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CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
FOR FOREIGN SERVICE AND DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

The Need

Critics of the Department of State over many years have consistently faulted us for failure to develop systematically our personnel. Recognizing that our people are our main resource in carrying out United States diplomacy, we have no excuse--especially in times of budget stringency--for not bringing these people to fuller effectiveness by careful development of careers through assignments and training. Most recently the Senate has addressed this need in an amendment to the proposed Foreign Service Act which mandates a full career development and training plan and requires us to report in 90 days from passage on progress and the resources needed.

The unique combination of foreign affairs generalist and expert in some of the many special functions and areas that are vital to foreign affairs (economics, science and technology, military/disarmament affairs, narcotics, to name a few) defines a very difficult and changing career development task. Yet a personnel force that has substantive depth in these specialties, as well as the generalist's foreign policy sense, is crucial to the Secretary of State's remaining effective in all the specialized fields that are critical to management of foreign policy. Given the breadth and depth of these requirements, increased training, together with more tailored assignment experiences, has to be a part of a successful approach.

Adequate investment in training our people has not been possible previously because we have too few people in the system to fill all line jobs, much less provide training, creating continual pressure on even our existing training programs. Therefore, to implement a structured approach of training for all Foreign Service officers at strategic points in their careers, as foreseen in the Pell Amendment in the new Act, we need, as a minimum, additional people in the Service at least equivalent to the resulting increase in person/years of training. Otherwise we could meet the important career development and training requirement only by neglecting or further understaffing other important functions--an unsustainable approach. The cost of the plan is largely this personnel cost--expanding employment by the amount of additional time in training.

The Proposal

Based on the nature and variety of jobs Foreign Service officers are expected to do throughout their careers, we have developed a strategic approach to enhancing their effectiveness by professional training for all at 3 critical points of their careers--the beginning, early mid-level and the senior threshold.

The expansion of initial training is concentrated on basic job skills plus grounding in the requirements and tools of analytical reporting. (We are also requesting additional junior officer positions overseas to assure that more of them get both more varied and more reporting experience early in their careers.) Mid-level training--an entirely new program--is designed to deepen professional skills in an officer's main function (political, economic, administrative, consular) as well as broaden our skills base by training in a second, probably less traditional area of foreign affairs. The main function of senior-level training would be program management, defined broadly to include the domestic and bureaucratic dimensions of successful foreign affairs management, although some of this would be covered at mid-level as well.

We also propose to correct the shocking inadequacy of language training and area orientation for Foreign Service staff people, most of whom are now sent to work and live overseas without any such training. Under the proposal we could provide basic language training and relevant area orientation for about two-thirds of our staff going overseas, rising eventually to a skill base where virtually all would have this preparation.

While expansion of the junior officer training (by 3 weeks) and the senior management training (5 weeks) can be absorbed, the new mid-level program (5 months for 180 FSO-5s each year) and the expanded training for Foreign Service staff (about 140 annually in 10 week language/area courses, plus increased administrative, consular and communications training) are not possible without increasing the work force by the planned increase in training investment each year: 75 FSO (for 75 person/years of additional training) and 45 Foreign Service Staff positions.

To provide continuity and to assure Congress, OMB and ourselves that we mean business, we would take these additional positions, plus what training investment we now make, and segregate them in a "training complement" that defines the annual investment the Foreign Service should make to operate the career development and training program at the level required. In other words we are not just asking for some more training positions, we are proposing to establish a permanent career development and training program which consists of a defined annual investment in personnel time, the addition of people needed to assure permanence, segregated in a training complement, and a completely revised curriculum of the Foreign Service Institute to meet the needs of this program.

The proposed increase in training for the Department's Civil Service employees emphasizes management training and job-related

functional training. Because of the nature of the Civil Service system, new training positions are not required, other than establishment of a Presidential Management Intern complement..

Curriculum of Foreign Service Institute

Secretary Vance, concerned about missed opportunities in the role of the Foreign Service Institute, had ordered a complete review and reform of its curriculum. This task is already underway, although part of it will meet the instructional side of the career development and training proposal and therefore accounts for part of the proposal's cost. This review concluded that while the quality of FSI's courses should be improved, the main reason it was not achieving the desired, strategic increase in the effectiveness of our people was the problem of delivering the training under current personnel constraints. The career development and training proposal, entailing increased personnel, the training complement and the three levels of required professional training for all FSOs, was the major result of the review's conclusions, but FSI has undertaken other course reforms to meet the delivery problem as well.

Since most of our FSOs now go overseas with no training in the area they are supposed to interpret and analyze, we face a serious risk to the stable of in-depth area knowledge and communications effectiveness that is one of the traditional strengths of the Foreign Service. To address this problem FSI has created a more challenging and country-specific set of area courses which are now integrated with the basic language training that all of our officers take several times during their careers.

To allow more Foreign Service staff and family members to get basic language and relevant area orientation (aimed at living in a society rather than analyzing it), FSI is also developing a new set of short language courses, again integrated with area orientation, for all the world's major languages. This will allow many more staff members and working spouses to make the shorter investment in time required for a facility in the language and culture adequate for social and logistical requirements. These courses will be introduced in January.

An expanded junior officer course and an analytical reporting course (oddly enough the first of its kind) are now in operation. Development of the 5-month mid-level program, which we hope to offer to the first group of 60 FSO-5s next July (if OMB approves our proposal and the Congress has not rejected it) has begun but will not be completed until early next year. In the functional part of this program (economics for economic officers, political analysis for political officers, etc.) our objectives will be

to deepen our officers' capacity for analysis, particularly of overseas events and to enhance their understanding of the full context of major foreign policy issues, including the United States domestic dimension. The basic vehicles will be issues and case studies with concepts, theory and topical background used to probe the meaning and trends underlying the current state of critical issues. The approach will be to analyze issues such as energy, disarmament negotiations and immigration in such depth that both broader specific understanding and the habits of rigorous thinking are imparted. A second element of the program would entail each officer's going outside his or her primary field to learn about other aspects of foreign affairs, which could be economic analysis for a consular officer or narcotics, nuclear, or administrative matters for a political officer. This is designed to fit the new emphasis on "out-of-cone" assignments to prepare better generalists and to serve the Department's need for more substantive depth in non-traditional functions. The third segment of the program, the only one to be a common experience for all officers, would provide training in mid-level management as well as the specific requirements for bureaucratic effectiveness in a complex Washington environment.

FSO CAREER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

YEAR

JOB EXPERIENCE

TRAINING

1

Career Candidate

Two tours, at least one abroad, providing

- - Rotational experience
- - Consular work
- - Testing in primary Field

Expanded Basic Officer Course - 7 weeks

Consular Course - 3 weeks

Analytical Reporting Course - 2 weeks

or

Basic Admin. Course - 5 weeks

5

Mid - Level

Reporting (RAP) job abroad to hone these skills

- Four-Six Tours, providing
- - deepening in primary Field
 - - policy experience
 - - management testing

Mid-Level Program - 5 months

Foreign Affairs Operations and Management

Political	Economic	Consular	Admin.
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Selection: Secondary Field Courses

15

Senior

Management jobs in program direction or Functional Fields

Program and Policy Management for Senior F. S. Candidates - 5 weeks

Sabbatical Experience Expanded in FY-83 and beyond

NEW COURSES
IN THE
CAREER DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM PLANNED BY FSI

FSI has introduced or is now planning the following new courses as part of a consolidated career development concept, and in order to equip all personnel better for service overseas. These new courses are listed below by category and purpose. Brief descriptions of their content are attached at tabs as indicated.

FSO Career Development

Junior Officers

- A core skills segment has been added to our initial orientation course for career candidates (TAB A).
- A two-week course in analytic reporting skills has been designed for junior officers, to be taken just prior to their first assignment to a reporting position or a rotational position in the field. (TAB B)

Mid-Career Officers

A five-month package of courses are being planned for all officers to be given as soon as practicable after an officer achieves tenure and full career status (FSO-5 level). The mix of courses will be tailored to the specialty and interests of the individual officer, with the following constituting parts of the program:

1. Advanced courses for political, economic/commercial, consular and administrative specialists. (TABS C-F)
2. A four-week course in Foreign Service resource management for all officers. (TAB G)
3. A course in systems analysis for all consular and administrative specialists. (TAB H).
4. A variety of courses in secondary fields of specialization. (TAB I)