

Natural Resources Conservation Service

**Leadership Development Framework (LDF)
Foundational Leadership Cluster**

**Relationship/Partnership Management
Recommended Curriculum**

Target Proficiency Level: 3.0

Course: Building Your Professional Network

Description: A key factor in advancing your career is using good communication skills to build strong professional relationships and maintain an effective business network of contacts. This course provides you with the essential communication skills required to establish a business network and includes strategies for building rapport with new contacts during networking opportunities. It also covers best practices for maintaining your network so that business contacts can help you achieve your career goals.

Modality: Web-Based

Length: 25 minutes

Vendor: SkillSoft

Cost: N/A

Developmental Opportunity: Mentoring for Relationship/Partnership Management

Objectives:

- Demonstrate ability to work with individuals outside of the Agency to address mutual issues and concerns
- Apply strategies to build consensus through an understanding of common goals and by soliciting input from promoting trust between various parties
- Practice managing relationships with internal and external partners to ensure effective coordination

Mentoring Considerations:

- Pairing should be self-selected to encourage motivated mentoring pairs
- Should meet regularly with a trusted individual at the Tactical leadership level (or above) to gain insight into effectively developing and maintaining relationship with internal and external networks
- Consider working through the process of establishing a new contact/relationship with an individual outside of the Agency
- Be flexible and accommodating when considering schedules, workload, etc.
- Develop a mentor/mentee agreement, with up-front expectations regarding the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee, what each person is hoping to gain from the mentor/mentee relationship, expectations and logistics, etc.
- Develop suggested checklist for activities and conversations regarding best practices for networking and fostering strong interpersonal relationships
- Mentees should consider maintaining this mentoring relationship as they progress in their careers, as their professional relationships continue to become more complex and influential

Modality: In-person; virtual

Length: 6-12 months; 2 hours per month; continue longer as needed

Vendor: N/A

Cost: N/A