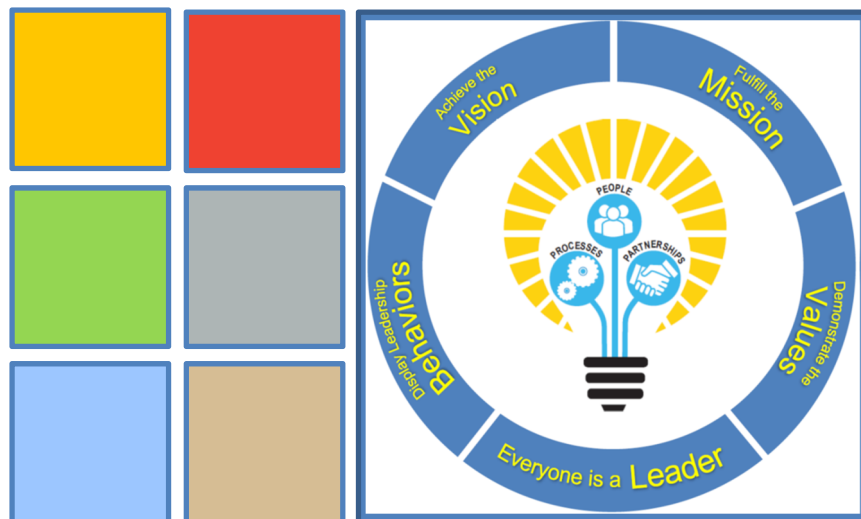




NRC Leadership Model



June 19, 2018

Preface

Through our behaviors and attitudes, every U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) employee, regardless of title or position, provides leadership by influencing work products and the people with whom we interact. Thus, everyone at the NRC should receive clear expectations to understand how we individually and collectively demonstrate leadership in fulfilling the NRC mission.

In light of this, the NRC Leadership Model was developed to provide a roadmap to communicate, in one place, how we individually and collectively demonstrate leadership in fulfilling the NRC mission.

The NRC Leadership Model complements the Principles of Good Regulation (ICORE) and NRC Organizational Values (ISOCER) by elaborating upon six fundamental characteristics, which are not explicitly addressed by either the Principles or Values. Specifically,

Participative Decision Making
Receptivity to new Ideas & Thinking
Empowerment and Shared Leadership
Diversity in Thought
Innovation and Risk Tolerance
Collaboration and **Teamwork**

The Model describes the specific leadership behaviors associated with these characteristics that are expected from individuals, supervisors, and team members. It also describes the NRC programs and activities that contribute to, implement, and allow us to hold each other accountable for the concepts and ideals presented in the Leadership Model.

In closing the NRC Leadership Model will help us to nurture a strong organizational culture, enabling us to regulate with excellence into the future and ensure continued success in meeting the NRC's safety and security objectives.

Victor M. McCree
Executive Director for Operations

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The NRC organizational values are integrity, service, openness, commitment, cooperation, excellence, and respect. ISOCER is an easy-to-remember acronym for these values, with a logo in which the words are displayed around a soccer ball.

The Leadership Model complements ICORE and ISOCER by elaborating on certain fundamental characteristics (see PREDICT in Part II below) that the principles and values do not explicitly address.

Our behaviors, demonstration of values, and practice of leadership form a foundation for building agency programs and activities that enable us to fulfill our mission and achieve our vision. Our Leadership Model also recognizes that successful leaders apply conscious, balanced effort across three core areas—processes, partnerships, and people. Figure 1 depicts the Leadership Model.



Figure 1. The NRC Leadership Model

How Do We Inform, Make, and Carry out Decisions at the NRC?

The NRC makes many decisions on safety and security and corporate management issues. It is important to make these decisions promptly based on the best available information. Making sound and timely decisions is easier when everyone knows that the agency's approach to informing, making, and carrying out those decisions is the key to successfully accomplishing its mission.

Achieving the mission of the NRC in an effective, efficient, and agile manner requires trust and teamwork to ensure timely decisions made in an open, collaborative environment that visibly demonstrates the agency's values. Whether we are facing a program or corporate issue, freely and respectfully sharing our perspectives better enables us to achieve our mission because the best decisions consider diverse views.

The NRC's most valuable resource is its people, and the decisions resulting from our knowledge and experience reflect the quality of our work and dedication to the mission. Our work often involves issues that are nuanced and complex, technically, legally, and administratively, and warrant careful study. Available facts and opinions must be sought openly when making decisions. Decisionmakers should seek and consider diverse (and possibly conflicting) viewpoints to fully inform final decisions. Although adopting everyone's viewpoint is unrealistic, considering all views results in the most effective decision.

Empowerment means that people can either make or influence decisions, depending on their respective roles and responsibilities, in a helpful, sharing, team-oriented environment. Consistent with the NRC's Principles of Good Regulation, final agency decisions must be based on objective, unbiased assessments of the available information and must be documented with reasons explicitly stated. After the relevant information and views are considered and a decision is made, we are most effective in carrying out our mission when we unify behind the decision and support its implementation with focused teamwork.

The following general expectations of NRC employees support timely and effective decisionmaking:

- We understand our expected role in the decisionmaking process. This includes knowing the identity and role of the decisionmaker for a particular issue and understanding how to keep him or her fully informed.
- While participating in the decisionmaking process, we engage one another in a manner that reflects our organizational values, particularly cooperation (being helpful, sharing, team oriented, and engaged) and respect (being professional, courteous, objective, and compassionate), as well as openness, excellence, and commitment.

- Consistent with our organizational value of excellence, we strive to achieve the highest quality in our individual and collective actions, providing outstanding assessments and recommendations to decisionmakers.
- We are transparent and forthright while engaging in the decisionmaking process, which reflects our organizational value of openness. We raise any differing views as early as possible to support efficient and timely decisionmaking.
- We are encouraged to use the available NRC processes (e.g., informal discussions, Open Door Policy, Non-concurrence Process, and Differing Professional Opinion Program) to share our perspectives on matters that affect our regulatory decisionmaking and mission accomplishment, without fear of reprisal. Managers are expected to support use of these processes.
- We are expected to support and implement agency actions once the differing views have been considered and a final decision has been made.
- We are accountable for decisions. This includes the responsibility to explain the rationale for decisions, particularly those that differ significantly from the recommended approach.

What Is the Importance of Fostering a Climate of Trust?

Fostering a climate of trust is an important attribute of a high-performing organization. It involves building relationships in an environment where people feel free to speak out knowing that they will be heard, understood, and respected. When we experience and exhibit trust in the workplace, we are more likely to make well-informed decisions, demonstrate behaviors consistent with the leadership characteristics, and fully embrace our organization's vision, mission, and values.

We trust people when we have confidence in their character and competence. There are many studies, books, and consultants that examine the importance of trust in the workplace and offer practical tools to develop trust. The NRC encourages us to continue learning and developing skills and practices throughout our careers as we demonstrate the behaviors described in the NRC Leadership Model. For example, in 2017–2018, the NRC offered training on the Speed of Trust™ method developed by Franklin Covey Company. The “Behaviors of High Trust” identified in Speed of Trust™ are consistent with the behaviors in the NRC's Leadership Model, and the tools and techniques of Speed of Trust™ offers excellent opportunities to practice these behaviors, set expectations for each other, and communicate with each other about the behaviors.

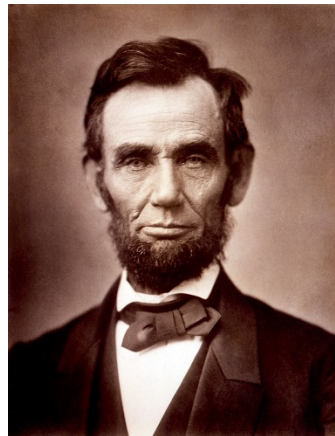
Part II. PREDICT: The Six Characteristics of the NRC Leadership Model

The importance of the Principles of Good Regulation and the NRC organizational values is well established, and they have served as effective guideposts to the NRC’s organizational culture and performance for many years. Both ICORE and ISCOCCER present characteristics that guide our behaviors. The Leadership Model complements ICORE and ISCOCCER by elaborating on six fundamental characteristics (PREDICT) that the principles and values do not explicitly address.

Consistency and predictability are necessary components of our regulatory mission and equally critical in leadership. They foster an environment and culture in which people can predict action-based outcomes. The consistent application of these behavioral characteristics is always important and becomes increasingly so during periods of significant change by positioning the NRC to respond more rapidly and productively. The explicit Leadership Model serves as a beacon by establishing characteristics that, when applied, can PREDICT positive results in how we interact and achieve mutual success.



- P**articipative Decisionmaking
- R**eceptivity to New Ideas and Thinking
- E**mpowerment and Shared Leadership
- D**iversity in Thought
- I**nnovation and Risk Tolerance
- C**ollaboration and **T**eamwork



“The best way to predict your future is to create it.”
– Abraham Lincoln

P Participative Decisionmaking—All employees have a role in the decisionmaking process, consistent with their assigned responsibilities. This work entails gathering facts and soliciting diverse viewpoints of those involved in the process. To make the most informed and soundest decision, the decisionmaker(s) should consider as many viewpoints as practical and critically assess the merits of each position. Once a decision is made, the person or organizational unit responsible should explain that decision and ensure that it is implemented accordingly.

- R** Receptivity to New Ideas and Thinking—We recognize that a key measure of our organizational agility is our ability to respond to change promptly and effectively. All employees are open to a broad range of possible solutions to resolve problems or find new ways of working.
- E** Empowerment and Shared Leadership—Each supervisor is expected to give his or her employees the support, access to information, and discretion to perform work consistent with their assigned roles and responsibilities. Each employee is expected to display leadership and initiative while engaging others in a manner that supports the mission and reflects the NRC organizational values and Principles of Good Regulation
- D** Diversity in Thought—At the NRC, decisionmaking is enhanced when it incorporates a variety of viewpoints. For this reason, we cultivate a positive environment for the expression of diverse views, alternative approaches, critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, unbiased evaluations, and honest feedback.
- I** Innovation and Risk Tolerance—All employees are encouraged to actively identify new ways of doing the work of the agency. We embrace failures as learning opportunities that build personal and organizational character, and despite the possibility of falling short of our goal, we persevere in seeking ways to improve.
- CT** Collaboration and Teamwork—We are inclusive when employees deliberately work together with others internally and externally on a shared goal. This work involves collective brainstorming, debating, and developing possible solutions to inform a decision. Team members share the recognition that the best solutions often come not from a single individual, but through the team working together.

To explain PREDICT, the Leadership Model places particular emphasis on observable behaviors, rather than inherent traits or values. Observing what we do and how we react to each other provides opportunities to build trust through feedback and hold each other accountable.

Each characteristic of PREDICT is demonstrated through the behaviors of individuals, supervisors/managers, and teams/organizations. Every person at the NRC plays a role as an individual leader modeling leadership behaviors, no matter his or her position. In addition to

being individual leaders, managers and executives must also demonstrate specific leadership behaviors that enable both individual and organizational success, whether it be communicating goals with clarity, ensuring an open and collaborative work environment, or reinforcing expectations. Lastly, we exhibit specific behaviors in teams or organizations, whether at the branch, division, office, or agency level, that are focused on strategic aspects of our mission and how we act as an organizational unit.

Table 1 identifies the top behaviors currently representative of the six leadership characteristics. For simplicity, behaviors that apply to multiple characteristics are identified only under the characteristic with which they are primarily associated. Also, behaviors such as being trustworthy, respectful, honest, accountable, and reliable are vital to success in demonstrating all six characteristics as well as the NRC values, so the table does not explicitly identify them.

***The key to successful leadership today
is influence, not authority.***

- Ken Blanchard

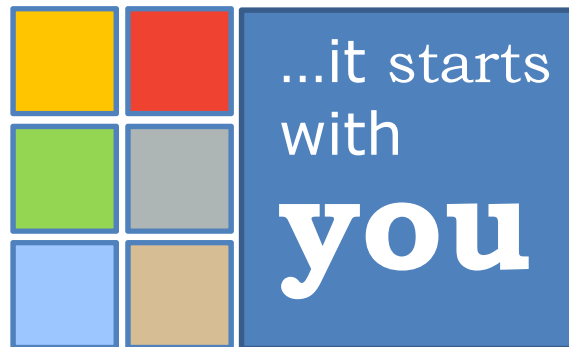



Table 1. Behaviors Associated with the Six Leadership Characteristics

| Characteristic | Leader Behaviors for... | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| | Individuals | Supervisors and Executives | Teams and Organizations |
| <p>P</p> <p>Participative Decisionmaking</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be respectful and communicate frequently to solicit and provide regular feedback, understand the agency’s evolving priorities, and actively consider diverse viewpoints. • Take risks and have the confidence to make your opinions heard, while recognizing that others also need to be heard if there is to be trust. • Seek individual development, including working with a mentor and striving to know your own strengths and weaknesses. • Be approachable—show vulnerability, admit mistakes, and be willing to not win every discussion. • Be curious and seek a full understanding of complex situations. • Incorporate diverse viewpoints and take responsibility for identifying and removing barriers to participation and communication. • Support and implement agency actions once all views have been considered and a final decision has been made. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively provide information and solicit input through regular meetings, periodic e-mails, and one-on-one discussions to ensure staff is aware of upcoming major decisions and has ample opportunity to participate in the process. • Communicate openly and honestly to address misunderstandings and repair rifts. • Ensure thorough modeling, support, and promotion of appropriate behaviors so that people feel confident to speak up, trust their input will be considered, and understand the reasons for decisions and how their input was considered. • Step outside your comfort zone, and understand your strengths, weaknesses, and biases. • Create and maintain an environment of trust, and delegate authority. • Spend time getting to know staff members and determine the best method to communicate with each one based on emotional intelligence. Understand and show acceptance of strengths, weaknesses, and differences. Respect each person’s value regardless of grade and position. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively communicate regularly through diverse channels to ensure staff is aware of upcoming major decisions and can participate in the process. • Treat every member as having value by seeking diverse viewpoints, challenging all to develop as individuals, and committing to communicating across all levels of the organization. • Commit to transparency, direct communication, and the truth as essential to a full understanding of the opportunities and challenges we face. • Develop the skills needed to have hard conversations, address misunderstandings, and repair rifts. |

| Characteristic | Leader Behaviors for... | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| | Individuals | Supervisors and Executives | Teams and Organizations |
| <p>R</p> <p>Receptivity to New Ideas and Thinking</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that the environment is continually changing and that previous approaches and thinking may also need to change. • Demonstrate engagement by providing constructive feedback, asking questions, raising issues, and offering alternatives and solutions. • Recognize the need for continual learning and development to ensure your agility in a changing environment. • Show humility by valuing the views of others and seeking to understand the reasons for new ideas or thinking. • Demonstrate active listening and a willingness to set aside personal biases and established ways of working. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that introducing new ideas and thinking constitutes change. Ensure that change management tools are used as appropriate. • Leverage operating experience and lessons learned before undertaking important activities, and benchmark other organizations. • Communicate new ideas and thinking with clarity and specificity, and provide a compelling case for change. • Ensure sound project management practices in implementing new solutions and ideas to ensure confidence in the organization's ability and capacity to effect change. • Fully and objectively consider the merits of new ideas and thinking, and provide constructive feedback including the bases for decisions, as applicable. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of change management tools and reinforce expectations. • Provide resources and establish priorities to manage change initiatives collectively. Strike an appropriate balance between the pace of change and the organization's capacity to assimilate changes. • Promote the use of project management tools and reinforce expectations. • Reinforce desired behaviors through recognition. • Establish forums for feedback and disagreement in an open and collaborative work environment. |

| Characteristic | Leader Behaviors for... | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| | Individuals | Supervisors and Executives | Teams and Organizations |
| <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p>Empowerment and Shared Leadership</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate confidence in your ability to achieve, and be open, self-motivated, and empowered with the mindset to do your best. • Take action when appropriate; when in doubt, ask. • Engage in conversations, even when difficult. • Seek a clear understanding of your role in the organization and how your effort contributes to the overall mission. • Model the NRC values, hold yourself accountable for your actions, and recognize your contribution to the team. • Self-identify gaps and frequently reassess yourself to grow as an individual. • Understand the difference between collaboration and consensus— your ideas will be considered but may not be adopted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide timely, transparent communication and feedback in all aspects of business. • Encourage ownership by providing team members with the necessary resources and latitude to perform their job effectively, while removing obstacles. • Affirm a shared responsibility in the success and failures of our actions. • Recognize that, with progressively higher positions of authority, accountability increases but control decreases, and adjust accordingly. • Facilitate and promote an open and engaged coaching environment vital to individual development and team growth. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate a shared leadership culture that encourages all individuals to be self-empowered to perform their responsibilities to the best of their ability. • Demonstrate equal respect for every individual’s contribution and value to the organization, and prioritize “We > Me” and team above self. • Foster an engaged, agile, and resilient organization that demonstrates acceptance, openness, and rapid ability to recover from setbacks. • Commit to embracing a team environment that shifts from win/lose to win/learn and improving our collective willingness to engage productively. |

| Characteristic | Leader Behaviors for... | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| | Individuals | Supervisors and Executives | Teams and Organizations |
| <p style="font-size: 48pt; margin: 0;">D</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Diversity in Thought</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge and express ideas. • Use processes and avenues in place to share alternative thoughts. • Be open and respectful of all thoughts and ideas. • Ask for and expect feedback, listen to the feedback, support the decisions made. • Support and encourage others who express a differing view by listening and taking the time to learn about the alternative idea(s). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to become familiar with staff preferences, provide input in multiple ways, and remove barriers that may hinder communication of ideas. • Seek to become familiar with the agency's formal and informal processes for sharing differing views, and encourage and support these programs to enhance decisionmaking. • Ask specific questions designed to elicit constructive criticism and diverse opinions to foster an environment where employees are comfortable sharing their thoughts without fear of reprisal. • Acknowledge, understand, and consider all viewpoints and alternative thoughts. Describe the path forward and give an honest rationale and feedback related to decisions (explain the "why" behind your decisions). • Recognize those who come up with creative new ideas. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirm that the collective power of diverse ideas can help organizations make better decisions. • Support formal and informal programs, mechanisms, and avenues that value diversity in thought and promote its use to improve decisionmaking and the agency's safety and security mission. • Create programs to affirm that harassment, intimidation, retaliation, discrimination, or any other threats are not tolerated, and foster diverse viewpoints without fear of reprisal. • Affirm that decisionmakers should clearly communicate feedback and the rationale behind their decisions (especially if the decision involved diverse opinions). • Support programs to recognize those who demonstrate creativity and come up with new ideas. |

| Characteristic | Leader Behaviors for... | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| | Individuals | Supervisors and Executives | Teams and Organizations |
|  Innovation and Risk Tolerance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and encourage new ideas with the potential to enhance performance through active participation and constructive feedback. • Identify new opportunities and best practices that will enable us to perform our mission more effectively and efficiently. • Use insights gained from successful and unsuccessful innovations to generate new and creative ideas. • Make informed choices by assessing if the benefits of embracing a new approach or idea outweigh the risks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and nurture new ideas by investing the time and resources that enable staff to generate and test them. • Share insights gathered from successful and unsuccessful idea implementations to enhance the environment for taking risks without the fear of failure. • Encourage open discussions and be clear about balancing the risks and benefits of ideas. • Recognize new ideas. • Support and connect staff to the right individuals who are able to foster their success. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build trust in the organization’s commitment to innovation by providing opportunities to be heard, and involved, and create a transparent process for vetting and implementing new ideas. • Leverage individual development and employee skills to generate new ideas and enhance diversity of thought. • Communicate continuously to foster a culture where informed risks and “false starts” are embraced as learning opportunities. • Use agencywide approaches to promote the development of innovative ideas and achieve greater benefits from broad implementation. |

| Characteristic | Leader Behaviors for... | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| | Individuals | Supervisors and Executives | Teams and Organizations |
| <p>CT</p> <p>Collaboration and Teamwork</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to others without prejudice, encourage participation by all, and fully consider all ideas offered. • Place the agency's best interests first, then your team's, and then your own. • Pay attention to others—show personal interest, recognize unique talents and roles, and eliminate distractive behaviors. • Take actions that are reliable and timely. Deliver work on time, consistently, and reliably. • Show mutual support for teammates, and do not let them fail. • Seek to develop and preserve personal and organizational relationships. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish clear expectations, roles, and responsibilities for organizational teamwork and collaboration. • Inquire as to the best solution rather than advocating for a position. • Act as a role model for teamwork and collaboration and the NRC's Principles of Good Regulation. Walk the talk! • Establish clearly defined goals and explain intention and context for assigned work. • Establish processes and standards for behavior and monitor adherence—do not tolerate poor behaviors. • Give credit to the team! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be courageous in acknowledging gaps in behaviors and ensuring accountability up, down, and across the organization. • Speak of colleagues with respect especially when they are not present. • Build teams with diverse membership to promote a broad spectrum of views. • Establish IT infrastructure to effectively support collaboration. • Speak with one voice to the public. • Share knowledge with other agencies and professional organizations. Publish informed decisions. |

Part III. People, Processes, and Partnerships— NRC Strategies and Activities To Promote Leadership

To positively influence an activity or group of people, leaders at the NRC apply conscious, balanced effort and behaviors across three core categories—people, processes, and partnerships.¹

Developing and appreciating our people, the NRC’s most valuable asset, clearly increases our capacity to achieve our mission effectively.

Similarly, leaders provide structure through organizational processes that help us all work towards a common purpose, take reliably consistent actions, and optimize results within our resources. Often, we think of processes (e.g., procedures) as mainly management tools rather than leadership tools, but they are both. (There are many interesting scholarly works that examine the difference between management and leadership). How we establish and use our procedures to guide, influence, and enable progress towards our goals speaks to leadership with respect to our Leadership Model.

Finally, we must foster partnerships because the nature of our work means we depend on each other to succeed at our tasks. Partnering with each other and our key external stakeholders ensures that we make informed decisions and enables efficient problem-solving.

The appendix provides information on specific NRC programs and activities that contribute to the NRC Leadership Model.

¹ The three-core-area approach to describe the NRC’s Leadership Model has been adapted for NRC use from the works of Dr. John Adair, a preeminent expert in leadership theory.