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Natural Resources Conservation Service

1712 – Training Specialist
Career Guide

Your Field. Your Future.

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Introduction

NRCS Career Guides

Career Guides enable employees to explore the different types of competencies that are required within the occupational series, the level of proficiency required at each grade level, and available learning and development resources to pursue their career goals.

Career Guides include:

- A description of the occupations within the occupational family
- A crosswalk of the applicable supervisory and non-supervisory grade levels for each occupation in the occupational family
- Descriptions of foundational, leadership and management, and occupation-specific competencies for the occupation
- Required education and experience for the occupation, as applicable
- Target competency proficiency levels for the occupation at each grade level
- A sample list of learning and development opportunities linked to each competency

Together, these elements help employees make informed decisions about their careers at NRCS.

The Career Guides are not intended to be all encompassing, but rather to give users an overview of each job and available developmental opportunities within NRCS.

Human Resources Group Description

An occupational family consists of jobs with similarities in their nature of work, required knowledge, and competencies that enable success. The Training Specialist occupation is part of the Human Resources Group. Jobs in the Human Resources Group are responsible for advising on, administering, supervising, or performing work involved in the various phases of human resources management, as well as employee development, training, and instructional design. The table below presents a description of each NRCS occupation within this job family; the Training Specialist occupation is highlighted.

Job	Description
201 – HR Specialist	This series includes positions that manage, supervise, administer, advise on, or deliver HR management products or services. At NRCS, an employee in this series specializes in of the following areas, also known as a parenthetical: • Workforce Strategy • Labor and Employee Relations • Recruitment and Staffing • HR Data Management • Employee Benefits • HR Policy • Performance Management and Recognition • Employee Development • Change Management • Classification and Position Management • Special Emphasis Programs
203 – HR Assistant	This series includes positions that supervise, lead, or perform HR assistance work requiring substantial knowledge of HR terminology, requirements, procedures, operations, functions, and regulatory policy and procedural requirements applicable to HR transactions.
1712 – Training Specialist	This series includes positions that supervise, lead, or perform work related to training program development, evaluation, or instruction using a combination of knowledge of the methods and techniques of instruction and practical knowledge of the subject-matter being taught.
1750 – Instructional Systems Specialist	This series includes positions that administer, supervise, advise on, design, develop, or provide educational or training services in formal education or training programs by applying knowledge of learning theory and the principles, methods, practices and techniques.

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Crosswalk of Grade Levels

This table reflects the General Schedule (GS) grades associated with the job series within NRCS's Human Resources Group. Both supervisory and non-supervisory positions are represented.

	201 – HR Specialist	203 – HR Assistant	1712 – Training Specialist	1750 – Instructional Systems Specialist
Supervisory	GS 15			GS 15
	GS 14			GS 14
	GS 13		GS 13	GS 13
Non-Supervisory	GS 14			GS 14
	GS 13		GS 13	GS 13
	GS 12		GS 12	GS 12
	GS 11		GS 11	GS 11
	GS 09	GS 09	GS 09	GS 09
	GS 08	GS 08		
	GS 07	GS 07	GS 07	
	GS 06	GS 06		
	GS 05	GS 05		

Foundational Competencies

Foundational competencies are required for success across all NRCS occupations and grade levels.

Foundational Competencies	Associated Work Behaviors
Attention to Detail *Performs work in a thorough and conscientious manner, ensuring that work products and services provided are accurate and complete.* Learning and Development Resources	• Checks work to ensure it is accurate, thorough, and meets applicable policies, standards/specifications, or other guidelines. • Evaluates information or data to assess accuracy, relevance, and completeness. • Identifies errors or inconsistencies and takes action to correct them, bringing them to the attention of decision-makers and/or relevant others when necessary.
Accountability *Accepts and assumes responsibility for one's own actions, words, products, and decisions and/or those of the group, team, or division.* Learning and Development Resources	• Takes responsibility for accomplishing work goals and meeting deadlines. • Ensures timely and accurate products and deliverables. • Complies with established control systems, including relevant laws, standards, guidelines, policies, and rules.
Organizing & Prioritizing Work *Plans work, sets priorities, and determines short- and/or long-term goals and strategies to achieve them; monitors progress toward goals, evaluates outcomes, and makes appropriate adjustments.* Learning and Development Resources	• Analyzes workload and establishes priorities and timelines. • Formulates an approach to achieve work tasks, established goals, and organizational objectives. • Directs and/or redirects efforts as necessary to meet deadlines and goals. • Monitors progress towards the achievement of goals.

Representing the Agency *Represents USDA/NRCS and Agency interests when dealing with others; interacts with internal and external parties in a professional manner.* Learning and Development Resources	• Interacts and shares information with outside parties in a manner that reflects positively on the Agency. • Enhances trust and credibility of the Agency and its mission through professional interactions with others. • Represents NRCS in meetings, conferences, and other engagements with individuals and members of other organizations. • Establishes an understanding of NRCS' position on and policies toward natural resources conservation issues.
Resource Management *Identifies, obtains, maintains, secures, distributes, and utilizes resources (e.g., material, equipment, space, money, time) in order to support the Agency's workforce and achieve goals and objectives.* Learning and Development Resources	• Maintains an awareness of available resources (e.g., material, equipment, space, money, time). • Identifies, requests, obtains, and/or approves needed resources required to accomplish work activities or projects. • Maintains, secures, and/or distributes available resources (e.g., material, equipment, space). • Protects resources to ensure the prevention of fraud, waste, and abuse. • Appropriately documents obtaining, using, and disposing of resources.
Technology Management *Keeps up-to-date on technological developments, making effective use of technology and related technical resources to achieve results; ensures security of technology and computing systems.* Learning and Development Resources	• Maintains an awareness of available technological resources and the process for accessing these resources. • Plans for, acquires, organizes, and prioritizes technology and technical resources to accomplish the Agency's mission and objectives. • Uses appropriate and available tools or technology to perform work activities. • Safeguards technology to ensure the prevention of fraud, waste, or abuse.

Organizational Awareness *Knows the Agency's vision, mission, functions, and organizational structure; understands how the Agency's social, political, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them.* Learning and Development Resources	• Demonstrates an understanding of the Agency's vision, mission, functions, organizational structure, and systems. • Demonstrates an understanding of how relevant organizational systems and processes work and operates effectively within them. • Demonstrates an understanding of one's own role within the Agency's mission and structure. • Demonstrates an understanding of conservation and the importance of partnerships. • Demonstrates an understanding of intra-Agency staff relationships.
Adaptability & Flexibility *Adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; is open to and effectively deals with ambiguity.* Learning and Development Resources	• Adjusts plans and/or priorities to adapt to new information or changing situations in order to achieve work goals and objectives. • Anticipates and addresses obstacles using both established and innovative methods. • Effectively copes with ambiguity and progresses with work activities under uncertain conditions.
Continuous Learning *Assesses and recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; acquires knowledge and skills through training, feedback, mentoring, or other opportunities for professional development and then applies new knowledge and skills to achieve work outcomes.* Learning and Development Resources	• Identifies when it is necessary to acquire new knowledge and skills. • Stays up-to-date and acquires new knowledge and skills by participating in training and other learning activities. • Contributes to work outcomes by maintaining expertise and applying new knowledge and skills obtained.

Initiative *Displays self-motivation and commitment toward completing assignments in a timely manner; seeks out additional work assignments and responsibilities.* Learning and Development Resources	• Proactively identifies and understands issues relevant to assignments. • Takes the lead in getting tasks done with limited or no prompting or direction. • Demonstrates a willingness to accept new or additional assignments and responsibilities. • Seeks out new opportunities within Agency or with outside groups/partners, following established protocols.
Integrity & Honesty *Maintains the integrity of the Agency by displaying ethical conduct and honesty; understands the impact of violating ethical standards on the Agency, self, and others.* Learning and Development Resources	• Demonstrates integrity and honesty in dealings with parties internal and external to USDA/NRCS (e.g., coworkers, peers, customers, partners). • Displays high standard of ethical conduct and understands how violating the Agency's ethical standards can impact the Agency, self, and others. • Chooses an ethical course of action and does the right thing even when faced with opposition. • Identifies and reports ethical violations and holds others accountable for their actions.
Stress Tolerance & Resilience *Deals effectively with stressful and challenging situations; persists at tasks to achieve Agency outcomes despite interruptions, obstacles, or setbacks.* Learning and Development Resources	• Manages own work stress in a constructive manner so that it does not impede the work of self or others. • Deals professionally with, and is respectful toward, individuals or parties in difficult and/or tense situations. • Models calm, focused, and professional behavior when facing stressful situations and individuals. • Persists at tasks despite interruptions, obstacles, or setbacks.

Oral Communication *Verbally expresses information to individuals or groups in a clear and understandable manner; takes into account the audience and nature of the information; actively listens to and considers input/feedback from others.* Learning and Development Resources	• Verbally communicates in a clear, concise, and articulate manner. • Actively listens and responds to the questions, ideas, and concerns of others. • Tailors oral communication (e.g., language, tone, technical/legal detail, level of specificity) to the audience's level of understanding. • Makes oral presentations, responding to questions and adapting to unforeseen circumstances. • Actively responds to nonverbal cues when communicating with others and adjusts communication appropriately.
Written Communication *Communicates written information and ideas in a concise and organized manner taking into account the audience and nature of the information; uses correct mode, tone, grammar, punctuation, and spelling and conforms to style and format guidelines.* Learning and Development Resources	• Writes in an accurate, clear, concise, and well-organized manner. • Tailors written communication for internal and external use (e.g., language, tone, detail, level of specificity) to the audience's level of understanding and to the communication medium. • Reviews and edits written materials for content and intended purpose, correctly identifying and correcting errors. • Interacts in written correspondence by reading, acting on, and responding appropriately in a timely manner.
Influence & Negotiating *Positively persuades others to accept recommendations, cooperate, or change their behavior; works with others to find mutually acceptable solutions.* Learning and Development Resources	• Negotiates with others to reach mutually acceptable agreements, settlements, or solutions that build or improve respectful working relationships. • Convinces individuals or groups to take a particular course of action, resolve conflicts, or accept findings, recommendations, changes, or alternative viewpoints. • Clearly and persuasively presents ideas and concepts in a manner that gains commitment and/or agreement from others.

Conflict Management *Recognizes and works to manage and resolve conflicts (i.e., grievances, confrontations, disagreements) in a constructive manner in order to minimize negative personal or organizational impact.* Learning and Development Resources	• Works with individuals, groups, or agencies to resolve disagreements or conflicts in a positive and constructive manner. • Understands and/or anticipates potential areas of conflict and takes steps to prevent counter-productive confrontations and conflict. • Utilizes a variety of methods, procedures, and resources, both internal and external, to provide mediation and resolution.
Interpersonal Skills *Shows respect, courtesy, professionalism, and tact when working with others; develops and maintains working relationships with a wide variety of individuals from varied backgrounds; considers individual differences and diversity.* Learning and Development Resources	• Develops constructive, professional working relationships with others across different work units, groups, agencies, or boundaries. • Adjusts interpersonal style, as needed, to interact with different individuals. • Respects and understands individual differences and diversity by treating everyone fairly and professionally. • Deals diplomatically and tactfully with internal or external parties at all times.
Teamwork *Encourages and facilitates cooperation and trust among all team members; contributes to or fosters commitment and team spirit; works with others to achieve goals.* Learning and Development Resources	• Shares information and knowledge and works collaboratively with other members to achieve desired goals. • Seeks and integrates diverse perspectives from coworkers, peers, customers, partners, and stakeholders. • Contributes to an atmosphere that fosters cooperation, integration, trust, team spirit, and goal accomplishment. • Solicits others' input to foster shared understanding of priorities, needs, perspectives, and concerns.

Creativity & Innovation *Develops new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to problems; suggests new methods where methods and procedures may be outdated, inapplicable, inefficient, or unavailable.* Learning and Development Resources	• Identifies and utilizes innovative or creative methods and solutions to accomplish work, where appropriate. • Designs and develops alternative concepts, solutions, courses of action, and strategies to address issues and problems where established methods have proven inadequate, unsuccessful, or are unavailable. • Interprets and applies policies, procedures, and methods in an innovative, non-standard manner, within policy and procedure guidelines.
Decisive Judgment & Decision Making *Makes sound, informed, objective, and timely decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; follows through on decisions to accomplish work goals even in uncertain situations.* Learning and Development Resources	• Makes informed decisions or recommendations without deferring action when decisions need to be made. • Develops and implements responses or solutions to problems while considering implications of decision. • Takes action in order to accomplish work objectives even in ambiguous or unclear situations.
Information Management *Knows where or how to gather information; identifies need for and organizes and maintains information or information management systems.* Learning and Development Resources	• Gathers and records information or data to accomplish work tasks. • Integrates, develops, and prioritizes information resources to accomplish work objectives. • Develops and implements procedures and strategies to organize, manage, and safeguard information. • Takes necessary steps to ensure information is relevant, accurate, current, and complete, filling in gaps and resolving ambiguities as needed. • Safeguards privileged, sensitive but unclassified (SBU), and Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

Problem Solving *Identifies problems and determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives; makes recommendations and applies solutions.* Learning and Development Resources	• Identifies and defines issues, problems, opportunities, or emerging trends. • Recognizes the relevance of a variety of issues and/or problems and questions underlying assumptions. • Collects, analyzes, and integrates relevant information or data to draw conclusions. • Recognizes, produces, and/or evaluates alternative solutions to problems. • Makes recommendations to remove obstacles and applies solutions as necessary.
Customer Service *Seeks to understand the needs of internal and external customers; delivers products and services that meet customer needs/objectives; is committed to continuous improvement and providing high quality products and services; communicates with customers to improve processes and provides updates on the delivery of services.* Learning and Development Resources	• Communicates with customers to understand issues, define requirements, assess their needs, and obtain feedback. • Provides products, services, and advice to customers that meet their needs/objectives and are in accordance with applicable guidelines, policy, and regulations. • Offers ideas, solutions, technologies, or methods to meet customer needs based on understanding of desired outcomes/goals. • Strives to meet and manage customer expectations. • Keeps customers informed of issues, changes, or problems; anticipates and resolves problems or issues.

Leadership and Management Competencies

Leadership and Management competencies are required for success in an NRCS formal leadership position (e.g., manager, supervisor).

Leadership and Management Competencies	Associated Work Behaviors
Fiscal Responsibility *Understands the Agency's fiscal responsibilities and financial processes, including the preparation, justification, and administration of the budget in a fiscally sound manner. Monitors expenditures and uses cost-benefit analysis to set priorities.* Learning and Development Resources	• Maintains an understanding of, and makes appropriate use of, available financial resources. • Safeguards available financial resources to ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, or procedures to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. • Plans and advocates for, acquires, organizes, and prioritizes financial resources to accomplish the Agency's mission and objectives. • Authorizes available funds and monitors expenses against budgets to identify potential overruns and excesses. • Analyzes commitments, obligations, or expenditures to ensure they are in accordance with the annual financial plan, appropriation law, and/or regulatory controls.
Assigning, Evaluating, & Monitoring Work *Directs and oversees the planning, distribution, and assigning of work activities for other employees. Evaluates other's work to ensure it meets established standards and Agency goals and objectives.* Learning and Development Resources	• Sets and communicates expectations for the work of others. • Coordinates and monitors the short-term and strategic work activities and functions of others. • Evaluates the quality of others' work and follows up to ensure that products/projects are on track and are completed in accordance with appropriate processes, procedures, and standards, goals, and objectives.

Developing Others *Develops the ability of others to perform and contribute to the Agency by providing ongoing feedback and developmental opportunities.* Learning and Development Resources	• Models behavior and conduct for others that demonstrates a commitment to employee development. • Collaboratively identifies developmental needs with others and ensures they receive needed development, work opportunities/stretch assignments and/or training opportunities. • Develops others through coaching and mentoring. • Influences, motivates, and challenges others to maximize their potential.
Human Resource Management *Builds and manages workforce based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. Ensures that employees are appropriately recruited, selected, appraised, and rewarded. Takes action to address changing talent and staffing needs.* Learning and Development Resources	• Monitors workforce trends and current and emerging needs to determine talent requirements. • Recruits, selects, and retains talented individuals. • Appraises and rewards employee performance and addresses conduct problems, as warranted.
Team Building *Assembles teams and inspires and fosters team commitment, spirit, pride, trust, and an understanding of the team's purpose. Promotes cooperation and motivates team members to accomplish goals.* Learning and Development Resources	• Assembles teams by determining membership (skill needs, diversity, demographics) based on goals and objectives. • Discusses purpose of team with members to establish common goals and objectives and explains each member's role and responsibilities. • Recognizes and acts on responsibility to provide information to others and appropriately shares information and knowledge to achieve desired goals. • Continually fosters a positive team atmosphere that promotes cooperation, integration, trust, group identity, and goal accomplishment. • Solicits and listens to others' input to foster shared understanding or priorities, needs, perspectives, and concerns.

External Awareness *Understands and keeps up-to-date on local, national, and international policies and trends that affect the Agency and shape stakeholders' views. Remains aware of the Agency's impact on the external environment. Identifies and understands how events and economic, political, and social trends affect the Agency.* Learning and Development Resources	• Maintains an awareness of external factors that affect the Agency or specific work assignments. • As appropriate, communicates information about external factors that affect the Agency or specific work assignments. • Applies knowledge of external factors to improve internal processes or work assignments.
Relationship/Partnership Management *Develops and maintains relationships within internal and external networks to build alliances within NRCS and with external customers and partners. Collaborates across boundaries to achieve common goals.* Learning and Development Resources	• Initiates, develops, and maintains relationships, networks, and alliances with individuals internal and external to the Agency. • Leverages relationships to gain endorsement from important stakeholders and/or to help achieve common goals between USDA/NRCS and its customers and partners. • Builds consensus and trust by fostering commitment, considering stakeholder input, and working collaboratively.
Leveraging Diversity *Fosters an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the Agency. Remains sensitive to cultural, race, gender, and other individual differences in the workforce. Promotes a culture of acceptance and productivity regardless of those differences.* Learning and Development Resources	• Leads, develops, and manages a diverse workforce, ensuring employment practices are administered in a fair and equitable manner. • Promotes and fosters an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the Agency. • Works effectively with others from a variety of backgrounds and treats all fairly and professionally.

Public Service Motivation *Shows a commitment to serve the public and ensures that actions meet public needs. Aligns organizational objectives and practices with public interests.* Learning and Development Resources	• Exhibits a commitment to public interest and civic duty. • Works to serve the interest of people and their communities, balancing their needs with Federal laws, rules, and regulations. • Gathers feedback from general public and community to improve and enhance Agency's services and programs. • Strives to address and overcome existing barriers to better serve the public.
Political Savvy *Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the Agency. Perceives organizational and political reality and acts accordingly.* Learning and Development Resources	• Demonstrates an understanding of the Federal government, the Agency, and the Department, including the major functions and processes within the Department. • Demonstrates an understanding of the Agency's mission, functions, and systems and the heart of the Agency's policy agenda. • Demonstrates an understanding of the climate and culture of the Agency, such as its formal and informal power structures; recognizes legitimate limits to the Agency's reach. • Identifies, builds, influences, and strengthens internal and external support bases. • Understands how to manage interests of external groups with Agency goals and objectives.
Vision *Takes a long-term view and builds a shared vision with others. Acts as a catalyst for change. Sets direction and influences others to translate vision into action.* Learning and Development Resources	• Creates and communicates a shared vision and mission within one's work unit and mobilizes employees, customers, partners, and collaborative networks in support of objectives. • Translates broad organizational goals into concrete objectives, plans, priorities and assignments and gains buy-in. • Seeks out opportunities or implements changes to help the organization accomplish its mission and objectives and move toward its long-term vision while educating others on the purpose of the change and establishes buy-in. • Communicates how changes impact employees while remaining sensitive to employees' needs and concerns.

Strategic Thinking and Action *Develops strategies to implement solutions consistent with the interests of the Agency. Capitalizes on opportunities and manages risks.* Learning and Development Resources	• Formulates and executes short- and long-term strategies, considering stakeholders and the process to be involved. • Develops and executes clearly defined plans/proposals to ensure proper integration of short- and long-range strategic goals, objectives, timelines, or implementation milestones. • Identifies the most probable short- and long-term consequences of implementing various strategies. • Strategically analyzes the risks, benefits, and opportunities of various strategies. • Develops and executes strategies to reduce or mitigate risks. • Implements chosen strategies, despite difficulty and resistance from others. • Collaborates across organizational units to ensure buy-in and follow-through on strategies.

Occupation-specific Requirements: 1712 – Training Specialist

Training Specialist Education/Experience Requirements

Education: Undergraduate and graduate education with a major in education or a subject area related to the position to be filled.

OR

Experience (above GS 5): Specialized experience that demonstrated a practical knowledge of the subject area of the position and of the methods and techniques of instruction. Examples of qualifying specialized experience include:

- Teaching or instructing in an adult education program, secondary school, college, military installation, or industrial establishment in the appropriate field(s).
- Supervising or administering a training program.
- Development or review of training/course materials, aids, devices, etc., and evaluation of training results.
- Work in the occupation or subject-matter field of the position to be filled that required training or instructing others on a regular basis.

Training Specialist Occupation-specific Competencies

Occupation-specific competencies are the technical competencies required for success within a given occupation or occupational family. The Training Specialist occupation at NRCS has 4 parentheticals (i.e. specialty areas), which share the same occupation-specific competencies presented below.

Occupational Competencies	Associated Work Behaviors
Training Design Support *Behavioral Definition Supports the planning and design of NEDC training, both classroom and web-based, using a working knowledge of instructional design principles and techniques.* Learning and Development Resources	• Supports others on the development of learning and performance objectives. • Provides input on the selection of instructional modalities/learning technologies based on proposed training content and objectives. • Supports course design and content, including designs plans, for NEDC trainings/programs within area of expertise. • Supports the redesign of existing courses based on new technology, student evaluations, or instructor feedback, as directed.
Training Development Support *Applies a practical knowledge of instructional development principles and techniques in order to create materials for a wide-variety of training programs and offerings, including classroom and web-based training.* Learning and Development Resources	• Develops and packages NEDC course content (e.g., web-based training modules, classroom-based instructor and student guides) within area of expertise. • Researches and coordinates with others to obtain training resources that support the development of instructional materials. • Develops scripts and visual aids for use in web-/computer-based trainings, ensuring the latest tools and learning technologies are used. • Develops and tailors instructional materials with subject matter experts (SMEs). • Recommends revision of existing training or instructional materials based on new technology, evaluation results, or instructor feedback.

Facilitation and Training Instruction *Successfully delivers a variety of trainings (e.g., classroom and web-/computer-based technical courses) using practical knowledge and skill in training instruction and facilitation methods and techniques.* Learning and Development Resources	• Assists in facilitation, or serves as the lead instructor of, NEDC courses, ensuring successful classroom or web-/computer-based delivery. • Creates a positive learning environment that enables participation and achievement of learning objectives. • Modifies and adapts lesson plans to meet participant needs and changes in learning environment. • Establishes clear goals and objectives at the start of the training/program. • Maintains a working knowledge of adult learning methods and techniques to ensure instructional material is delivered effectively.
Training/Program Implementation *Ensures the delivery and implementation of NEDC training/programs, including logistical support, onsite coordination, and recruitment of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).* Learning and Development Resources	• Supports the recruitment of NEDC Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and provides training to ensure effective instruction. • Evaluates NEDC instructors by reviewing classroom performance and providing feedback as necessary. • Coordinates with training/program facility staff to finalize all onsite needs. • Serves as an onsite coordinator during NEDC trainings/programs. • Disseminates training/program information to NEDC instructors and participants.
Training/Program Evaluation Support *Uses practical knowledge of training/program evaluation techniques to develop procedures, criteria, and standards for use in training/program evaluation.* Learning and Development Resources	• Supports the evaluation of NEDC trainings/programs to determine effectiveness. • Collaborates with other NEDC staff and instructor cadres to develop recommendations to improve training/program delivery. • Supports studies to evaluate the use and effectiveness of learning technologies within NEDC trainings/programs. • Supports the development of evaluation instruments for all major phases of training/program evaluation within NEDC.

Learning Management System (LMS)/Learning Content Management System (LCMS) Administration *Manages USDA's enterprise-wide Learning Content Management System (LCMS) and any additional course delivery platforms, by overseeing NEDC course activities (e.g., registration, reporting, catalogue information, content management, and exam and evaluation management), user management activities, and assessment management activities.* Learning and Development Resources	• Provides technical and administrative assistance to all NRCS staff and external customers. • Coordinates and maintains the NEDC on-line course schedule, notifying staff when changes occur. • Collaborates with others to create, host and/or link to web-/computer-based training within LCMS. • Recommends changes to LCMS that support NRCS objectives. • Manages LCMS data input, completion tracking, report generation, and user and course (classroom and web-/computer-based) management. • Supports the enrollment of participants into NEDC courses and documents learning histories within LCMS. • Manages the 360 Assessment process through LCMS.

Training Specialist Competency Proficiency Requirements

The tables in this section present the proficiency levels required at each grade and within each parenthetical (i.e., specialty area) of the Training Specialist occupation at NRCS. The Training Specialist occupation at NRCS has 4 parentheticals, which share the same set of occupation-specific competencies, but have different proficiency level requirements as presented in the following tables. The tables following the occupation-specific competency requirements present the foundational and leadership and management competency proficiency requirements, which are applicable to all Training Specialist parentheticals at NRCS. The proficiency requirements were established and validated by NRCS subject matter experts using the following scale:

- Level 5 = Expert
- Level 4 = Advanced
- Level 3 = Fully Proficient
- Level 2 = Basic
- Level 1 = Awareness

A full description of the proficiency levels can be found in Appendix A. Competency Proficiency Scale.

NRCS Training Specialist Parentheticals

- 1712 – Training Specialist (Learning Technology)
- 1712 – Training Specialist (Design & Development)
- 1712 – Training Specialist (Delivery)
- 1712 – Training Specialist (Operations)

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1712 – Training Specialist (Learning Technology)		GS 7	GS 9	GS 11	GS 12	GS 13
Occupation-Specific Competencies	Training Design Support	1*	1*	2*	3	4
	Training Development Support	2	3	3	4	5
	Facilitation and Training Instruction	2*	3	3	4	4
	Training/Program Implementation	3	3	3	3	4
	Training/Program Evaluation Support	1*	3	3	4	5
	Learning Management System (LMS)/ Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS) Administration	3	4	4	5	5

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1712 – Training Specialist (Design & Development)		GS 7	GS 9	GS 11	GS 12	GS 13
Occupation-Specific Competencies	Training Design Support	1*	2	3	3	4
	Training Development Support	1*	2	3	3	4
	Facilitation and Training Instruction	1*	2	3	3	4
	Training/Program Implementation	1*	2	3	3	4
	Training/Program Evaluation Support	1*	2	3	3	4
	Learning Management System (LMS)/ Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS) Administration	1*	2	3	3	4

	1712 – Training Specialist (Delivery)	GS 7	GS 9	GS 11	GS 12	GS 13
Occupation-Specific Competencies	Training Design Support	2*	3	4	4	5
	Training Development Support	2*	3	3	4	5
	Facilitation and Training Instruction	2*	3	4	4	5
	Training/Program Implementation	2*	3	4	4	5
	Training/Program Evaluation Support	2*	3	4	4	5
	Learning Management System (LMS)/ Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS) Administration	2*	3	3	4	5

1712 – Training Specialist (Operations)		GS 7	GS 9	GS 11	GS 12	GS 13
Occupation-Specific Competencies	Training Design Support	1*	2*	3	4	5
	Training Development Support	3	3	4	5	5
	Facilitation and Training Instruction	2*	2	3	5	5
	Training/Program Implementation	3	4	4	5	5
	Training/Program Evaluation Support	1*	2*	3	4	5
	Learning Management System (LMS)/ Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS) Administration	3	3	3	4	4

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	1712 – Training Specialist	GS 7	GS 9	GS 11	GS 12	GS 13
Foundational Competencies	Attention To Detail	3	3	4	4	5
	Accountability	2	3	3	4	5
	Organizing & Prioritizing Work	2	3	3	4	4
	Representing The Agency	2	3	3	4	5
	Resource Management	2	3	3	3	4
	Technology Management	2	3	3	4	4
	Organizational Awareness	2	3	3	3	4
	Adaptability & Flexibility	2	3	3	4	4
	Continuous Learning	2	2	3	3	4
	Initiative	2	3	3	4	4
	Integrity & Honesty	3	3	3	4	5
	Stress Tolerance & Resilience	2	3	3	3	4
	Oral Communication	3	3	3	4	4
	Written Communication	3	3	3	4	4
	Influence & Negotiating	2	2	3	3	4
	Conflict Management	2	2	3	3	4
	Interpersonal Skills	3	3	3	4	4
	Teamwork	2	3	3	3	4
	Creativity & Innovation	2	3	3	4	4
	Decisive Judgment & Decision Making	2	3	3	4	5
	Information Management	2	3	3	4	5
	Problem Solving	2	3	3	4	4
	Customer Service	3	3	4	4	4

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1712 – Training Specialist		GS 13
Leadership and Management Competencies	Fiscal Responsibility	4
	Assigning, Evaluating, & Monitoring Work	4
	Developing Others	4
	Human Resource Management	3
	Team Building	4
	External Awareness	3
	Relationship/Partnership Management	4
	Leveraging Diversity	4
	Public Service Motivation	5
	Political Savvy	4
	Vision	4
	Strategic Thinking & Action	4

Learning and Development Opportunities: Foundational Competencies

Foundational Competency: Attention to Detail

Course: Editing and Proofreading Business Documents			
Description: Have you ever distributed a document or message only to find later that you forgot to include a key point or correct an embarrassing spelling error? Taking the time to edit and proofread your writing will help you produce more focused, polished, and effective business documents. This course describes how to edit and proofread effectively, covering key areas, such as tone, structure, clarity, and accuracy, as well as common grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes to watch out for.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Foundational Competency: Accountability

Course: Developing a Personal Accountability Framework			
Description: Taking responsibility for meeting your objectives, including deadlines and work targets, is an important component of good business etiquette and demonstrates your attitude of professionalism. While it can be difficult at times, being accountable for delivering on your objectives shows you are reliable, organized, and dedicated to your work. In this course, you'll learn about the importance of personal accountability. You'll also learn strategies for developing a personal accountability framework by setting goals, developing an action plan, managing priorities, and staying focused and energized.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Becoming Your Own Best Boss			
Description: Have you ever thought that you could be the best boss you've ever had? By developing attitudes and skills that empower you, you can manage from within and become your own best boss. Self-empowerment is the process of taking responsibility for your attitudes, behaviors, and actions at work to maximize your effectiveness. As an empowered employee, you will be driven by ownership, initiative, and performance. This course focuses on attitudes and behaviors that promote self-empowerment. It provides strategies for empowering yourself through self-coaching, approaches for developing an entrepreneurial mind-set, and an opportunity to apply a model for self-empowerment to enhance your performance. Applying these approaches will help you become a self-empowered contributor in your organization.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: USDA NRCS Giving and Receiving Feedback			
Description: This course will provide the knowledge and skills needed to effectively give and receive feedback in a variety of workplace situations. Upon completion of the training, participants will be able to: • Define key terms and recognize the principles of effective feedback • Identify situations where feedback might be appropriate • Apply frameworks for giving and receiving feedback • Apply tips essential for effectively giving and receiving feedback			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1.5 hours	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Setting Performance Expectations			
Description: Setting Performance Expectations explains how to translate generic, higher-level standards in the elements into meaningful expectations for different jobs and individual employees. The course features sample discussions between managers and employees on behavioral performance expectations, illustrating effective and ineffective behaviors.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1 hour	**Vendor:** HR University (ODNI)	**Cost:** N/A

Foundational Competency: Organizing & Prioritizing Work

Course: Make the Time You Need: Get Organized			
Description: You don't have to manage your time, but the stress and potential for mistakes grows when you don't. To manage time, you need to be organized. In this course, you'll learn strategies for improving your productivity depending on what type of time management personality you have. You'll also learn how to deal with time stealers, create manageable to-do lists, and maintain an organized time management approach.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Developing a Personal Accountability Framework			
Description: Taking responsibility for meeting your objectives, including deadlines and work targets, is an important component of good business etiquette and demonstrates your attitude of professionalism. While it can be difficult at times, being accountable for delivering on your objectives shows you are reliable, organized, and dedicated to your work. In this course, you'll learn about the importance of personal accountability. You'll also learn strategies for developing a personal accountability framework by setting goals, developing an action plan, managing priorities, and staying focused and energized.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: How to Start a Project Right			
Description: Set your project up for success. Proper planning dramatically increases your odds of meeting project objectives and coming in on time and under budget. In less than 3 hours, we'll give the tools to initiate a project successfully. We'll show you how to set realistic objectives and accurate baselines for scope, timeline, costs and quality.			
Modality: Classroom, Virtual	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** American Management Association	**Cost:** $1,889 per person

Course: Best Practices for the Multi-Project Manager			
Description: Put the best concepts, tools, and techniques available for multi-project management to work for you and your organization! Ace multiple-project assignments by balancing time and resources. This updated seminar provides you with examples of best practices within the profession. Learn how to develop a culture for consistent, standardized Multi-Project Management (MPM) practices, utilize proven metrics for MPM performance and implement innovative tools and techniques for successful completion of multiple projects.			
Modality: Classroom, Virtual	**Length:** .5 days	**Vendor:** American Management Association	**Cost:** $236 per person

Foundational Competency: Representing the Agency

Video: Appearances Count			
Description: As federal employees, we are charged with avoiding even the appearance of impropriety. We need to consider how things look to someone from outside the government in order to ensure that we are dealing fairly with everyone. The impartiality regulation, covered in this video, helps us to ensure that consider our connections outside of USDA whenever we make a decision. We will help you understand and navigate this difficult topic.			
Modality: Web-Based Video	**Length:** 15 minutes	**Vendor:** Other USDA Agencies	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Introduction to NRCS			
Description: This is a-self paced program for all new employees to be completed during their first six months of employment. It includes such topics as Mission and History; NRCS Customers and Partners; Employment and Position Classification; Performance Appraisal and Merit Promotion; EEO, Civil Rights; Valuing Diversity; Employee Relations; Safety and Health; Ethics and Conduct; Employee Development and Career Management; and Directives and Records. Upon completion of this programs, participants will be able to: • Describe how NRCS is organized to accomplish our Mission; • Describe how NRCS interacts with other federal, state, and local agencies and others to form partnerships; • Define an NRCS program, and be aware of how programs are created and funded; • Differentiate between competitive and non-competitive promotions; • Be aware of Work Force Diversity; and • Identify where to direct questions pertaining to career advancement, ethics, conduct, safety, and grievance procedures.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 4 hours	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Reputation Management: How Performance + Behavior + Communication Define Us			
Description: Our actions and words shape our reputation as individuals, agencies, and the government as a whole. This session will explore the theory behind organizational reputation management and the factors that influence public perception. We'll look at: • How reputation is not a single sliding scale of good and bad • The importance of Intrinsic identity and how it amplifies the good & bad in our reputations • How crisis communications levels can rise when reputation is on the line			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** Departmental Management (DM) (DA)	**Cost:** N/A

Foundational Competency: Resource Management

Course: Internal Control & Fraud Prevention Training			
Description: The agenda includes a range of timely and valuable information including: fraud detection, data analytics, improper payments and risks with government payment cards. Internal Control & Fraud Prevention Training provides cutting-edge information from highly respected and distinguished industry leaders as well as an unparalleled program in two formats: in-person and virtually.			
Modality: Web-based	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Best Practices for the Multi-Project Manager			
Description: Put the best concepts, tools, and techniques available for multi-project management to work for you and your organization! Ace multiple-project assignments by balancing time and resources. This updated seminar provides you with examples of best practices within the profession. Learn how to develop a culture for consistent, standardized Multi-Project Management (MPM) practices, utilize proven metrics for MPM performance, and implement innovative tools and techniques for successful completion of multiple projects.			
Modality: Web-based	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** American Management Association	**Cost:** $1,889 per person

Foundational Competency: Technology Management

NRCS does not currently have learning and development resources related to this competency.

Foundational Competency: Organizational Awareness

Course: Influence Others with Political Savvy			
Description: When dealing with power and influence you will inevitably have to navigate political waters. Most everyone knows that 'politics' are a reality in organizations and even if you dislike them, you cannot eliminate them. Just think about those who have position power – chances are they got there not just through their individual know-how, but because they know who's who, how to appeal to them, and how to build coalitions of power and influence. This course addresses what it takes to use political savvy as an aid to influencing without direct authority.			
Modality: Web-based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Foundational Competency: Adaptability & Flexibility

Course: Coping with Conflicting Priorities			
Description: Too little time, too many tasks, and everything needs your immediate attention. Sound familiar? This Challenge Series exercise explores the tools and skills needed to manage your time and cope with conflicting priorities.			
Modality: Web-based	**Length:** 15 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Seminar - Surviving and Thriving During Transition			
Description: Transitions and times of change present significant challenges for managers and leaders. Fear, uncertainty, and doubt are prevalent throughout the organization. Furthermore, there are more questions than answers. Maintaining morale and productivity is very trying. This two-hour seminar will provide valuable tools to help managers and leaders overcome resistance and blind compliance. Leaders will be better-prepared to face this challenging phase and become more successful.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** OCIO	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Leading Change			
Description: This course is a tool that executives can use to practice their leadership skills by leading an organization through a significant transition. During this simulation, executives will be provided with information that they will use to make decisions regarding a change management initiative.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 1 hour	**Vendor:** HR University	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Fostering Accountability, Adaptability, and Resilience			
Description: Organizations are in a constant state of flux. This can create uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environments for the people who work within them at the individual, team, and organizational level. In order to thrive within a changing environment, leaders at all levels must demonstrate accountability, adaptability, and resilience (AAR). Competency in AAR allows individuals to hold themselves responsible for behaviors and actions, be willing to change as needed, and to acknowledge setbacks and find creative ways to move forward. While many consider AAR to be innate traits, they can be learned and practiced through application of an AAR model. The AAR model allows participants to further develop their AAR skills—through self-awareness and mindfulness, proactivity, and efficiently managing issues as they arise. The AAR model aids in decision making during fast-paced and uncertain situations. This course is designed to help participants develop the knowledge and skills needed to systematically conduct AAR on a day-to-day basis. Through interactive activities, self-assessments, and discussions, participants will explore concepts designed to improve their ability to perform well in their role and meet goals in the midst of organizational change and uncertainty.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** Management Concepts	**Cost:** $829* per person (*commercial rate – GSA rate not available)

Foundational Competency: Continuous Learning

Course: Creating Your Individual Development Plan (IDP)			
Description: To guide participants in the development of their Individual Development Plan (IDP) focusing on specific competencies (knowledge and skills) needed to enhance current technical, program and/or leadership competencies, and/or prepare for new responsibilities.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1 hour	**Vendor:** Other USDA Agencies	**Cost:** N/A

Course: The Power of Forward Thinking			
Description: How do you plan to get to the next stage in your career? This workshop will provide opportunities for internalizing your plan and review steps to guide you to your goals.			
Modality: Classroom	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** Other USDA Agencies	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Developing a Plan to Further Your Career			
Description: The whole notion of what a career is has changed. You are now responsible for making your own career choices, and it's not always clear which way offers the straightest path toward your goal. This course guides you through the process of taking inventory of your values, interests, skills, and needs. Then based on these findings, you can determine your strengths. This course also provides tips on how to deal with any weaknesses that are holding you back. You will also learn how to develop and implement your action plan to further your career.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Coaching and Mentoring for Excellence			
Description: Increasing demands on the Federal workforce are requiring organizations to perform at higher levels with fewer resources and staff. Whether guiding employees to learn skills through on-the-job coaching or mentoring employees through change and transition, coaching and mentoring can improve an organization's ability to succeed. This course explores how to use these important skills to help other develop both technically and as leaders in order to improve their organization's overall performance. Helping employees develop their leadership competencies can increase your organization's success by making them more skilled at what they do and more effective at choosing the right methods to get their jobs done well.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 3 days	**Vendor:** Office of Personnel Management (OPM)	**Cost:** $2,400 per person

Foundational Competency: Initiative

Course: Becoming Your Own Best Boss			
Description: Have you ever thought that you could be the best boss you've ever had? By developing attitudes and skills that empower you, you can manage from within and become your own best boss. Self-empowerment is the process of taking responsibility for your attitudes, behaviors, and actions at work to maximize your effectiveness. As an empowered employee, you will be driven by ownership, initiative, and performance. This course focuses on attitudes and behaviors that promote self-empowerment. It provides strategies for empowering yourself through self-coaching, approaches for developing an entrepreneurial mind-set, and an opportunity to apply a model for self-empowerment to enhance your performance. Applying these approaches will help you become a self-empowered contributor in your organization.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Taking On Greater Responsibility: Step-Up Skills for Non-Managers			
Description: Do you have what it takes to step up to the plate to lead, work in teams and juggle new assignments with your current responsibilities? What about having a "can-do" attitude that prepares you for additional growth? Now you can acquire new skills and prepare to make a positive difference at work. In this career development course, you will lay the foundation to achieve good performance now and integrate additional skills to exceed present role expectations. You will develop a customized approach to think strategically, to solve problems and to make sound decisions so you can adapt to change and grab new opportunities.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** American Management Association	**Cost:** $1,586 per person

Foundational Competency: Integrity & Honesty

Course: Avoiding Discrimination Bias: Training and Tips for Managers			
Description: Avoiding Discrimination and Bias for Managers presents a compelling business case and strong personal incentive for managers to avoid discrimination in implementing the performance management process. The course describes biases that everyone has and provides strategies that will help managers reduce costly and time consuming employee challenges and promote a positive and productive work environment that keeps everyone focused on the mission.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 45 minutes	**Vendor:** HR University (ODNI)	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Modeling Ethical Behavior			
Description: To create an environment of ethical behavior, the entire organization must behave that way. Venkatesh Valluri explains why it's important to model ethical behavior.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 3-4 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Developing Your Business Ethics			
Description: It's not always easy to decide between right and wrong at work. Understanding ethics can help you to discern the right thing to do in difficult situations. In this course, you'll learn some basic myths about business ethics, and consider some ethical approaches you could follow at work. You'll also learn about the ethical values that a code of ethical conduct is based on, and learn how to develop a personal code of conduct. You'll explore some obstacles of ethical conduct, and learn strategies for overcoming them. And finally, you'll learn how to make ethically defensible decisions.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** HR University (ODNI)	**Cost:** N/A

Foundational Competency: Stress Tolerance & Resilience

Course: Blame Backfires – Conquer Negative Thinking			
Description: Many employees find accepting criticism difficult. This Business Impact details how to handle workplace criticism professionally and effectively.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 5 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Anger Management: How to Recognize Your Hot Buttons			
Description: This workshop will provide employees with useful tools to recognize the patterns and different levels of anger escalation. It will discuss the types of circumstances that make them angry and management options for dealing with conflict. Participants will learn how to effectively communicate using the “I” messages and other options. The information discussed during this workshop will be beneficial in all facets of life.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** Other USDA-wide	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Persevering through Setbacks			
Description: Goals begin with good intentions and sincere commitment, but setbacks can quickly erode determination and stall progress. It's at these times that understanding the qualities of perseverance can pay off. It's not enough to simply push ahead. Success hinges on understanding how action, attitude, and self-awareness come together.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 15 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Managing Pressure and Stress to Optimize Your Performance			
Description: Meeting the challenge of high-pressure situations is a different experience for everyone. You won't always be able to control the external events that lead to pressure, but you can control your reaction, develop a solution, and implement it. In this course, you'll learn about the triggers of stress and how stress can affect you physically, mentally, and emotionally. You'll explore mechanisms for handling pressure and stress in the workplace in order to optimize performance. You'll also learn the ways in which people who possess different work-style types deal with pressure, and finally, you'll learn how to deal with stressed colleagues.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: USDA NRCS Giving and Receiving Feedback			
Description: This course will provide the knowledge and skills needed to effectively give and receive feedback in a variety of workplace situations. Upon completion of the training, participants will be able to: • Define key terms and recognize the principles of effective feedback • Identify situations where feedback might be appropriate • Apply frameworks for giving and receiving feedback • Apply tips essential for effectively giving and receiving feedback			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1.5 hours	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Fostering Accountability, Adaptability, and Resilience			
Description: Organizations are in a constant state of flux. This can create uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environments for the people who work within them at the individual, team, and organizational level. In order to thrive within a changing environment, leaders at all levels must demonstrate accountability, adaptability, and resilience (AAR). Competency in AAR allows individuals to hold themselves responsible for behaviors and actions, be willing to change as needed, and to acknowledge setbacks and find creative ways to move forward. While many consider AAR to be innate traits, they can be learned and practiced through application of an AAR model. The AAR model allows participants to further develop their AAR skills—through self-awareness and mindfulness, proactivity, and efficiently managing issues as they arise. The AAR model aids in decision making during fast-paced and uncertain situations. • This course is designed to help participants develop the knowledge and skills needed to systematically conduct AAR on a day-to-day basis. Through interactive activities, self-assessments, and discussions, participants will explore concepts designed to improve their ability to perform well in their role and meet goals in the midst of organizational change and uncertainty.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** Management Concepts	**Cost:** $829* per person (*commercial rate – GSA rate not available)

Course: Managing Chaos: Tools to Set Priorities and Make Decisions Under Pressure			
Description: Welcome to chaos—otherwise known as the world in which we all work today. Attend this seminar and get proven solutions for managing chaos and minimizing its negative impact. First, you'll discover how you can harness the energy of a dynamic, though often chaotic, work environment and avoid feeling overwhelmed when things start to spin out of control. You'll learn a variety of tools that will help you re-think the way you approach chaos and enable you to leverage resources to help you tackle challenging situations as they arise. Gain hands-on experience applying tools for setting priorities and adjusting to shifting demands with greater clarity. Practice techniques for analyzing and resolving problems and learn to strategically communicate your solutions. You'll leave confident and ready to apply the most appropriate techniques to clarify, alleviate and eliminate chaos within your control—and better manage your reactions to the chaos beyond your control.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** American Management Association	**Cost:** $1,700 per person

Foundational Competency: Oral Communication

Course: Become a Great Listener			
Description: When communicating, the response from the communication recipient is as important as the message that's given. When you're on the receiving end of a communication, you have the responsibility to be receptive and understand what was intended. This requires two essential skills: listening and questioning. In this course, you'll work on sharpening those skills, as well as getting yourself in the right receptive mind-set for communicating.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Diplomacy and Tact for Every Day			
Description: Imagine a world where people always say what's on their mind with no filters. This is a world where you are informed at a lunch meeting that you have lettuce in your teeth, where it's announced at the staff meeting that a project has been delayed because you forgot to send an e-mail, or where your co-workers openly roll their eyes when you ask a question they think is embarrassingly basic. This is a world without diplomacy and tact. Utilizing Tact and Diplomacy is important when engaging in difficult conversations, but these skills are just as important in our day-to-day work environments. People who communicate with diplomacy and tact will be notable and noticed for their ability to communicate across all levels of an organization in a way that puts people at ease and inspires confidence. In this course, you'll explore diplomacy and tact, and recognize the difference between them and the value they bring to you and your work environment. You'll also review situational awareness, how to choose words to avoid a meltdown, and how to apologize with grace.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: The Art and Science of Communication			
Description: There is a science behind communication, including how we react neuro-physiologically to others – their actions, words, tone, and body language. You can develop skills in connecting with others so that your communication intention is clear and understood. There's also an art to communication, allowing your authentic self to shine through and allowing the exchange with another person to unfold naturally. Interpersonal communication is complicated: there's more than just one conversation happening. There is what you're thinking and saying as well as what your audience is thinking and saying. This course will teach you the art and science of communication by discussing how to connect with your audience and how to enhance and strengthen that connection as you communicate.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 20 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Using Communication Strategies to Bridge Cultural Divides			
Description: It takes time to build working relationships with people from other cultures, but it only takes a second to alienate them by accidentally breaking the rules of intercultural protocols. That's why relationships are so important in the current global business context, where you have to share objectives and working space with people with diverse cultural backgrounds. In this course, you will learn about dealing effectively with cultural difference to improve cross-cultural communication and build rapport. You'll also learn about the misunderstandings and behaviors that can hinder good communication and ways to overcome them. Finally, you'll learn strategies to give effective presentations to people from low- and high-context cultures.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Capturing the Attention of Senior Executives			
Description: Does your job require you to communicate critical information to senior executives? Perhaps you have opportunities to influence executive decision making, but don't know how best to deliver your message. In order to make the most of your communication with senior executives, you need to be prepared. In this course, you'll learn how to shape your message so it's communicated clearly. You'll also learn about the principles to follow when approaching communication with senior executives, as well as some important tips on how to build your credibility with those at the senior level. And finally, you'll explore how to approach and plan meetings with senior executives, and how to make your case, whether it's with an elevator pitch or a formal report.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Briefing and Presentation Skills			
Description: Public speaking can feel like a daunting task, but with adequate preparation and time to practice delivery techniques, you can communicate clearly and confidently, anticipate audience needs and questions, and address other fears associated with briefings and presentations. Learn techniques for creating and organizing content, write compelling introductions and clear transitions, and create strong closings that appeal to a variety of audiences. Develop effective messages by applying best practices, including the use of visual aids.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 days	**Vendor:** Management Concepts	**Cost:** Varies

Course: Leadership Communication			
Description: Become the leader who people want to follow. Focus on one of the most crucial competencies of a good collaborative leader: strong communication. Learn to connect with people to build trust and loyalty, use emotional intelligence to build rapport, how to bridge and leverage cultural and generational distances, and how to use these skills to reach consensus, build teams and develop better workers.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** Graduate School USA	**Cost:** Varies

Foundational Competency: Written Communication

Course: Introduction to Plain Language			
Description: This course outlines the requirements on public documents created or substantially revised since the creation of the Plain Writing Act in 2010. The course also teaches the basic principles of plain writing, including basic plain language writing and reviewing skills, grammar skills, and presentation and formatting of documents to be viewed by the public.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** Other USDA Agencies	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Plain Language in Government Writing: A Step-by-Step Guide			
Description: Using examples from a variety of federal and state agencies, this practical guide walks you step-by-step through every phase of the writing process, providing tips for improved clarity, conciseness, and completeness.			
Modality: Web-Based, Document	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Editing and Proofreading Business Documents			
Description: Have you ever distributed a document or message only to find later that you forgot to include a key point or correct an embarrassing spelling error? Taking the time to edit and proofread your writing will help you produce more focused, polished, and effective business documents. This course describes how to edit and proofread effectively, covering key areas, such as tone, structure, clarity, and accuracy, as well as common grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes to watch out for.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Audience and Purpose in Business Writing			
Description: To write effective and appropriate business messages, you need to know your audience and your purpose. In this course, you'll discover how to identify your readers and create messages that convey the appropriate tone for different reader roles. You'll also explore how to write effectively for the three most common purposes: to inform, respond, or persuade.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Improving Your Technical Writing Skills			
Description: Technical writing is a skill. It involves producing technical documents that are suited to the requirements, comprehension level, and background of its readers. In this course, you'll learn how to avoid common writing pitfalls, and how to structure your writing effectively. You'll find out how to tailor your writing to the specific requirements of different types of technical material – so that whether you want to persuade or to instruct, you'll be able to achieve your writing goals.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 20 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Effective Technical Writing			
Description: Technical writing is unique because of its specialized content. It must convey objectivity and reach both technical and nontechnical audiences with exactness and clarity. Along with writing emails, letters and reports, the technical writer must be able to prepare definitions, physical descriptions, product specifications, procedures, test and laboratory results, and many other kinds of documents. This seminar offers you a battery of tools and techniques to help you jumpstart the writing process on any challenging technical writing endeavor. You will learn ways to defeat writer's block, procrastination and writer's anxiety, as well as how to develop a better understanding of readers' needs and expectations. You will also discover principles and approaches that cover a broad range of industries and topics and get hands-on experience improving your technical writing ESP—efficiency, sufficiency and proficiency. In addition, you will receive expert feedback on your work from an experienced writing consultant to help fine-tune your new skills.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 days	**Vendor:** American Management Association (AMA)	**Cost:** $1,984 per person

Foundational Competency: Influence & Negotiating

Course: You and Your Negotiating Counterpart			
Description: We all have emotions, motivations, and unique personalities. You'll need to accept and integrate that into your negotiating strategy. Most people are so busy with their own interests that they do not fully realize the other person's issues. This course will help you build critical components of a good negotiating relationship, including mutual trust, a deeper understanding of where your negotiation counterpart is coming from, a set of techniques to use when faced with different personalities, and a plan for getting them to come along with you.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Reaching a Negotiated Agreement			
Description: At this point in the negotiation, you've done what you can to establish a trusting relationship, kept focused on the issues, and adapted your approach to optimize your influence with your counterpart. The finish line may be in sight, but it's not yet a guarantee. The object of negotiation is to come to and confirm an agreement. When you started the negotiation, you asked questions. At this point you're focusing on the answers. In this course, you'll learn how to think creatively about solutions to maximize your chances of arriving at a mutually beneficial agreement with your negotiating counterpart. You'll also learn how to facilitate that agreement – even amid resistance from the other party.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Influencing Skills			
Description: Influencing Skills is designed for professionals who want to expand their personal influence within their organization, learn to overcome obstacles, and discover influencing strategies to help build relationships. Through highly interactive activities and discussions, participants learn how to assess influence situations, practice using a variety of influencing behaviors, and build networks. During the course, participants apply learned skills to current work-related influence challenges.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** Management Concepts	**Cost:** Varies

Course: Negotiation Skills			
Description: Negotiation comes with a negative connotation when associated with manipulation, chiseling, and taking advantage of others. However, negotiation has a positive outcome when you seek to understand the interests and goals in play in order to find a mutually beneficial solution. Learn the concept, stages, and elements of a successful negotiation. Through interactive activities, practice applying negotiation skills to a variety of situations in order to develop creative solutions, recover stalled negotiations, and determine the best alternative to the negotiated agreement (BATNA).			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** Management Concepts	**Cost:** Varies

Foundational Competency: Conflict Management

Workshop: Keeping Conflict at Bay			
Description: This workshop will discuss how conflict attributes to interpersonal dispute, review some of the many sources of conflict, and explore specific strategies to prevent conflict from flaring and resolve it when it occurs.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** Other USDA Agencies	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Working Out and Through Conflict			
Description: When you are dealing with workplace conflict, emotions get stirred up, and many people want conflict to 'go away.' But in most cases it won't go away on its own, so you need to choose a course of action. Sometimes it just means making peace with yourself or a situation. Other times, you may need to make trade-offs. If your choice is to deal with it straight on, you need a process. In this course, you'll learn how to work through conflicts smoothly by using a structured conflict resolution process. You'll also learn about techniques for getting the process back on track if difficulties arise.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Meeting the Challenge of Workplace Conflict			
Description: Conflict in the workplace is inevitable. But that's not always a bad thing. In fact, conflict is often a healthy stimulus to creativity, problem solving, decision making, and growth. However, 'bad' conflict – the kind that hurts people – is destructive and disruptive. Conflict resolution requires a whole set of skills to recognize it, prevent the 'bad' kind of conflict before it gets out of control, to work out and through a conflict situation and to adapt your own conflict style to the situation you're faced with. In this Challenge, you'll need all of those skills to work through a common conflict situation – upholding the mission of your team, while under pressure to give in to the demands of competing priorities.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 15 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Workshop: Conflict: Where There's Smoke... There's Fire			
Description: This workshop is strategically designed to examine conflict through a lens of employee engagement and inclusion. This presentation breaks the pattern of focusing on conflict issues only after they've become crises. The topic will reveal the major trends that affect conflict in today's organizations. During the presentation, emphasis will be placed upon the need to anticipate conflict and foster a work environment that maximizes human capacity, enhances organizational capabilities, and considers the total well-being of the organization.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 5.5 hours	**Vendor:** Civil Rights	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Resolving Conflict			
Description: This course is designed to identify the nature of conflict and the role conflict plays in an organization. Through highly interactive large and small group activities, self-assessments, and discussion, participants learn how to recognize the constructive and destructive natures of conflict, appropriately react to a conflict situation, effectively communicate through the exchange, and explore methodologies to effectively manage and resolve conflicts. Participants also gain insight into their personal styles for responding to conflicts so they can better understand how to work through conflict and achieve desired outcomes for themselves as well as their organizations.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** Management Concepts	**Cost:** Varies

Foundational Competency: Interpersonal Skills

Course: Putting Yourself in the Other Person's Shoes			
Description: Putting Yourself in the Other Person's Shoes provides strategies for improving communication by considering and understanding the other person's perspective. The course describes effective communication styles and examines the impact of generational or cultural differences in workplace performance communications. The course includes the following modules: • How Filters Clog Communication • How to Separate Observation from Judgement • How to Discover Possible Reasons Behind Troubling Behavior • How to Increase the Amount of Time You Listen vs. Hear • How to Inspire Those You Work With By Creating Buy-in and Showing Appreciation			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1 hour	**Vendor:** HR University (Office of Personnel Management)	**Cost:** N/A

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

Course: Working With You Is Tough			
Description: This training focuses on the importance of an interpersonal relationship with your co-workers and how to mitigate destructive patterns they sometimes fall into. Participants will learn how to recognize the symptoms of a negative workplace relationship, the role each of us plays in these situations, how to set boundaries and control your reactions to co-workers who cross those boundaries, and how to "unhook" yourself from difficult interpersonal situations at work.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** Other USDA-wide	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Using Communication Strategies to Bridge Cultural Divides			
Description: It takes time to build working relationships with people from other cultures, but it only takes a second to alienate them by accidentally breaking the rules of intercultural protocols. That's why relationships are so important in the current global business context, where you have to share objectives and working space with people with diverse cultural backgrounds. In this course, you will learn about dealing effectively with cultural difference to improve cross-cultural communication and build rapport. You'll also learn about the misunderstandings and behaviors that can hinder good communication and ways to overcome them. Finally, you'll learn strategies to give effective presentations to people from low- and high-context cultures.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Workshop: Civility and Respect in the Workplace			
Description: This workshop will discuss how disrespectful and uncivil behaviors can drain productivity and negatively influence both an organization's bottom line and the overall economy. Interactive discussions will bring an awareness of positive results stemming from respectful behaviors in the workplace and beyond.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led or Web-Based	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** Civil Rights	**Cost:** N/A

Foundational Competency: Teamwork

Course: Strategies for Building a Cohesive Team			
Description: Team cohesion, or the strength of the links between team members, determines how effective a team will be, especially in responding to outside pressures. A team has to be cohesive if its members are to function as a unit, working closely and efficiently to achieve common goals. In this course, you'll learn how to build a more cohesive team by focusing on improvements in three areas: communication, cooperation, and trust. You'll learn specific strategies for improving communication and promoting cooperation among team members. You'll also learn what signs suggest a lack of trust on a team and what you can do about this, including specific techniques you can use to build trust.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Effective Team Communication			
Description: It's vital to maintain open, effective communication on a team. However, it's all too easy to adopt bad habits. Without realizing how badly it affects your team, you or another team member may communicate in ways that lead to misunderstandings, cause unnecessary conflict, keep others from having their say, and prevent the team from performing as well as it could. In this course, you'll learn about different verbal barriers to effective team communication and strategies for overcoming them. But speaking is only one part of communication; effective listening is vital too. So you'll also learn about specific active listening techniques that can help you be a better listener.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Foundational Competency: Creativity & Innovation

Video: Innovation is Everyone's Job			
Description: Innovation includes processes as well as products. Look for processes where people are attached by ego, eliminate or fine-tune any process that does not put the client at the center, and make sure activities are aligned with your firm's strategic direction.			
Modality: Web-Based Video	**Length:** <5 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Creative Approaches for Innovative Solutions			
Description: Creative Approaches for Innovative Solutions reiterates how pragmatic analysis model (PAM) can be used and, additionally, imbues two more competencies into PAM's steps: Flexibility and Creative Thinking. The addition of these two competencies and their respective behavioral indicators will foster an environment in which critical thinking strategies support creative thinking strategies, and innovative solutions can be formulated, implemented, and evaluated.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** HR University (VA)	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Unleashing Personal and Team Creativity			
Description: Believe it or not, everyone has the potential to be creative. If you're struggling to express your creativity then something is getting in the way. The good news is that these barriers can be overcome. At work, it can be especially difficult for individuals to express themselves freely and interact in teams. But with the right approach and techniques, team leaders can provide a safe space that allows everyone to share and contribute their ideas. This course describes personal barriers to creativity and how to overcome them. It provides strategies for enhancing creativity in the workplace. In addition, it outlines key requirements for promoting creativity in a work environment. And it explores techniques for fostering creativity in teams, including brainstorming and role playing.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Promoting Creative Thinking			
Description: Strategic creative thinking is a process, requiring encouragement and the freedom to take risks. This Challenge explores methods for promoting creative thinking in the workplace.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 15 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Creativity and Innovation
Description: This course is designed to provide participants with practical tools and techniques to help them generate and gain support for creativity and innovation in the workplace. Participants will explore the conditions necessary for creativity and

innovation to thrive in the workplace. Through highly interactive group activities, self-assessment, and discussion, participants will practice a wide range of techniques to access their creative capacities, develop persuasive cases in order to implement new ideas, and obtain buy-in for innovation from stakeholders. Participants are strongly encouraged to come to class with a situation (i.e., problem, issue, challenge, or goal) that has them “stuck.”			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** Management Concepts	**Cost:** Varies

Foundational Competency: Decisive Judgment & Decision Making

Course: Making and Carrying Out Tough Decisions			
Description: You've defined the problem, generated ideas for how to resolve it, and narrowed down your options. The time has come to make a final decision. What do you do? In this course, you'll learn how to make a smart decision by paying attention to key criteria, such as costs, time constraints, and alignment with organizational goals. In addition, you'll find out about different decision-making styles and ways to plan and manage the implementation of a solution. You'll also learn about the importance of evaluating how the implementation went and, last but not least, of celebrating your efforts and accomplishments.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 36 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Problem Solving and Decision Making Workshop			
Description: Our classic workshop is the gold standard in critical thinking skills training. The workshop is presented in a live classroom environment by a certified instructor. The workshop helps you learn and apply KT questioning techniques that improve the ability to cut through complex situations, use data effectively, weigh options logically, and act decisively. You will have the opportunity to use your new skills in realistic case studies and to address your own work-related issues. You will learn to maximize your critical thinking skills, systematically organize and prioritize information, set objectives, evaluate alternatives, and analyze impact.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 8 hours	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Foundational Competency: Information Management

Course: Protecting Personally Identifiable Information			
Description: The Personally Identifiable Information (PII) lesson is designed to introduce new United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agency Privacy Officials and Information System Security Program Managers to what Privacy Act data is and the importance of protecting it. The lesson will also discuss the organizational responsibilities for safeguarding PII, as well as an individual's responsibilities for recognizing and safeguarding protected/sensitive data.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 50 minutes	**Vendor:** USDA	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Informatics 1 – Database Basics			
Description: Database Basics covers the concepts of databases work and how they are managed, and how data are extracted. Understanding how databases work will help you get better, more meaningful results from the data you are using.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** APHIS	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Developing Your Analytical Skills: How to Research and Present Information			
Description: When making decisions, how do you assess the credibility of information? Do you conduct research and gather data methodically, or act on instinct and follow the latest trends? Do you know what key questions to ask? Feel confident you're making valid decisions? Whether you are developing a new product or service, presenting findings on a competitor's product, or deciding how to allocate resources, you need the analytical skills to be able to support your conclusions with valid and credible evidence. In this course, you'll learn the basics to implement a process for data analysis that ensures you're focusing on the most critical information, involving the right people, and conveying your message in terms your audiences will understand.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** American Management Association	**Cost:** $1,785 per person

Foundational Competency: Problem Solving

Course: Problem Solving: Process, Tools, and Techniques			
Description: In personal and professional settings alike, the interrelated tasks of problem solving and decision making are often encountered. This Challenge Series exercise focuses on the process, techniques, and competencies that help create winning solutions.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 15 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Solving Problems: Framing the Problem			
Description: Clearly articulating a problem requires asking the right people the right questions. Having all that information will make finding the root cause easier than if you tried to solve the problem in isolation. Framing the problem accurately requires finding out who affects and is impacted by the problem. It also requires identifying the reason(s) the problem exists. In this course, you'll learn how to identify stakeholders and effectively elicit their input. You'll find out how the causes of problems can lie at different levels of the organization, and you'll learn techniques to uncover the root cause.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Solving Problems: Generating and Evaluating Alternatives			
Description: Before generating alternative potential solutions to a problem, it's helpful to have a sense of the 'ideal state' – what the situation would look like if people had a magic wand. This provides some direction to those coming up with new ideas. After all, it's helpful to know if you're heading north or south before leaving your driveway, right? Once ideas and alternatives are on the table, evaluating which ones are the best to implement can be a daunting task. In this course, you'll first learn how to elicit descriptions of ideal states. Next, you'll find out how to use basic techniques for generating and evaluating alternative solutions to a problem. Finally, you'll learn to recognize and avoid common pitfalls that can occur while generating and evaluating alternatives.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 40 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Making and Carrying Out Tough Decisions			
Description: You've defined the problem, generated ideas for how to resolve it, and narrowed down your options. The time has come to make a final decision. What do you do? In this course, you'll learn how to make a smart decision by paying attention to key criteria, such as costs, time constraints, and alignment with organizational goals. In addition, you'll find out about different decision-making styles and ways to plan and manage the implementation of a solution. You'll also learn about the importance of evaluating how the implementation went and, last but not least, of celebrating your efforts and accomplishments.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 35 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Problem Solving and Decision Making Workshop			
Description: Our classic workshop is the gold standard in critical thinking skills training. The workshop is presented in a live classroom environment by a certified instructor. The workshop helps you learn and apply KT questioning techniques that improve the ability to cut through complex situations, use data effectively, weigh options logically, and act decisively. You will have the opportunity to use your new skills in realistic case studies and to address your own work-related issues. You will learn to maximize your critical thinking skills, systematically organize and prioritize information, set objectives, evaluate alternatives, and analyze impact.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 8 hours	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Pragmatic Problem-Solving			
Description: Pragmatic Problem-Solving introduces the basics of problem-solving through the use of a problem-solving model—the pragmatic analysis model (PAM). PAM is used to frame the content because its steps entail actions that map to both the course objectives and the aforementioned competencies' behavioral indicators. In addition, PAM is as versatile as it is practical, making it an ideal approach for the audience, which is presented with a myriad of problems from day to day on their jobs. The behavioral indicators for the first four competencies identified above fit into the architecture of PAM. In mastering PAM, participants master the behaviors that empower them to analyze and solve moderate-to-complex problems using sound problem analysis, which includes strong attention to detail, reasoning, and strategic thinking.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** HR University	**Cost:** N/A

Foundational Competency: Customer Service

Course: Rapport Building in Customer Service			
Description: Good customer service and strong customer relationships begin with building rapport. Building rapport requires knowing your customers, understanding their situations, and providing an empathetic ear for them to voice their concerns. In this course, you'll learn how to build rapport with customers by paying close attention to their needs, connecting with them, and being positive. You'll also learn how to empathize with customers by relating your own experiences, reflecting their emotions back to them, and normalizing their difficulties.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Providing Effective Internal Customer Service			
Description: When you do things to help other people within your company do their jobs better, you are providing internal customer service. The quality of that service often has a huge impact on the overall quality of service delivered to external customers. In this course, you'll learn about types of internal customers and how to identify internal customer service relationships. You'll also learn about the importance of getting to know your internal customers, identifying their expectations of you, and taking action on those expectations. Finally, you'll learn guidelines for providing internal customer service.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Interacting with Customers			
Description: Failing to realize the importance of customer service and effective communication can lead to increasingly dissatisfied customers. This course provides valuable advice on how to improve your interactions with customers, including how to overcome barriers to communication as well as how to speak effectively, use vocal cues, and listen actively and use paraphrasing to convey your understanding of the customer's needs.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Learning and Development Opportunities: Leadership and Management Competencies

Leadership and Management Competency: Fiscal Responsibility

Course: Appropriations Law			
Description: In this course participants will receive information on the correct usage of federally appropriated funds to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Covering Volumes I and II of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) Principles of Federal Appropriations Law (the Red Book), this course enables participants to understand their fiduciary responsibilities concerning appropriated funds in the federal government.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 4 days	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Appropriations Law Refresher			
Description: In this course participants will receive information on the correct usage of federally appropriated funds to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations by refreshing the participant's knowledge of appropriations law basics and reviewing the latest changes and developments. Using recent GAO case decisions, the course explores hot-button issues to revisit the key concepts of appropriations law and identify changes in policy and their impact. The course also helps to maintain the participant's ability to avoid Antideficiency Act violations.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 4 days	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Federal Budgeting for Non-Budgeting Personnel			
Description: This course explains advanced budget concepts and introduces program management strategies to respond to budget reductions in a downsizing environment. Checklists will be provided and "how to" guidelines for budget and program managers to build a defensible budget compliant with the new requirements for appropriations requests. Learn about the importance of performance measurement and strategic planning as the keys to support a mission-driven funding request. Receive tools to enable you to develop a narrative justification in support of your programs and maintain your funding level consistent with the financial policies of the President, Office of Management and Budget, Congress, and senior management within your agency.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 days	**Vendor:** Graduate School USA	**Cost:** Pricing for onsite facilitation varies based on number of participants

Course: Budget Execution			
Description: Experience has shown that agency personnel spend more time on budget execution than on any other phase of the budget process. In this course you will learn to develop and manage an operating plan, monitor and track performance, respond to unanticipated events, and avoid Anti-Deficiency Act (ADA) violations. You will also understand the apportionment process, be able to manage reimbursable work, and prepare for year-end closeout, including the preparation of the SF-133. This course is part of the Master Certificate in Federal Financial Management (MCFFM).			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 4 days	**Vendor:** Graduate School USA	**Cost:** Pricing for onsite facilitation varies based on number of participants

Course: Managing Under Budgetary Constraints			
Description: This course explains advanced budget concepts and introduces program management strategies to respond to budget reductions in a downsizing environment. Checklists will be provided and "how to" guidelines for budget and program managers to build a defensible budget compliant with the new requirements for appropriations requests. Learn about the importance of performance measurement and strategic planning as the keys to support a mission-driven funding request. Receive tools to enable you to develop a narrative justification in support of your programs and maintain your funding level consistent with the financial policies of the President, Office of Management and Budget, Congress, and senior management within your agency.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 1 day	**Vendor:** Graduate School USA	**Cost:** Pricing for onsite facilitation varies based on number of participants

Leadership and Management Competency: Assigning, Evaluating, & Monitoring Work

Course: Effectively Directing and Delegating as a Manager			
Description: Understanding the essential responsibilities you have when directing and delegating to others, and the practices you should employ in order to meet those responsibilities, will lead to you fulfilling your duties and realizing the potential of your entire team. This course provides information on the key proficiencies of setting direction and establishing clear objectives and goals for your direct reports are explored. The importance of organizing, as well as communicating for clarity and direction, are discussed. This course also covers the best practices for planning delegation and the techniques you need to carry through with delegation. Finally, the course details the importance of monitoring delegated tasks to ensure employees are on the right track.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Setting Performance Expectations			
Description: Setting Performance Expectations explains how to translate generic, higher-level standards in the elements into meaningful expectations for different jobs and individual employees. The course features sample discussions between managers and employees on behavioral performance expectations, illustrating effective and ineffective behaviors.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1 hour	**Vendor:** HR University (ODNI)	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Establishing Team Goals and Responsibilities, and Using Feedback Effectively			
Description: Everyone on a team has particular strengths. To get a team to perform at its best, these strengths have to be recognized, reflected in the roles and responsibilities assigned to team members, and directed toward achieving suitable goals. In this course, you'll learn how to build a team, including how to set effective team goals, identify roles and assess team members' competencies, and assign roles based on these competencies. You'll also learn how to give and receive feedback effectively, so that it strengthens your role and the performance of your team.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** Unknown	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Aligning Unit Goals and Imperatives			
Description: Getting your priorities straight, no matter where you are in your organization, is about keeping a focus on your goals. It requires you to think about the bigger picture to ensure your department's work effectively supports the strategic objectives of your organization. In this course, you'll learn about the importance of setting strategic, tactical, and operational goals. You'll also learn how to create effective unit goals and align them with company goals. Finally, you'll learn how to identify imperatives for action that keep you focused on meeting your objectives.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Delegation Boot Camp			
Description: Let's face it. To simply delegate the work is not as easy as it seems. This fast-paced, intensive 1-day seminar gives you real-world practice in delegation strategies that will reduce your stress level, empower your staff, and build morale. Put this delegation skills training to work for you to pinpoint the right task, the right time, and the right person to help you maximize productivity for you and your team.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 1 day	**Vendor:** American Management Association	**Cost:** $1,037 per person

Leadership and Management Competency: Developing Others

Course: Coaching Towards High Performance			
Description: Recall the best coach you ever had. What characteristics did they display and how did it affect your development? All employees can be exceptional coaches. This course provides an overview of the coaching process and detects ways to use coaching to enhance their effectiveness and the effectiveness of others. Employees will learn the CARE +5 and GROW coaching models. Attendees will be able to demonstrate the ability to ask effective questions.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** USDA	**Cost:** N/A

Course: USDA NRCS Giving and Receiving Feedback			
Description: This course will provide the knowledge and skills needed to effectively give and receive feedback in a variety of workplace situations. Upon completion of the training, participants will be able to: • Define key terms and recognize the principles of effective feedback • Identify situations where feedback might be appropriate • Apply frameworks for giving and receiving feedback • Apply tips essential for effectively giving and receiving feedback			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1.5 hours	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Managing Essentials: Developing Your Direct Reports			
Description: A main goal of managing is developing your direct reports. This involves not only coordinating their work in a way so your organization's business objectives are met, but also empowering them and providing opportunities for them to meet their own professional development objectives. This course provides an overview of the importance and benefits of developing your direct reports as a manager, and tactical strategies for doing so. Specifically, this involves an examination of the steps required to assess the development needs of your employees by differentiating individual requirements. Also covered is the importance and methods for creating a development plan with your employees based on their individual requirements, and ways to support the development plan by creating opportunities for practice and growth in skills and abilities. Finally, this course introduces ways to continue supporting employees through follow up and monitoring, and ongoing and timely feedback. Materials designed to support blended learning activities aligned with this course are available from the Resources Page.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1 hours	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Coaching and Mentoring for Excellence			
Description: Increasing demands on the Federal workforce are requiring organizations to perform at higher levels with fewer resources and staff. Whether guiding employees to learn skills through on-the-job coaching or mentoring employees through change and transition, coaching and mentoring can improve an organization's ability to succeed. This course explores how to use these important skills to help other develop both technically and as leaders in order to improve their organization's overall performance. Helping employees develop their leadership competencies can increase your organization's success by making them more skilled at what they do and more effective at choosing the right methods to get their jobs done well.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 days	**Vendor:** Office of Personnel Management (OPM)	**Cost:** $2,400 per person

Leadership and Management Competency: Human Resource Management

Video: Conducting Interviews: Asking the Right Questions			
Description: Most organizations rely on the job interview as the primary tool for selecting which employees to hire. This impact explores how to use four common interview questioning techniques.			
Modality: Web-Based Video	**Length:** 5 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Addressing and Resolving Poor Performance			
Description: This course is designed to build the supervisor, manager, or ER practitioner's skills in handling performance or work-habit problems. Learners will explore the importance of communicating and documenting performance concerns; and the challenges of shifting from counseling for improvement to implementing formal consequences, and how to take appropriate action to effectively address ongoing performance and work-habit problems.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 3 hours	**Vendor:** HR University (Office of Personnel Management)	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Brief Introduction to Alternative Dispute Resolution - NAL			
Description: This session will provide a program overview of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and will touch on the key aspects of DR dynamics, commonly used ADR techniques, and participants' roles. It will also explain how ADR may assist you in the workplace. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions about ADR and how it relates to their individual workplaces.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 1 hour	**Vendor:** Other USDA Agencies	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Managing Your Company's Talent			
Description: Talent management focuses on recruiting, hiring, developing, and retaining the right talent to drive an organization's performance. This course covers why effectively managing talent is so important and how to plan for talent management. In addition, this course identifies the key activities associated with talent management and describes the roles played by managers in implementing a talent management strategy.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Introduction to Recruiting			
Description: An important part of recruiting is identifying the workforce needs of the agency. Nearly 80% of the employees in mission critical positions, as well as nearly 75% of the workforce at the executive level, will be eligible for retirement within the next five years. As personnel retire, new employees will need to be hired to take their place or to replace current employees as they are promoted. By the end of this training, participants will be able to do the following: • Define recruitment and why we do it at NRCS • Know and convey the mission of NRCS • Review the most common recruiting events and communication opportunities • Identify the important factors that you need to consider to successfully plan a recruitment effort • Identify characteristics of quality candidates • Identify characteristics of effective interviewing • Review the Federal hiring authorities • Review the hiring process at NRCS • Identify the benefits available to NRCS employees			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1 hour	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Leadership and Management Competency: Team Building

Video: Characteristics of Successful Teams			
Description: The most admired companies and leaders have three characteristics. 1) They are clear about why the task in front of them matters, 2) everyone knows why they should show up for the task, and 3) everyone on the team feels like they belong to the team.			
Modality: Web-Based Video	**Length:** 5 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Developing a Successful Team			
Description: Anyone who has worked in a project or team environment will tell you that team dynamics make a huge difference in the working environment. Developing effective project teams is one of the primary responsibilities of a team leader. In this course, you'll learn how to develop the team culture early on by establishing team member competencies and working to improve team dynamics. You'll also learn about methods used to encourage team participation and motivation and increase team members' commitment. Finally, you'll learn about the importance of assessing and improving team performance.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Leading a Cross-functional Team			
Description: Many organizations have discovered the advantages of using cross-functional teams to accomplish their goals. While the diversity inherent to these teams can present certain challenges, successfully managing cross-functional teams is worth the reward. In this course, you'll learn about the benefits of cross-functional teams. You'll also learn about the various development stages of cross-functional teams and the risks at each stage. Finally, you'll learn about the key abilities a cross-functional leader should have and best practices for cross-functional team success.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Building the Foundation for an Effective Team			
Description: The way in which a team is built is an important factor in determining team success. Leading a team quickly and smoothly into high performance mode requires the groundwork of pulling the right team together, setting team goals, and defining the standards of team behavior. In this course, you'll learn about the five stages of team development and strategies for selecting high-performing team members most suited for your project or team. You'll also learn about laying the foundation for a successful team, including setting team goals, assigning roles to individual team members, and defining specific guidelines that outline how team members should behave to minimize conflict and optimize team performance.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Workshop: Leading Your Team Through Change			
Description: Good business teams produce results during times of prosperity. It's a different story during times of change and uncertainty, when only prepared and motivated teams have the agility, focus and motivation to successfully in navigate the shifting environment. As a leader, you must help your people overcome their reactions, embrace the change initiatives, and use focused approaches to keep team activities on course. In this workshop, you'll gain practical tools that will enable you to manage reactions to change to communicate in a manner that inspires followers and ensures optimal productivity through any change initiative.			
Modality: Classroom, Virtual	**Length:** 2.5 hours	**Vendor:** American Management Association	**Cost:** $236 per person

Leadership and Management Competency: External Awareness

NRCS does not currently have learning and development resources related to this competency.

Leadership and Management Competency: Relationship/Partnership Management

Course: Cultivating Relationships with Your Peers			
Description: Developing and maintaining relationships with your peers at work can lead to success for both you as an individual, and for your organization. A supportive peer network can provide you with a wide variety of expertise and institutional knowledge, and enable you to leverage other people's networks. This course explores how you can identify the peers in your organization who are especially important in meeting your goals and how to develop and maintain solid, mutually beneficial relationships with these people.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 20 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

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

Course: Influencing Skills			
Description: Influencing Skills is designed for professionals who want to expand their personal influence within their organization, learn to overcome obstacles, and discover influencing strategies to help build relationships. Through highly interactive activities and discussions, participants learn how to assess influence situations, practice using a variety of influencing behaviors, and build networks. During the course, participants apply learned skills to current work-related influence challenges			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 2 days	**Vendor:** Management Concepts	**Cost:** Pricing varies based on number of participants

Course: Building Better Work Relationships: New Techniques for Results-Oriented Communication			
Description: In a complex environment, work is accomplished through the collaborative efforts of many. Differences are a positive force if you know how to harness them. Your ability to develop good interpersonal skills and create rapport in this environment can make—or break—your career. Get set to step up and become a "conscious communicator." Develop self-awareness, analyze situations, and consciously select and use productive communication strategies. You'll find your relationship style, identify your strengths and weaknesses, and master the winning tactics to work harmoniously to achieve your goals.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 days	**Vendor:** American Management Association	**Cost:** $2,079 per person

Leadership and Management Competency: Leveraging Diversity

Course: EEO for Supervisors and Managers			
Description: Course Topics: Fundamental overview of EEO in the federal government; protected classes; the EEO complaint process; types of harassment; the ADAAA.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1 hour	**Vendor:** Departmental Management (DM) (DA)	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Unconscious Bias and Conscious Inclusion			
Description: The second workshop, “Unconscious Bias and Conscious Inclusion,” is presented by Carlton Hadden of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. This session will look into unconscious bias and how it may find expression in unlawful employment discrimination. During the session, there will also be discussion of how to ensure the workplace is intentionally inclusive.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 2 hours	**Vendor:** Civil Rights	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Your Role in Workplace Diversity			
Description: To understand and appreciate diversity in the workplace, you must develop an understanding of yourself and the ways in which you and others view the world. Your ability to use a variety of strategies to effectively deal with diverse situations is very important. Equally important is the ability to share these effective strategies openly and leverage the diversity that exists within the organization. In this course, you'll explore strategies to help you become aware of your attitudes toward diversity, increase your acceptance of diverse cultures, people, and ideas, and become an advocate for diversity within the workplace.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Bridging the Diversity Gap			
Description: Without diversity in the workplace, organizations run the risk of viewing things from a very limited perspective. The organization provides the structure for operation, but it's the individuals within the organization who carry out the mission of the organization. This course focuses on what diversity is, how to leverage the diversity within the organization, and the barriers that must be overcome to create a diversified working environment.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Leading a Generationally Diverse Workforce			
Description: Through this course, Federal leaders will gain important information, strategies, and tools to understand, engage, and successfully lead a multi-generational workforce. Course participants will enhance their knowledge of the dynamics of our 21st Century Federal workforce. Participants will also learn the critical need and value for leaders to focus on the actual styles, preferences, and needs of each individual in their workforce, in addition to considering the generational impacts that may create similarities or differences for specific cohorts of people from different eras. This highly-participatory course contains modules for leaders on: recruitment; interviewing, and employee onboarding; employee engagement; and employee development. The course also provides learning exercises and job aids to increase and enhance leaders' positive interactions with employees.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 1.5 hours	**Vendor:** HR University (OPM)	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Using Communication Strategies to Bridge Cultural Divides			
Description: It takes time to build working relationships with people from other cultures, but it only takes a second to alienate them by accidentally breaking the rules of intercultural protocols. That's why relationships are so important in the current global business context, where you have to share objectives and working space with people with diverse cultural backgrounds. In this course, you will learn about dealing effectively with cultural difference to improve cross-cultural communication and build rapport. You'll also learn about the misunderstandings and behaviors that can hinder good communication and ways to overcome them. Finally, you'll learn strategies to give effective presentations to people from low- and high-context cultures.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Leadership and Management Competency: Public Service Motivation

NRCS does not currently have learning and development resources related to this competency.

Leadership and Management Competency: Political Savvy

Course: Influence Others with Political Savvy			
Description: When dealing with power and influence you will inevitably have to navigate political waters. Most everyone knows that 'politics' are a reality in organizations and even if you dislike them, you cannot eliminate them. Just think about those who have position power – chances are they got there not just through their individual know-how, but because they know who's who, how to appeal to them, and how to build coalitions of power and influence. This course addresses what it takes to use political savvy as an aid to influencing without direct authority.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Leadership and Management Competency: Vision

Video: QuickTalks: Cohen: Creating Commitment to a Vision			
Description: "Roll down" the vision; ask people below where the gaps are between where we are and where we want to go. Hone the vision; refine it. Use the vision - with customers; in considering promotions, talk about it.			
Modality: Web-Based Video	**Length:** 5 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Aligning Unit Goals and Imperatives			
Description: Getting your priorities straight, no matter where you are in your organization, is about keeping a focus on your goals. It requires you to think about the bigger picture to ensure your department's work effectively supports the strategic objectives of your organization. In this course, you'll learn about the importance of setting strategic, tactical, and operational goals. You'll also learn how to create effective unit goals and align them with company goals. Finally, you'll learn how to identify imperatives for action that keep you focused on meeting your objectives.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Communicating Vision to Your Employees			
Description: Leaders should strive to communicate vision with a sense of integrity, building trust as individuals and as leaders. This course provides a general introduction to vision communication, including its nature and its purpose. You will be guided through numerous techniques and methods for a leader to successfully communicate vision, such as personalizing and multiplying a clear message, communicating enthusiasm in an authentic way, and making the organization's vision the employees' own vision.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Crafting an Organizational Vision			
Description: Leading an organization toward the development of a compelling new vision requires both courage and creativity. This Challenge Series product examines the vision crafting process.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 15 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Leadership and Management Competency: Strategic Thinking & Action

Video: Thinking Critically: Drawing Conclusions with Confidence			
Description: Drawing conclusions is an appropriate expression because concluding – when thinking critically – often involves mapping out data and making it visual. When drawing conclusions, you analyze and weigh the data, information, and sources you have to support taking action. Even if you've verified assumptions and evaluated a variety of arguments related to an issue – you still have to reach the point of conclusion. A good conclusion is based on sorting through and out the data, getting critiques from others, and drawing it out/depicting it in a way that others can understand. In this course, you will analyze the process of drawing a conclusion into its logical components. You'll also learn about the use of questions and diagramming tools to assist in this process.			
Modality: Web-Based Video	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Aligning Unit Goals and Imperatives			
Description: Getting your priorities straight, no matter where you are in your organization, is about keeping a focus on your goals. It requires you to think about the bigger picture to ensure your department's work effectively supports the strategic objectives of your organization. In this course, you'll learn about the importance of setting strategic, tactical and operational goals. You'll also learn how to create effective unit goals and align them with company goals. Finally, you'll learn how to identify imperatives for action that keep you focused on meeting your objectives.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Responding Effectively to Risks			
Description: Once you have identified and assessed risks, you then have to deal with them. This course covers general strategies for dealing with risk, such as risk exposure adjustment and contingency planning. It also outlines specific strategies for dealing with both threats and opportunities.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 25 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Strategic Thinking as a Manager			
Description: It's important that all professionals in an organization learn how to think strategically in order to help them in their management tasks. This course explores the characteristics of strategic thinking as well as the traits you need to be an effective strategic thinker. It also covers how to develop your capacity for thinking strategically through being creative, being prepared to deal with complexity, and being aware of what's going on inside and outside your organization.			
Modality: Web-Based	**Length:** 30 minutes	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Strategy Execution: Getting It Done			
Description: Get the skills and knowledge to accomplish what so many others don't — the successful implementation of strategic goals. Whether it's entering new markets, repositioning, outsourcing, or undertaking new initiatives or technology, execution of strategic goals is often a graveyard of good intentions. A recent strategy execution study of a broad group of leaders found that 65% of them do not consider their own organization successful at executing their strategies.			
Modality: Classroom, Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 days	**Vendor:** Office of Personnel Management (OPM)	**Cost:** $2,400 per person

Learning and Development Opportunities: 1712 – Training Specialist Occupation-specific Competencies

Training Specialist: Training Design Support

Course: Trainer Skills Workshop			
Description: This course provides the basic knowledge and practice to become an effective instructor. The training is based on the book, Telling Ain't Training by Dr. Harold Stolovitch. The modules of instruction will answer the following questions: 1. Why is learning not easy? 2. How do adults learn? 3. How do I develop a successful learning environment for adults? 4. How do I turn adult learning theory into practice? 5. When do I need a scripted lesson plan? 6. How do I effectively use visual aids? 7. Can I move from just telling to real training? 8. How do I manage the classroom? In addition to a variety of exercises and group activities, learners will prepare and present a 20 minute lesson, will be videotaped and will receive feedback on their demonstrated skills from a professional instructor.			
Modality: Classroom; Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 hours	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Book: 101 Learning and Development Tools: Essential Techniques for Creating; Delivering and Managing Effective Training			
Description: Filled with figures; tables; checklists; and real life examples; this book concisely explores specific techniques for analyzing; planning; implementing; and evaluating a learning plan.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Book: 25 Best Practices in Learning & Talent Development			
Description: Featuring a concise collection of best practices that have been implemented within leading enterprises and business schools around the world; this fresh; new book offers a universe of ideas for all involved in the field of learning and talent development.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Training Specialist: Training Development Support

Course: Trainer Skills Workshop			
Description: This course provides the basic knowledge and practice to become an effective instructor. The training is based on the book, Telling Ain't Training by Dr. Harold Stolovitch. The modules of instruction will answer the following questions: 1. Why is learning not easy? 2. How do adults learn? 3. How do I develop a successful learning environment for adults? 4. How do I turn adult learning theory into practice? 5. When do I need a scripted lesson plan? 6. How do I effectively use visual aids? 7. Can I move from just telling to real training? 8. How do I manage the classroom? In addition to a variety of exercises and group activities, learners will prepare and present a 20 minute lesson, will be videotaped and will receive feedback on their demonstrated skills from a professional instructor.			
Modality: Classroom; Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 hours	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Book: 101 Learning and Development Tools: Essential Techniques for Creating; Delivering and Managing Effective Training			
Description: Filled with figures; tables; checklists; and real life examples; this book concisely explores specific techniques for analyzing; planning; implementing; and evaluating a learning plan.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Book: 25 Best Practices in Learning & Talent Development			
Description: Featuring a concise collection of best practices that have been implemented within leading enterprises and business schools around the world; this fresh; new book offers a universe of ideas for all involved in the field of learning and talent development.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Training Specialist: Facilitation and Training Instruction

Course: Trainer Skills Workshop			
Description: This course provides the basic knowledge and practice to become an effective instructor. The training is based on the book, Telling Ain't Training by Dr. Harold Stolovitch. The modules of instruction will answer the following questions: 1. Why is learning not easy? 2. How do adults learn? 3. How do I develop a successful learning environment for adults? 4. How do I turn adult learning theory into practice? 5. When do I need a scripted lesson plan? 6. How do I effectively use visual aids? 7. Can I move from just telling to real training? 8. How do I manage the classroom? In addition to a variety of exercises and group activities, learners will prepare and present a 20 minute lesson, will be videotaped and will receive feedback on their demonstrated skills from a professional instructor.			
Modality: Classroom; Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 hours	**Vendor:** NRCS-NEDC	**Cost:** N/A

Book: 101 Learning and Development Tools: Essential Techniques for Creating; Delivering and Managing Effective Training			
Description: Filled with figures; tables; checklists; and real life examples; this book concisely explores specific techniques for analyzing; planning; implementing; and evaluating a learning plan.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Book: 25 Best Practices in Learning & Talent Development			
Description: Featuring a concise collection of best practices that have been implemented within leading enterprises and business schools around the world; this fresh; new book offers a universe of ideas for all involved in the field of learning and talent development.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Book: Neuroscience for Learning and Development: How to Apply Neuroscience and Psychology for Improved Learning and Training			
Description: Explaining the science behind creative training delivery so that learners will be motivated; enjoy their training sessions; pay attention; remember what was being said; and ultimately be able to apply what they have learned; this book introduces tools; techniques; and ideas to help trainers improve their training.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Training Specialist: Training/ Program Implementation

Book: 101 Learning and Development Tools: Essential Techniques for Creating; Delivering and Managing Effective Training			
Description: Filled with figures; tables; checklists; and real life examples; this book concisely explores specific techniques for analyzing; planning; implementing; and evaluating a learning plan.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Training Specialist: Training/ Program Evaluation Support

Book: 101 Learning and Development Tools: Essential Techniques for Creating; Delivering and Managing Effective Training			
Description: Filled with figures; tables; checklists; and real life examples; this book concisely explores specific techniques for analyzing; planning; implementing; and evaluating a learning plan.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Book: 25 Best Practices in Learning & Talent Development			
Description: Featuring a concise collection of best practices that have been implemented within leading enterprises and business schools around the world; this fresh; new book offers a universe of ideas for all involved in the field of learning and talent development.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Kirkpatrick Four Levels Evaluation Certificate Program			
Description: Kirkpatrick Four Levels Evaluation Certificate Program: This course explores how to ensure that what is learned during training transfers to on-the-job behaviors. You will learn why training alone is not enough, and receive guidance to make sure that what you teach actually gets used on the job.			
Modality: Classroom; Instructor-Led	**Length:** 1 day	**Vendor:** NRCS	**Cost:** N/A

Book: Human Resource Development: Learning and Training for Individuals and Organizations; 2nd Edition			
Description: Clearly structured with detailed sections covering each aspect of the training cycle; this handbook provides both thought-provoking questions and stimulating answers to the key factors in HR development today.			
Modality: Web-Based Book	**Length:** N/A	**Vendor:** SkillSoft	**Cost:** N/A

Training Specialist: Learning Management System (LMS)/Learning Content Management System (LCMS) Administration

Course: AgLearn Admin Training			
Description: Training for NRCS AgLearn Administrators (primarily Training Officers)			
Modality: Classroom; Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3.5 days	**Vendor:** NRCS	**Cost:** N/A

Course: Blackboard System Administrator Training			
Description: On-site training to help position the client team to become self-sufficient and effective at the management and administration of the Blackboard Learn System.			
Modality: Classroom; Instructor-Led	**Length:** 3 days	**Vendor:** NRCS	**Cost:** N/A

Appendix A. Competency Proficiency Scale

Proficiency Level	Description
Level 5 Expert	• Demonstrates extensive depth and breadth of expertise in advanced concepts and processes. • Applies the competency in highly complex and ambiguous situations within and across disciplines. • Individuals operating at this level of proficiency serve as an acknowledged authority, advisor, and key resource across the agency in relation to this competency.
Level 4 Advanced	• Demonstrates extensive understanding of advanced concepts and processes. • Applies the competency in complex and unstructured situations. • Individuals operating at this level of proficiency seek guidance as needed and serve as a resource to others in relation to this competency.
Level 3 Fully Proficient	• Demonstrates thorough understanding of core concepts and processes. • Applies the competency in routine and non-routine situations. • Individuals operating at this level of proficiency work independently with minimal guidance and direction to perform tasks associated with this competency.
Level 2 Basic	• Demonstrates familiarity of concepts and processes. • Applies the competency to a wide range of routine, structured situations. • Individuals operating at this level of proficiency require regular, specific, guidance to perform tasks associated with this competency.
Level 1 Awareness	• Demonstrates a basic awareness of concepts and processes. • Applies the competency in the simplest situations. • Individuals operating at this level of proficiency require close and extensive guidance to perform tasks associated with this competency.