



National Emergency Training Center
16825 S. Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727-8998

FEMA

R5201

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

By now you should have received an email from the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) Admissions Office. This notification indicates your acceptance into the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), National Fire Academy (NFA) “Exercise of Executive Leadership: Self” (R5201) course.

The course materials for this course are now available in the NFA Online Mediated platform. This web-based system will provide not only the Student Manual (SM), but formal discussions, activities and electronic submission for all course work assignments. You will, or already have, received instructions specific to accessing your NFA Online Mediated account for this specific course. You are expected to bring your laptop or other device capable of completing online education requirements, including completing in-class assignments. Your pre-course assignments will also be available in the NFA Online Mediated classroom.

This is a 10-day class that starts on a Monday at 8:00 a.m. (EST). Subsequent classes will meet daily Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with evening activities possible. While there will be no classes held on Saturday or Sunday, you may be required to work on assignments that will need to be completed over the weekend.

The course materials are now available in a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) format that will function on any electronic device. If you own an electronic device (laptop computer, tablet, etc.) and are familiar with its document reader functions, we are asking you to download the Student Manual (SM) **before you travel to Emmitsburg** and bring the preloaded device with you. Please see the page following this letter for complete instructions on successfully downloading your course materials. Please note: If you plan to bring/use an iPad, you may experience issues saving/storing/printing course assignments because there is no USB/thumb drive capacity for these devices.

The NFA classroom environment is computer based. Increased numbers of students and instructors are bringing laptop computers or other electronic devices to campus; you are responsible for the security and maintenance of your equipment. The NFA cannot provide computer software, hardware (which includes disks, printers, scanners, monitors, etc.), or technical support for your device. For your convenience, we do provide surge protector power strips at each classroom table.

If you need additional information related to your course’s content or requirements, please send an email to our EFO Help mailbox at fema-efohelp@fema.dhs.gov. Good luck, and I hope to see you on campus.

Sincerely,

Eriks J. Gabliks, Superintendent
National Fire Academy
U.S. Fire Administration

Enclosures

January 2025

National Fire Academy Bring Your Own Device Course Materials/Download Instructions

If you own an electronic device (laptop computer, tablet, etc.) and are familiar with its document reader functions, we are asking you to download the Student Manual (SM) before you travel to class and bring the preloaded device with you.

The **first step** is to download Adobe Acrobat Reader to your device. This will enable you to read and manipulate the course materials. Adobe Acrobat Reader can be used to comment and highlight text in PDF documents. It is an excellent tool for note-taking purposes.

For laptops and computers

Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded from www.adobe.com/downloads/. It is a free download. Please note that depending on your settings, you may have to temporarily disable your antivirus software.

For tablets and other similar hand-Held Devices

Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded onto devices such as iPads, Android tablets and other hand-held devices. The application can be found in the device's application store using the search function and typing in "Adobe Acrobat Reader." Follow the instructions given. **It is a free application.**

After you have successfully downloaded the Adobe Acrobat Reader, please use the following web link to download your SM. You may copy/paste the links into your web browser.

https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/ax/sm/sm_5201.pdf

Note: In order to have the editing capabilities/toolbar, the SM needs to be opened with Adobe Acrobat Reader. There should be a function on your device to do this.

If you need assistance, please contact nfaonlinetier2@fema.dhs.gov.

Exercise of Executive Leadership: Self

Pre-course

January 2025

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The Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Program uses textbooks throughout the courses. Please purchase either electronic or bound copies of the texts below. **Students need to bring both Heifetz and Linsky books and the Northouse book to class.**

- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Heifetz, R., Grashow A., & Linsky, M., (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Heifetz, R., & Linsky, M., (2017). *Leadership on the line: Staying alive through the dangers of leading*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Northouse, P. G. (2021). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (9th ed.). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020).

Information found within the following textbooks should be read prior to starting the “Exercise of Executive Leadership: Self” (EEL: S) (R5201) class.

- *Leadership on the Line* (2017) all chapters required
- *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* (2009) all chapters required
- *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (2021) all chapters listed below
 - Chapter 1: “Introduction”
 - Chapter 2: “Trait Theory” and complete the Leadership Trait Questionnaire (LTQ), pages 52–53
 - Chapter 10: “Servant Leadership” and complete the Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ), pages 280–282
 - Chapter 15: “Leadership Ethics” and complete the Ethical Leadership Style Questionnaire (ELSQ), pages 453–458

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Module 1: Q0427, *Applied Research Design for Fire and Emergency Medical Services*

Overview

“Applied Research Design for Fire and Emergency Medical Services” (Q0427) introduces individuals in the fire and emergency medical services (EMS) to the knowledge and skills necessary for successfully planning for and completing a Capstone Applied Project (CAP) in compliance with generally accepted published practices for the conduct of applied research and within the guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Topics covered include American Psychological Association (APA) style, elements of research design to include problem statement and research question development, research approaches and methods, procedures and data analysis, and information and guidance on the use of common data-gathering instruments for applied research purposes.

Assignment: Complete the online class:

[Q0427 Applied Research Design for Fire and Emergency Medical Services](#)

Note: Students should download a copy of the course materials as the information will be necessary to complete Activity 8.1: Components of the Capstone Applied Project while participating in the EEL: S residential class.

The course can be found within the National Fire Academy (NFA) Online Learning Catalog:

[National Fire Academy Online Courses \(fema.gov\)](#)

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Module 2: Personal Development Plan

Overview

Executive officers may often spend significant time in the process of planning. This may be for an organizational or community event or associated with an emergency incident. But how much time do you spend planning for yourself or for your personal and professional needs and growth? Some time may be given but probably not much. Your participation in the EFO Program includes time devoted to planning for yourself.

The Personal Development Plan (PDP) is a life-planning process that may start here within the EFO Program, but has implications for you well into the future. There are three thoughts that are central concepts of this guide to life planning:

- In life there is simply not enough time to go around; we may not be able to do everything we would like to do.
- Each of us live life uniquely.
- Deep reflection on our personal values and principles is essential to growth both personally and professionally.

Our lives have a personal component, a family component, a professional component, and a community component. Each competes for attention, and there probably is not enough to go around, which is a good reason for some periodic life planning. In fact, such planning might be considered time management on a grand scale. But the issue is wider than time management. It is probably more appropriately termed goal setting within the context of our personal value system.

Some people with recent experience in executive development programs have observed that busy people sometimes lose sight of their true goals. How many high school dreams for the future died in the light of adulthood? We may get so caught up in the activities of daily living that we forget about our dreams.

Life planning is not just time management. Time management assumes that one can manage time. The reality is that you cannot manage time. You cannot get more minutes in the day even if you wanted to. But what you can do is focus the time you have each day toward that which is important to you personally, to your family, to your profession, and to your community. This plan gives you that challenge; it addresses your values, dreams, and goals.

The process offered here is not exhaustive; there are more complex approaches. While we have tried to configure the effort so it will be helpful and as painless as possible, the process is not easy. The process asks you to reflect deeply on where you are, where you want to be, what changes you need to make, what risks you are willing to take, and whether you have the courage to abandon the past in order to move forward.

The questions posed by each section in this guide may seem easy at first glance, but they deal with deep issues that are often overlooked. They are not easy questions; however, they are important. It is critical to remember that growth and learning do not come just from doing. Growth and learning come from personal assessment and reflection on what has occurred and how we desire the future to be.

“The unexamined life is not worth living” — Socrates

The EFO Program and this lesson do not attempt to prescribe what your goals should be or what your learning needs should be. Rather, they attempt to aid you in reflecting and clarifying your development needs. Obviously, this process is highly personal. Within the EFO experience, the focus will be on personal and professional as inclusive of family and community with an assessment of life/work balance. At some point in your life, changes will occur in each of these environments. This guide will help you think toward the future so that you may be better prepared to approach those changes and take advantage of opportunities that come your way.

Assignment #1: Personal Development Plan

Combine the three sections described below into one PDP. This assignment must follow these guidelines:

- Cover page and certification of original work is to be included.
- Format the paper with 1-inch margins, Times New Roman style with 12-point font, and double spaced.
- Page numbers should be on the top right of each page, except no page number on the cover page.
- Any citations used are to follow APA style (seventh edition).
- A reference page, if needed, is to follow APA style (seventh edition).

This activity is initiated prior to the start of the resident program and you will revise over the course of the EFO Program. **You will submit your initial PDP 5 days prior to the first day of class.** Then throughout the EFO Program you will continue to refine your PDP.

View the TED Talk presentation by Rosalinde Torres at the link below and reflect upon the general questions she presents on leadership for the future.

Torres, R. (2013, October). *What it takes to be a great leader* [Video]. TED Conferences. https://www.ted.com/talks/roselinde_torres_what_it_takes_to_be_a_great_leader

Section 1—Personal Development Plan: Personal

Following reflection, prepare a written response to the elements below.

1. In two to four sentences, describe who you are personally, not professionally.
2. Describe where you are today, as a person, versus where you would like to be as a person.
3. Giving a focus on the thoughts of Rosalinde Torres, develop a written statement of reflection to answer the following questions:
 - a. Where am I looking to anticipate change in my personal life?
 - b. What is the diversity measure of my personal network?
 - c. Am I courageous enough to abandon the past? Why or why not?

Section 2—Personal Development Plan: Professional

Following reflection, prepare a written response to the elements below.

1. In two to four sentences, describe who you are professionally.
2. Describe where you are today, professionally, versus where you would like to be professionally.
3. Giving a focus on the thoughts of Rosalinde Torres, develop a written statement of reflection to answer the following questions:
 - a. Where am I looking to anticipate change in my professional life?
 - b. What is the diversity measure of my professional network?
 - c. Am I courageous enough to abandon the past? Why or why not?

Section 3—Personal Development Plan: Life/Work Balance

Life/work balance is the final critical part of your PDP development. Reflect on your previous responses to Part 1 and Part 2 and consider the intersection of each component to the other. Consider your overall approach to life planning, your personal philosophy of leadership developed earlier in this course and reflect upon your highest personal needs.

Given these reflections, prepare responses to the following:

1. Where am I feeling out of balance in my personal life?
2. Where am I feeling out of balance in my professional life?
3. What are the influences in my life, personal and professional, that may be tilting the scale of balance?
4. What changes am I genuinely willing to make in order to move toward balance?

Note: Responses to the reflective questions should be succinct but thorough enough to provide you and your instructors with clarity as to your thoughts and reflections.

Module 3: Adaptive Challenge

The application of leadership is explored throughout the program through the lens of the adaptive leadership model as described in course readings of *Leadership on the Line* and *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*. As an executive, you will find many challenges that cross your desk. The EFO Program experience allows you the opportunity to air some of those challenges and hopefully find resolution.

During your first residential experience, you will have the opportunity to learn and apply a specific skill set to assist you in approaching an adaptive challenge that you face. You will be engaged in a process known as the Adaptive Challenge Case Consult. During your residential experience you will be placed into a small peer group, and you will present your adaptive challenge. Your peer group will serve as consultants to you in examining your adaptive challenge. You will use the ideas discussed to work through your leadership challenges and opportunities.

Assignment #2: Case Consult Synopsis

In preparation for the Adaptive Challenge Case Consult you need to complete the following activities.

1. Review pages 55–62 (“Distinguish Technical from Adaptive Challenges”) in *Leadership on the Line*.
2. Review Chapter 5, “Diagnose the Adaptive Challenge,” in *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*.
3. Reflect on and assess a current challenge you face. Presumably you will bring something from work life, but it also may be from your personal or community life. Ideally, this will be more of an adaptive challenge, although a technical problem with a strong adaptive sense may be used. A pure technical problem is not acceptable for this activity.
4. Write a case consult synopsis (maximum two pages) that includes the below:
 - description of the challenge (be specific)
 - major stakeholders and what their interests are in this challenge
 - your proposed actions
 - questions you would like your peer consultants to address

Note: Confidentiality of the information shared among all presenters is a substantive norm throughout the EFO Program. You are encouraged to be as open as possible.

You will submit your Case Consult Synopsis 5 days prior to the first day of class.

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APPENDIX A

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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Personal Development Plan

NAME

National Fire Academy

R5201 Exercise of Executive Leadership: Self

Instructors

Date

Exercise of Executive Leadership: Self

This Personal Development Plan (PDP) is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of R5201. I attest that this submission is my own original work and where the works of others may be used, appropriate citations are listed.

Student Signature

Section 1 – Personal Development Plan: Personal

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January 2025

References

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<https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/communication-1-idea-3-facts-5-tips/>

Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2016). *What science tells us about leadership potential.*

<https://hbr.org/2016/09/what-science-tells-us-about-leadership-potential>

Cordero, B. (2020). *How becoming a learning organization is key to being a successful*

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