

## MEMORANDUM TO PROSPECTIVE POLITICAL APPOINTEES

Purpose This memorandum provides information, references, general principles and suggested readings, that can be used by the prospective appointee to prepare for the position. It is also intended to supplement information that will be provided by the employing agency of Government.

General Proposition Public Service in the United States Government is likely to be the most difficult, challenging, complicated, demanding, frustrating, yet personally satisfying, work possible for the appointee. It is difficult for a political appointee to become an effective member of the Administration. Learning quickly the substance, procedures, applicable guidelines and practices of the particular position and of being an effective political appointee is very important. The individual backgrounds and experiences of appointees vary greatly. The employing agency will be providing a variety of orientation materials and activities for their new appointees. In advance of that, and to facilitate self help efforts to become a more effective appointee, the materials mentioned below will be useful in that learning process.

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. A political appointment is a unique privilege and public trust, not a right.
2. Remember, you are always on a public stage; however your faults, as well as your success, will be blamed on or attributed both to you and to the President and his administration.
3. Do not say, write or do things which you would not like to appear on the front page of the Washington Post or your hometown newspaper with your name attached.
4. Once a decision is made, one's responsibility is to support it whether or not you supported that position in its development and whether or not you agree with it; assuming, of course, that it is legal and ethical.
5. In communications with groups or individuals outside the Executive Branch one should remember that he or she is a member of the Administration and is expected to represent the Administration's position on issues, as distinct from presenting one's personal opinion.
6. The individuals in the career service are your working colleagues and should be treated with trust and respect; like you would desire to be treated by others. Remember that the individuals in the career service will be in your agency long after you leave. An important part of your legacy will depend upon their continuing the changes and programs you initiate.

7. Work with and respect the staff and Members of Congress; remember, the Members were elected, you were not, and the staff will see the Members and proposed legislation before and after any contact you have with the Member.
8. Work closely with the Administration, General Counsel, and, as appropriate, Inspector General functions of the Department or Agency. Without their tacit or explicit concurrence and support nothing will happen.
9. The real compensation from being a political appointee is the satisfaction you will achieve from contributing to the national interests of the United States through administering the President's program.
10. The political appointee brings to the process of governing an overview and philosophical perspective of what the President is trying to achieve. This perspective complements the expertise of the career employees. The political appointee can effectively facilitate changes which are required in our democratic process of government.

#### Ethics and Conflict of Interest

1. Vice President Bush speech to Congressional Interns July 26, 1988. B
2. "How to keep out of Trouble: Ethical Conduct for Federal Employees ... in Brief", Office of Government Ethics, March 1986. C
3. "The Code of Ethics for Government Service", House Concurrent Resolution 175, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, 72 Statute B 12. D
4. Executive Order 11222, May 8, 1985 (3 CFR 1965, Supp p. 130) D1
5. The Presidential Appointee's Handbook, National Academy of Public Administration, Washington D.C. - 1988 E
6. Political Activity and the Federal Employee; Office of the Special Counsel. U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board F
7. Index to Clippings of (261) Alleged Ethics Violations and Other Improprieties by Reagan Administration Appointees; October 4, 1988, Compiled by the House Subcommittee on Civil Service, Representative Patricia Schroeder, Chairman. The list of published allegations was compiled but not further investigated by the Subcommittee. G
8. Two part April 27-18, 1986 Washington Post Article regarding Ethics in the Reagan Administration. H
9. Employee Responsibilities and Conduct Regulations for the Department of Commerce. I

## The Budget Process

1. Circular A-11 June 17, 1988 OMB Advice to Departments regarding Preparation and Submission of Budget Estimates. The General Information and Policies section is particularly useful. J
2. The Congressional Budget Process - An Overview House Budget Committee - December 1988 J1
3. Broken Purse Strings, Congressional Budgeting, 1974-88; Rudolph G. Penner and Alan J. Abramson, Gerald Ford Foundation, Urban institute Press, Washington, D.C. 1988.
4. Glossary of Budgetary Terms and Definitions J2
5. Budget Calendars J3
6. The Budgetary Process by Aaron Wildavsky J4
7. Washington Post Article re: Gramm - Rudman and FY 1990 Key Dates J5

## Role of OMB

1. The work of the Office of Management and Budget, 1988 K

## Congress

1. How Congress Works, Congressional Quarterly Inc. Washington D.C., 1983
2. How Our Laws Are Made, Edward F. Willett, Jr., Law Revision Counsel, U.S. House of Representatives, 1986 Doc. No. 99-158 L
3. Making The Government Work: Legislative Executive Reform: Edited by Robert E. Hunter and Wayne Burman Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC - 1985 L1

## Testifying

1. Thoughts About Testifying M

## Security and Classified Information

1. Marking, EO 12356 National Security Information MC
2. Classifying National Security Information; U.S. Department of Commerce N

## Personnel Issues

1. Features of the Senior Executive Service January 1988, OPM O
2. Senior Executive Service, February 1988 OPM P
3. Civil Service Hiring; Federal Merit Promotion Program; and Reduction in Force in Federal Agencies; Career/Non-Career Roles 1988 OPM Q

4. Employee Handbook, U.S. Department of Commerce, September, 1988 R

### Inspector General

1. The Inspector General, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1985 S
2. Executive Summary of 1988 Semiannual report of the Inspector General of U.S. Department of Commerce; December 1988 and transmittal letter to President of the Senate. T

### Communication

1. Communication Sourcebook. Tips and Tools for Speeches, Interviews and Press Conferences. U.S. General Services Administration: Office of Public Affairs, August, 1987. U

### Management in a Government Organization

1. Managers Handbook, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1981

### Evaluation of and by Political Appointees and Management Guidelines for Political Appointees

1. Inside the Bureaucracy: The view from the Assistant Secretary Desk; Thomas P. Murphy, Donald E. Nuechterlein and Ronald J Stupak; 1978 Westview. Special studies in Public Policy and Public Systems Management, Westview Press, Boulder Colorado.
2. "Capturing Lessons Learned" Interviews and analysis of Political Appointees experiences during Reagan Administration; Draft: Dorothy Robyn and William Kristol - 1985 V
3. America's Unelected Government: Appointing The President's Team, National Academy of Public Administration, Ballinger Publishing Company, 1983; especially chapter 4 The Federal Executive's Work Environment: Problems for Recruiting and Retention.
4. A Government of Strangers, Executive Politics in Washington; Hugh Heclo, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. 1977.

### More General Books about the U.S. Government Process

1. The Power Game: How Washington Works; Hedrick Smith, Random House, New York, 1988
2. Steering the Elephant, How Washington Works, Edit. Robert Rector and Michael Sanera, Universe Books, 1987

3. Mandate for Leadership III, Policy Strategies for the 1990's edited by Charles L. Heatherly and Burton Yale Pines, The Heritage Foundation, Washington 1988 (Part Four, Agency Management of Policy Initiatives attached) W
4. The Ring of Power, The White House Staff and its Expanding Role in Government, Bradley H. Patterson, Jr., Basic Books, New York 1988
5. The Politics of Public Management, Philip B. Heymann, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1987
6. Maxims for White House Staff proposed by Donald Rumsfeld in An American Agenda, sponsored by Presidents Ford and Carter, 1988; New York Times editorial, December 5, 1988 XYZ
7. Rules of the Game by Terry Eastland, The Washingtonian, January 1989 XYZ

#### General Research

In addition to reading materials from the above list the prospective appointee should seek publicly available information such as the latest relevant budget request to Congress, the relevant speeches by the President during and after the campaign and the position descriptions or departmental orders assigning responsibilities to the positions.

Those appointees who will be confirmed by the Senate should consider meeting with a broad range of the interest groups and/or organizations affected by the position in order to listen to their views about what is important with respect to the activities of the position without committing to any decisions or course of action if confirmed. Those to be confirmed should also consider meeting several predecessors in the subject position to listen to their perspective on the important issues or aspects of the position for the new appointee. Before an appointee is confirmed there should be no discussions with the press about the prospective position or your intentions once confirmed.

Those appointees to be confirmed should consider talking to as many people who have had the same level of position, or any politically appointee position, in the subject agency to seek their perspective on the prospective assignment.

During the earliest discussions with Departmental or agency representatives, the prospective appointee should review with the Director of Personnel whether there are any particular issues such as pending RIF's, EEO compliance problems, security violations, inadequate performance appraisals; insufficient attention to management or training issues, physical relocation moves, performance awards programs or other matters that need attention or consideration in the context of the subject position. Similarly the prospective appointee should discuss the budget situation with the

Director of the Budget for the agency; review with the Inspector General any recent or other investigation or analysis performed by his Office; and review with the General Counsel both the major pending legal issues and the arrangements for providing legal counsel to the prospective appointee.

About one week before the confirmation hearing, the prospective appointee should ask the Office of Congressional Affairs of the agency to conduct a "Murder Board". This mock hearing should include individuals playing roles of the most aggressive Senators who might appear at the hearing. Very tough, nasty, confrontational questions should be asked and the prospective appointee should answer. This will prepare the nominee mentally and psychologically for the hearing. Over 90% of confirmation hearings are not confrontational. However a good Murder Board will enable the nominee to be better both in a non-confrontational and in a confrontational hearing, both at confirmation and later.

Further useful background information about the publicly important activities of the position could be obtained by reviewing past issues of The National Journal, The Congressional Quarterly, the relevant "Inside Washington" publications, the Washington Post, the New York Times and published Congressional hearings.