the mission and to public service, it will not be possible to have a career in VA
- Be mindful of who you are working for; it may be your career, but it is not about you



2. Career Opportunities

Psychologist Careers within Traditional Domains**

- Expertise in Clinical Practice → SME → Called upon as a National Leader
- Research → Centers of Excellence/ Program Evaluation → National Leader
- Training Supervisor → Training Director → Psychology Training Council/ APA Rep
- Organizational Consulting → Increasing Level of Responsibility
- Program Office → Increasing Level of Responsibility

** These may or may not involve any supervisory/ management role



2. Career Opportunities

Careers with Supervisory/ Management Roles

Within Psychology/ Mental Health

- Facility Level: Staff → Supervisor → Chief/ ACOS
- VISN Level: Facility Leader → MH Liaison/ Lead
- CoE/ Program Office: Staff → Supervisor → Director

Within Operations

- Facility Level: Integrated Service Line Leader → ACOS/ Assistant Director → AD → MCD
- VISN Level: MH Lead → AND → ND
- VACO Office: Staff → Management → SES

Career Opportunities – What are Yours?





3. Career Development Tools

- Excellence in Your Work
- Commitment to Leadership (more to come)
- People Around You
- Coaching/ Mentoring
- VA Sponsored Programs
 - Facility LEAD, VISN LEAD, HCLDP
 - BHL
 - LVA



3. Career Development References

- High Performance Development Model

<http://vaww4.va.gov/hpdm/>

- Performance Based Interviewing

<http://www.va.gov/PBI/index.asp>

- VHA Succession Planning

http://vaww.succession.va.gov/Employee_Development/HCLD_P/_layouts/viewlsts.aspx

- Health Care Leadership Development Program

http://vaww.succession.va.gov/Employee_Development/HCLD_P/default.aspx



4. Putting It Together

A Commitment to Leadership

Careers and Leadership

What do leaders do?

- clarify direction, align resources, and help overcome barriers to obtain results

What do psychologists do...?

Psychologist or not, we are all leaders and we are all leading, all the time.



Careers and Leadership

- Leadership is not about a defining moment, the number of supervisees, or the size of the budget
- Leadership is about who I am, it comes from within, it is a way of life
- Leadership is not measured by the scale of the opportunity but by the quality of the response
- Careers are long and often not dramatic; it is the character of the choices made day-to-day that builds a career and determines success



Careers and Leadership

Skills for Career Advancement while Remaining Whole and On Track

1. Self-awareness

What do I care about, what do I want, what is the value that I bring to the table, what about me might get in my way?

2. Adaptability

What do I need to let go of in order to adapt to the changing landscape, how can I improve my focus on interests rather than positions?



Careers and Leadership

Skills for Career Advancement while Remaining Whole and On Track

3. Forward-moving Collaboration

How can I improve my listening to and sharing of stories, what do I really want and how would I behave toward others if that were really true?

4. Continuous Learning/ Discovery

What are the things that can derail me and what do I need to do to stay on track, who are the people/ what are the opportunities uniquely available to me in my life journey/ career path?



Careers and Leadership

Skills for Career Advancement while Remaining Whole and On Track

5. Intentional Development but not Self-Absorbed

Developing a career is not likely to occur accidentally, but it will not be well served if driven only by what's-in-it-for-me. Look for opportunities that align with your goals and values.

6. Read and Learn Beyond Psychology

Be curious and read about the wide world beyond psychology.



Reading Out of the Box

- Fisher, R., Ury, W. & Patton, B. (1991). ***Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in*** (2nd ed.). Penguin Books.
- Gladwell, M. (2008). ***Outliers: The story of success***. Little, Brown.
- Lowney, C. (2003). ***Heroic leadership: Best practices from a 450-year-old company that changed the world***. Loyola Press.
- Oakley, E. & Krug, D. (1991). ***Enlightened leadership: Getting to the heart of change***. Simon & Schuster.
- Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2002). ***Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high***. McGraw-Hill.
- Quinn, R. (2004). ***Building the bridge as you walk on it: A guide for leading change***. Jossey-Bass
- Thaler, R. & Sunstein C. (2008). ***Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth, & happiness***. Yale University Press.