



APG

Cohort Alliance

ABOUT THE APG SENIOR LEADERSHIP COHORT

To meet the challenges of today and the future, organizations must create sustainable learning communities that continuously develop leadership knowledge and skills in those holding senior leadership positions. The Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) Senior Leadership Cohort program is designed to create a self-sustaining leadership learning community that will serve as a catalyst for change to concurrently deliver individual, team, organizational and APG community results. This senior leadership program, designed around the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Executive Core Qualifications, is designed to create and sustain a cadre of high potential managers at APG. Currently in its third year, the Cohort program brings together individuals from varying backgrounds and organizations and builds upon the foundation of the individual, deepening each participant's self-awareness and self-management so that they can become a more effective and productive leader.

May Cohort Session Highlights

The overarching goal for the May Cohort session was for participants to learn what it takes to be an effective leader. This objective was reached through a number of assignments and discussion topics, all aiming to build each participant's understanding of successful leadership skills, including:

1. Discussing personal values and how they affect leadership
2. Defining leadership styles
3. Introducing Community-Based Projects (CBP)
4. Conversing with Senior Executive Service (SES) members

Values were a key focus of this month's leadership lesson. The class used discussions to compare espoused values or "what we say" to values in action, "what we do" - noting the importance of a leader's impact on their employees. Since strong leaders live their values through their behavior, participants also focused on leadership styles. The six leadership styles studied by Cohort participants included both results-oriented styles and relational styles (*Goleman, Daniel. "Leadership That Gets Results." The Harvard Business Review (2000).*)

Results-oriented leadership styles

- Coercive
- Pacesetter
- Authoritative

Relational leadership styles

- Democratic
- Affiliate
- Coaching

The Cohort program is designed to create a self-sustaining leadership community within APG and the eight month CBPs are a significant part of the creation of this community. CBPs focus on strategic issues related to the APG community and how these issues can be improved or solved. These projects provide opportunities for participants to collaborate with colleagues within the APG community to resolve issues and improve efficiencies across the Garrison.



During a recent classroom session, Aberdeen Proving Ground Senior Leadership Cohort participants discussed values and how they relate to leadership styles. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army.

Participants also learned that part of becoming a better leader is through listening to others' personal experiences and learning from them. By bringing in both an experienced and a newly appointed SES, the students were given the opportunity to hear first-hand what it takes to become an SES. The keynote speakers for the May SES discussions were Mr. Gary Martin, Executive Deputy to the Commander of the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command and Cohort 3 Champion, and Ms. Suzanne Milchling, Director of the Directorate of Program Integration at the Edgewood Chemical and Biological Center. The informal discussion covered various topics, ranging from risk management and the current state of the Army to the importance of sharing information and decision making.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

For additional information about the program or to apply to Cohort 4, which will begin in spring 2012, please contact Tiffany Evans at tiffany.evans@us.army.mil.



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Leadership Value: “You as a Leader”

The Cohort program comprises eight scheduled sessions in which participants learn leadership concepts and knowledge, receive individual coaching and execute projects that deliver real results to the individual, the organization and the APG community. The May session focused on the concept of “You as a Leader,” which encompassed defining leadership values and styles, examining leadership impacts, and assessing personal strengths and weaknesses through participation in the Senior Executive Assessment Program (SEAP).

SEAP is an intensive program that assesses participants’ performance potential and provides a realistic preview of what the SES position requires in order to assist participants in making an informed decision about whether or not they will pursue the SES career path.

The 12 hour Assessment Center provided a comfortable, secure environment in which assessors observed the participants’ behaviors in a series of team and individual situations. The following day, the assessors met to review their notes and develop ratings, with three assessors developing consensus on the rating for each participant. The event then culminated in a feedback session where each participant received a tailored action plan for leadership development at the SES level. This feedback session gave each participant the chance to see his or her work style through an observer’s eyes. One participant remarked, “The Assessment Center provided the right amount of stress and impossibility, making you look at what you do well and where you could use improvement.” By obtaining feedback from the professional assessors, Cohort participants are now equipped to strengthen their own leadership skills, create focused development goals and help their teams be as successful and efficient as possible.

Around the Cohort Corner...

The next Cohort session will take place 14 -16 June and will focus on the leadership value of “Teamwork.” During this session participants will gain insight into team leadership and team effectiveness. Additionally, they will have the opportunity to take what they learned about their leadership style during the Assessment Center and build on it.

If you are a member of the Cohort Alumni Association and would like to attend an upcoming session, please RSVP at least one week prior to the session to Tiffany Evans at tiffany.evans@us.army.mil.



Aberdeen Proving Ground Senior Leadership Cohort participants learned about what it takes to be an effective manager and leader, during a recent classroom session. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army.

BENEFITS OF THE APG SENIOR LEADERSHIP COHORT

- Practicing leadership in a “live environment” with “real issues” enables participants to expand leadership capacity and skillfully convert knowledge into action on the job and across the installation.
- Creating connections across organizational lines and developing ways to work together more effectively improves efficiencies across the Garrison.
- Engaging in installation-wide community-based projects demonstrates social responsibility and improves the APG community.
- Implementing project work focused on APG organizations provides observable return on investment.
- Creating and maintaining a self-sustaining leadership learning community assists in developing the next generation of exemplary leaders at APG.



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