



INTERAGENCY CONNECTION

215 Dean A. McGee, Suite 153, Oklahoma City, OK 73102

<http://www.oklahoma.feb.gov/>

(405) 231-4167

Chair's Corner



Since 2016 is an election year, we are receiving information reminding us to guard against politically influenced personnel actions. In a January 11th memo, OPM Acting

Director, Beth Colbert stated: *“During this Presidential election year, I would like to remind agency heads of the need to ensure all personnel actions remain free of political influence or other improprieties and meet all relevant civil service laws, rules, and regulations. All official personnel records should clearly document continued adherence to Federal merit principles and remain free of any prohibited personnel practices. In particular, any appointments of political appointees, Schedule C employees, and Non-career Senior Executive Service (SES) members to competitive or non-political excepted service positions or to career SES positions require careful attention to ensure they comply with merit principles regarding fair and open competition.”* The full memo that also addresses incentive awards and other personnel matters is located at: <https://www.chcoc.gov/content/appointments-and-awards-during-2016-presidential-election-period>.

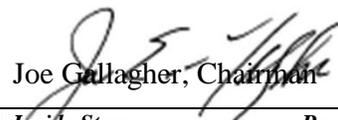
In an effort to assist agencies with educating federal employees regarding the **Hatch Act**, our FEB has placed pertinent information and resources on our website in one convenient

location. At <http://www.oklahoma.feb.gov/HatchAct.htm> you have access to:

1. a one-page flyer, appropriate for posting on bulletin boards
2. 14-page booklet of information on “Political Activity and the Federal Employee, as well as
3. A Power Point presentation on the Hatch Act that can be used for staff meetings.

Activity on personal social media accounts fall within the restrictions of the Hatch Act and employees should be aware of the consequences involved in violating the Hatch Act. With Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Instagram and other social media outlets, federal employees can easily “cross the line” into restricted political activity, without realizing it.

Our website also has the various activities, events, training, and table top exercise registration forms for you and your staff to participate. Visit www.oklahoma.feb.gov and utilize the buttons to navigate to your area of interest. Registration forms are also provided within this newsletter for your convenience.


Joe Gallagher, Chairman

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STRESS FREE PROBLEM-SOLVING

Too much problem-solving is a problem. Dis-empowered employees want you to solve their problems for them.

Successful leaders help *others* solve problems.

(This post originates with a problem-centric-email I received. It only took 30 minutes on the phone for her to find a path forward.)

12 Steps to Stress free problem solving:

#1. Choose compassion, not

solution. Solving problems *for* others is stressful and perhaps a little arrogant. Begin problem-solving conversations with an open heart toward people. *Focus on them – help them focus on the problem.*

Every time you solve problems others could solve, you weaken the problem-solving power of your team.

#2. Determine if the problem is one only you should solve. Own it if it's yours.

#3. Give the monkey back. People walk into your office with a monkey they want you to own. *Every problem you own – that isn't yours – limits your ability to lead.*

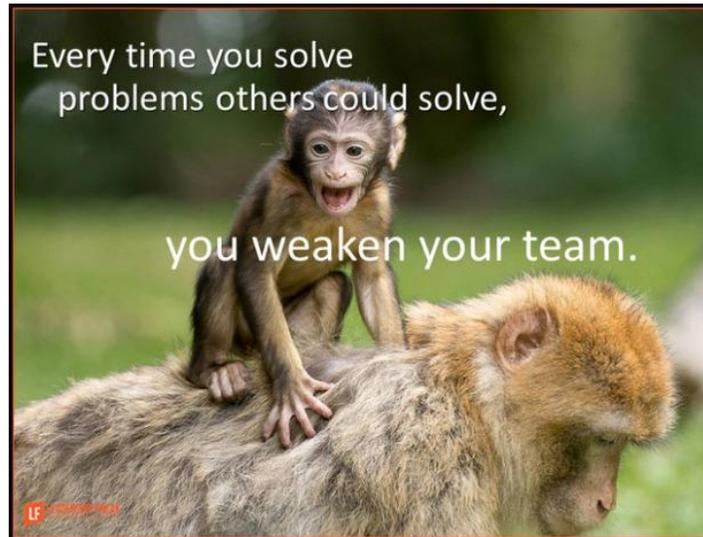
#4. Set your solution aside. *Solutions you provide invite dependency.* It might be good for your ego, but it doesn't strengthen organizational capacity.

#5. Relax. *You aren't going to solve their problem, they are.*

#6. Create small buckets. *Divide big problems into small buckets.* On the call, she

divided her problems into a "personal relationship bucket" and an "organizational performance bucket."

#7. Choose a bucket. I asked which issues were most pressing. She chose personal relationship.



#8. Encourage people to focus on what they want. Problem-centric leaders sink into what they *don't* want.

#9. Encourage positive language. "How might you shift what you just said from negative to positive?"

#10. Focus on their behaviors, not the behavior of others. They can't control others.

#11. Explore small changes. *Aim low to reach high.*

#12. Try something. She identified a pressing issue and crafted a behavior-based solution in 30 minutes. It wasn't perfect. It was progress.

<https://leadershipfreak.wordpress.com/2015/11/07/solution-saturday-stress-free-problem-solving/>



Spotlighting Information in Public Service

Did you Know?

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

mission is to:

"... enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives."

The BIA is the oldest bureau of the United States Department of the Interior. The BIA, Eastern Oklahoma Region (Region), currently provides services (directly or through contracts, grants, or compacts) to 20 American Indian Tribes in the Eastern part of Oklahoma. The BIA is responsible for the administration and management of surface and subsurface minerals estates held in trust by the United States for American Indian, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives. Oklahoma is the only state in the United States that have two BIA Regional Offices. Below is contact information for the Eastern Regional Office and its Agencies:

BIA, Eastern Oklahoma Regional Office

Eddie Streater, Regional Director
3100 W. Peak Boulevard
Muskogee, OK 74401
Telephone: (918) 781-4608
Telefax: (918) 781-4604

BIA, Chickasaw Agency

Ashley Large, Superintendent
2015 Lonnie Abbott Boulevard
Ada, OK 74820
Telephone: (580) 436-0784
Telefax: (580) 436-3215

BIA, Miami Agency

Paul Yates, Superintendent
34 "A" Street, NE (2nd Fl.)
Miami, OK 743545
Telephone: (918) 542-3396
Telefax: (918) 542-7202

BIA, Okmulgee Agency

Carla Norman, Superintendent
3100 W. Peak Blvd
Muskogee, OK 74401
Telephone: (918) 781-4608
Telefax: (918) 781-4604

BIA, Osage Agency

Robin Phillips, Superintendent
813 Grandview
Pawhuska, OK 74056
Telephone: (918) 287-5700
Telefax: (918) 287-4320

BIA, Talihina Agency

Cristy Hammons, Choctaw Liaison
3100 W. Peak Boulevard
Muskogee, OK 74402
Telephone: (918) 781-4682
Telefax: (918) 781-4604

BIA, Wewoka Agency

Ramona Ellis, Superintendent
600 N. Milt Phillips
Seminole, OK 74868
Telephone: (405) 303-2701
Telefax: (405) 303-2091



Making Better Group Decisions The Stepladder Technique

Making decisions within a group can often be challenging. When things go well, they can go very well. However, when things go wrong, you can end up mired in conflict. Some people may fight for recognition and position, others may be over-critical or disruptive, while others may sit quietly and not contribute anything to the overall effort. Because of this, groups can often spin out of control and make worse decisions than individuals working on their own.

When this happens, it's easy to see why some people throw their hands up in frustration and give up. However, when a group works in the right way, it really WORKS. Groups that function effectively together can outperform individuals and make much better decisions.

But how do you make your group effective? How do you get all group members to contribute and inspire one another to create great ideas and solutions?

The Stepladder Technique is a useful method for encouraging individual participation in group decision making.

What is the Stepladder Technique?



© iStockphoto by ericmichaud

The Stepladder Technique is a simple tool that manages how members enter the decision-making group. Developed by Steven Rogelberg, Janet Barnes-Farrell and Charles Lowe in 1992, it encourages all members to

contribute on an individual level BEFORE being influenced by anyone else. This results in a wider variety of ideas, it prevents people from "hiding" within the group, and it helps people avoid being "stepped on" or overpowered by stronger, louder group members.

All of this helps the group make better decisions.

How to Use the Tool

The Stepladder Technique has five basic steps. Here's how it works:

Step 1: Before getting together as a group, present the task or problem to all members. Give everyone sufficient time to think about what needs to be done and to form their own opinions on how to best accomplish the task or solve the problem.

Step 2: Form a core group of two members. Have them discuss the problem.



Making Better Group Decisions (cont'd)

Step 3: Add a third group member to the core group. The third member presents ideas to the first two members BEFORE hearing the ideas that have already been discussed. After all three members have laid out their solutions and ideas, they discuss their options together.

Step 4: Repeat the same process by adding a fourth member, and so on, to the group. Allow time for discussion after each additional member has presented his or her ideas.

Step 5: Reach a final decision only after all members have been brought in and presented their ideas.

The Stepladder Technique gives quiet team members a boost.

to-face meetings, so everyone knows who the other members are.

- *The Delphi Method is a lengthy process, while the Stepladder Technique is much quicker.*
- *The Delphi Method is often used for major decisions that need input from a large number of people. The Stepladder Technique works best with smaller groups that make a wide range of decisions.*

Tip:

Groups can begin to lose their effectiveness and ability to make good quality decisions if they have too many members. Keep your group small – four to seven team members – to maximize effectiveness.

The Stepladder Technique is similar to the Delphi Method⁺, another tool that's often used in groups to prevent Groupthink⁺ and to encourage participation. While both tools have the same objective, they differ in a few key ways:

- *In the Delphi Method, an objective facilitator or leader manages the group. In the Stepladder Technique, all members are equal.*
- *The Delphi Method keeps members anonymous. The facilitator manages the flow of information, and members may have no idea who else is in the group. The Stepladder Technique involves face-*

Key Points

The Stepladder Technique is a step-by-step approach that helps you ensure that all members of a group participate and are heard. The technique allows shy, quiet people to present their ideas before other group members can influence them, and it allows everyone to hear many different viewpoints before reaching a final decision.

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_89.htm?utm_source=nl&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=10Nov15#np

IRS predicts better customer service, workforce attrition in 2016

The Internal Revenue Service says it is confident that this upcoming tax filing season will go more smoothly than the last one thanks to an additional \$290 million in congressional funding this fiscal year--\$700 million less than what the IRS asked for but the first time in the past six years that the agency has received a notable bump in funding. Commissioner John Koskinen said the IRS will use the extra dollars, in part, to hire about 1,000 customer-service representatives for this tax season. <http://federalnewsradio.com/management/2016/01/290-million-irs-predicts-better-customer-service-workforce-attrition-2016/>



One Word Successful People Never Use At Work

Delete this word from your work vocabulary immediately.

By [Jacquelyn Smith](#)

"Think twice before you speak, because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another." —Napoleon Hill

Darlene Price, president of Well Said, Inc., and author of "[Well Said! Presentations and Conversations That Get Results](#)," told Business Insider that words, poorly and unconsciously chosen, can indeed harm your credibility, relationships, and opportunities for advancement at work.

"Words matter," she explained. "They are a key component of persuasive communication. Regardless of the audience, topic, or industry ... a leader uses language to influence someone's mind in order to achieve a certain result. That's one reason they're seen as leaders; their words compel people to follow."

She said one word these people *don't* use at work is "try."

If your boss says to you, "I need your proposal by 10 a.m. tomorrow for the customer meeting," and your reply is, "Okay. I'll *try* to get it finished," they probably won't be thrilled.

"The word 'try' implies the possibility it may not get finished," Price said. And no boss wants to hear this, as it presupposes possible failure.

It also tells them you're not completely confident in your abilities to get something done, which isn't the message you want to send at work.

Instead, she suggested trying: "Yes, I will get it finished" or "I will have it on your desk by 9 a.m."

If it's not an unreasonable request, there's no reason you shouldn't be able to get it done — and therefore no reason to use the word

"try."

But if for some reason you really can't complete the assigned task, you'll want to politely ask for an extended deadline and get figure out a way to complete the task by then.

Copied from http://jobs.aol.com/articles/2015/09/01/one-word-successful-people-never-use-at-work/?SiteID=cbaolcompromotion_sept_2&icid=main-fluid%7Cbon2-t2%7Cd17%7Csec8_Ink8%26pLid%3D1666440190_amp-bon2-t2





UPCOMING EVENTS February 2016

- Feb 8, 2016** **FEB/OPM Conference Call**
1:00 p.m. POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167
- Feb 11, 2016** **Executive Policy Council Mtg**
10:00 a.m. Social Security Office
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167
- Feb 15, 2016** **Presidents' Day** 
All Day
- Feb 17, 2016** **Final Planning mtg for Tabletop Exercise**
1:00 p.m. 2600 NE 63rd St.
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167
- Feb 19, 2016** **Deadline for Award Nominations for FEB
Interagency competition**
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167

INSPIRATION CORNER

The way to be a leader today is different. I no longer call the shots. I'm not the decision maker. The essence of leadership today is to make sure that the organization knows itself. -Mort Meyerson

If the validity of your action depends on its secrecy, better decide to do something else. -Harlan Cleveland

The virtue of man ought to be measured, not by his extraordinary exertions, but by his everyday conduct. -Blaise Pascal

If there is no sense of trust in the organization, if people are preoccupied with protecting their backs...creativity will be one of the first casualties. -Manfred F.R. Kets de Vries

I had no vision of the scope of what I would start. But I had confidence that as long as we did our work well and were good to our customers, there would be no limit to us. -Sam Walton

Your Federal Executive Board

“Federal Executive Boards (FEBs) are generally responsible for improving coordination among federal activities and programs in...areas outside of Washington, D.C...FEBs support and promote national initiatives of the President and the administration and respond to the local needs of the federal agencies and the community.” (GAO-04-384)

We applaud the efforts of the Oklahoma FEB Executive Policy Council members who ensure information is provided to direct our activities and efforts:

- Jeffrey Allen, Executive Director, Air Force Sustainment Center
- David Andra, Meteorologist-in-Charge, National Weather Service Forecast Office, Norman
- Michelle Coppedge, Director, FAA Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center
- David Engel, Chief Administrative Judge, Social Security Administration, Tulsa
- Dottie Overall, Director, Small Business Administration
- Betty Tippeconnie, Superintendent, BIA-Concho Agency

This newsletter is published monthly as a cost-effective tool for communicating events and issues of importance to the federal community in Oklahoma. If you have news of interest, please email to LeAnnJenkins@gsa.gov no later than the 15th of each month.

Officers

Chair: **Joe Gallagher**
Deputy to Commanding General
Army Fires Center of Excellence
Fort Sill

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Warden
Federal Transfer Center
Oklahoma City

Ex-Officio: **Julie Gosdin**
District Director
US Postal Service, Oklahoma City

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Director: LeAnn Jenkins
Assistant: Lisa Smith-Longman



2016 Leadership FEB Class Registration

Return this portion to FEB



In order to maximize the benefits and expand the cohesive networking opportunities, no alternates will be authorized to attend single sessions. However, if an identified participant becomes unable to honor their commitment to the program, the employing agency is authorized to replace that individual for the duration of the program.

Participants **must attend a minimum of five sessions** in order to receive a certificate of completion for this program. The majority of sessions will occur in the Central Oklahoma area; however, to illustrate the diversity of the nature and geographic areas of our federal community, a couple of sessions will be to visit federal agencies in outlying areas.

Forums may involve agencies with missions that require background investigations prior to the visit. If a registered employee has findings, their participation in that particular forum may be denied.

Due to limited availability, register as early as possible to reserve a slot for your participant. It is suggested that registrations be submitted no later than Friday, February 26, 2016. Cancellations will be processed at no charge to the agency through that date. After that, we ask the agency to honor their obligation due to cost incurred; however, a substitute participant is authorized and encouraged. Tuition for the program is \$750. This covers *Leadership FEB* program expenses for each forum, leadership books, parking fees for designated forums, and other materials. Personal expenses, lodging, and mileage are not included in this cost. Tuition is payable by the individual, the employer, or the sponsoring organization. Tuition paid with the application will be held until the selection process is completed. Tuition will be refunded if the applicant is not selected. *Agency/Registrant may pay the course fee (\$750) by check, credit card, or government voucher*

Name: _____

Title: _____

Dept & Agency: _____

City: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Participant's Signature

Date

Agency Director/Commander Review/Approval

Date

By Mail:	By Fax:	By Email:	Questions Call
Federal Executive Board 215 Dean A. McGee, Ste 153, Oklahoma City, OK 73102	(405) 231-4165	LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov Or Lisa.Smith-Longman@gsa.gov	(405) 231-4167



Half-Day Pre-Retirement Training Seminar-2016



Be sure you are financially prepared to do all the things you've planned for your retirement!!

CSRS session topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Overview of CSRS ➤ Survivor Benefit ➤ Voluntary Contribution Program ➤ Federal Employee Health & Life Insurance Programs ➤ Identity Theft Solutions ➤ Social Security ➤ Flexible Spending Accounts ➤ Annuity Calculation ➤ Thrift Savings Plan Allocation Strategies 	FERS session topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Overview of FERS ➤ Survivor Benefit ➤ Voluntary Contribution Program ➤ Federal Employee Health & Life Insurance Programs ➤ Identity Theft Solutions ➤ Social Security ➤ Flexible Spending Accounts ➤ Annuity Calculation ➤ Thrift Savings Plan Allocation Strategies
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TIME: 8:30am–11:30am OR 1:30pm-4:30pm (each day)
Registration will begin 30 minutes prior to the training

LOCATION: OKC Public Works Training Center, 3738 SW 15th Street, Oklahoma City

COST: No Cost

- [] I am registering for the CSRS session on Tuesday, March 8, 2016, 8:30 am-11:30 am
- [] I am registering for the CSRS session on Tuesday, March 8, 2016, 1:30 pm-4:30 pm
- [] I am registering for the FERS session on Thursday, March 10, 2016, 8:30 am-11:30 am
- [] I am registering for the FERS session on Thursday, March 10, 2016, 1:30 pm-4:30 pm

Seating is limited to 50 per session. Once a session is filled, future registrants will be notified and provided the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list for the next Pre-Retirement session.

NAME(S): _____
List name of employee and spouse on same form

AGENCY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: () _____ EMAIL: _____

Mail this registration form to:	Oklahoma FEB 215 Dean A. McGee, Suite 320 Oklahoma City, OK 73102	OR Email to: LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov Or Lisa.Smith-Longman@gsa.gov
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Cancellation Policy: Understanding that unforeseen circumstances may preclude an individual from attending, substitute attendees are authorized and encouraged!



Registration for Interagency Intergovernmental Table Top



Active Shooter Scenario

This event is an interagency intergovernmental planning effort that includes the FEB Comprehensive Emergency Management Team, FEMA, and Oklahoma Emergency Management. This exercise is for government leaders (federal, state, local) to discuss issues necessary to provide effective planning to increase the safety of our workforce and an opportunity to share lessons learned and best practices. Your agency's participation in this exercise is very important. We ask that only a couple of organizational leaders attend from each organization. There will be no After Action Report generated through the tabletop, rather a "self-evaluation" for the participants that can serve as a foundation for reviewing, updating, and continuing to improve relevant policies, plans, and/or procedures that will continue to build your organization's readiness.

Date:	Wednesday, March 30, 2016
Time:	8:30 a.m. Registration – 9:00 a.m. Start Time End Time scheduled for 3:30 p.m. (to include a working lunch)
Location:	Oklahoma City County Health Department, 2600 NE 63 rd St., OKC
Who Should Attend?	Agency Leaders, Emergency Coordinator and/or Facilities Manager
Cost:	No Fee

Agency: _____

Agency Leader (or designee) to attend: _____
Spelling for name tent

Phone: _____ **Fax:** _____

Email: _____

Emergency Coordinator, Facility Manager or Other to accompany Agency Leader:

Name Email Address

Name Email Address

<i>Please mail to:</i>	<i>Oklahoma Federal Executive Board 215 Dean A. McGee, Ste 320 Oklahoma City, OK 73102</i>
<i>Or Fax to:</i>	<i>(405) 231-4165</i>
<i>Or email to:</i>	<i>Leann.Jenkins@gsa.gov</i>

Cancellation Policy: In consideration of those planning this event, we ask that registered participants attend. Understanding that unforeseen circumstances may preclude an individual from attending, substitutions will be permitted through March 18, 2016.

Please register no later than March 18, 2016.



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 1:00 FEB/OPM Conf Call	9	10	11 Executive Policy Council-OKC	12	13
14	15 	16	17 1:00 Tabletop Planning Mtg	18	19 Award Nominations Deadline	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29		February 2016			

OKLAHOMA FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD
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 OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73102-3422
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