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Public Service Leadership Model

for AI Government Leadership

AI COMPANION POCKET GUIDE

Scan to explore the full Public Service Leadership Model

The Standard for Effective Government Leadership

AI COMPANION

This AI leadership companion to the Public Service Leadership Model explores its four key competencies through the lens of AI and its growing use in government. It offers practical insights to help leaders apply these competencies in their daily work regardless of where they serve or where they are in their leadership journey.

At the Public Service Leadership Institute©, we recognize that good leaders are fundamental to government's ability to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. In a world of complex problems, they spark innovation and drive change, act as stewards of vital public resources and enable employee success, ensuring that government organizations across the U.S. meet the needs of those they serve.

Capable and responsive leaders rarely appear by accident. The best organizations set—and empower leaders to meet—a consistent standard for effective leadership. The **Public Service Leadership Model** offers this standard and helps government leaders—regardless of agency, role or geographic location—evaluate their performance, assess their leadership effectiveness and chart a path for growth. It is built on two fundamental values that motivate public service leaders and serve as an anchor for the model's four core leadership competencies:



Stewardship of Public Trust

Given the vast influence and resources of government at all levels, trust in public leaders and their integrity is crucial. Leaders in public service must uphold the highest ethical standards as stewards of taxpayer dollars, the workforce they lead and the communities they serve.



Commitment to Public Good

Public service is a commitment to improving lives. Whether leading at the federal, state or local level, government leaders must uphold a service-oriented mindset to promote the common good and advance the mission of their agencies.

THE FOUR COMPETENCIES

AI Leadership Expressions

The Public Service Leadership Model's four competencies remain unchanged, but their application in the context of AI introduces unique considerations and challenges. This guide adapts each competency's description to reflect what effective leadership looks like when navigating AI in public service.



1: BECOMING SELF-AWARE

Leaders understand their own assumptions, biases, comfort levels and decision-making tendencies related to AI. They understand how to align AI decision-making with organizational values and mission.



2: ENGAGING OTHERS

Leaders build trust, coalitions and workforce readiness around AI adoption.



3: LEADING CHANGE

Leaders guide their organizations through technological and organizational transformation.



4: ACHIEVING RESULTS

Leaders measure outcomes of AI implementations as aligned with organizational mission and public service delivery.

AT A GLANCE

AI Leadership Behaviors

AI leadership behaviors aligned with our framework illustrate how the four basic competencies can be put into practice when working within the context of AI.



BECOMING SELF-AWARE

- Understands core AI concepts
- Understands strengths, limitations and risks of AI tools
- Reflects on personal assumptions regarding technology
- Continuously learns about emerging capabilities and risks
- Models curiosity and humility



ENGAGING OTHERS

- Communicates AI opportunities clearly
- Builds support across stakeholders
- Creates AI champions
- Addresses concerns and resistance
- Develops workforce capability



LEADING CHANGE

- Develops AI strategy
- Creates a vision for mission-aligned AI use
- Uses change management approaches
- Encourages responsible experimentation
- Supports innovation under uncertainty



ACHIEVING RESULTS

- Identifies mission-aligned AI opportunities
- Evaluates AI investments
- Implements governance structures
- Measures outcomes
- Continuously reassesses effectiveness

Questions by Leadership Role

ADAPTED FOR AI

Based on the reflection questions in the Public Service Leadership Model, these questions help leaders at each level reflect on how to apply the competencies and behaviors in the context of leading AI in government.

Find the role that best matches yours and then reflect on the questions under each of the four competencies.

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Emerging Leader

Team or work group member | First-time project leader
Aspiring supervisor | Developing technical expert

In this leadership role, ask yourself the following questions:

BECOMING SELF-AWARE

- How am I seeking feedback on my use of AI tools?
- How am I building literacy in AI capabilities and limitations?
- How does my use of AI impact others?

ENGAGING OTHERS

- How do I respond when encountering differing views on the use of AI?
- How does my use of AI build trust and enhance collaboration?
- How can my supervisor and I create a shared understanding for how I use AI?

LEADING CHANGE

- How am I incorporating responsible AI innovation into my day-to-day work?
- When using AI, am I applying my non-AI subject matter competence and producing high-quality work to establish credibility?
- How am I preparing myself for the changes AI may bring to my work?

ACHIEVING RESULTS

- How do I measure the impact of AI on my work and incorporate lessons learned to improve?
- How am I holding myself accountable and responsible for all uses and outputs of AI in my work?
- How am I staying up to date on changes to AI policies and AI tools within my organization?
- How can AI improve outcomes for the people I serve?

Leader of Teams or Projects

Team or work group leader | Project leader | New supervisor Technical expert | Liaison between teams or direct support to principal

In this leadership role, ask yourself the following questions:

BECOMING SELF-AWARE

- How do my values influence my use of AI?
- What are my strengths and gaps as an AI-ready leader?
- How am I assessing and responding to the changing needs of those around me as we integrate AI into our workflow?

ENGAGING OTHERS

- How do I build a team where members are encouraged to contribute new ideas for using AI?
- What are my strategies for engaging in difficult but necessary conversations around AI and AI use?
- Who are my key stakeholders across the organization when it comes to responsibly integrating AI tools and how do I engage with them?

LEADING CHANGE

- How am I aligning AI initiatives with my team's goals and mission outcomes?
- How do I encourage AI experimentation while managing risk appropriately?
- How do I effectively build support for AI initiatives among different stakeholders?

ACHIEVING RESULTS

- How am I holding myself and my team accountable for responsible, effective AI use?
- How am I using data to evaluate and improve the ways my team is using AI?
- What AI and other emerging technologies should I understand to better support my team's success?

Leader of Leaders

Office, division or large-team leader | Program portfolio leader | Midlevel supervisor | Technical leader in the field | Cross-functional convener and leader

In this leadership role, ask yourself the following questions:

BECOMING SELF-AWARE

- How do I communicate alignment between the use of AI and our organizational values and priorities?
- How do I use AI as a tool for serving others?
- Am I creating opportunities for honest feedback and self-reflection about AI-related decisions?

ENGAGING OTHERS

- What actions am I taking to actively build trust around AI use and decision-making within my organization and with other stakeholders outside of my reporting line?
- How do I ensure my direct reports have the time, training and resources they need to manage AI use on their teams and projects?
- How am I creating an environment where varied perspectives shape AI-related decisions?

LEADING CHANGE

- What is my vision for using AI to advance our mission and improve outcomes, and am I effectively communicating that vision?
- How am I creating opportunities and removing obstacles around AI and innovation?
- How am I anticipating and adapting to the ever-changing environment of AI in the workplace?

ACHIEVING RESULTS

- How am I celebrating responsible AI experimentation and encouraging learning from failure among those I lead?
- How am I measuring whether AI initiatives are achieving intended outcomes that support organizational goals?
- How am I considering the broader government system, our mission and the public we serve throughout the implementations of AI?

Leader of Organizations

Executive and enterprise leader | Cross-sector, interagency and intra-agency convener | Strategic and organizational driver of change | Public-facing leader

In this leadership role, ask yourself the following questions:

BECOMING SELF-AWARE

- How is my approach to AI shaping organizational culture?
- How do my values guide decisions about AI adoption, governance and workforce impact?
- What am I doing to create an environment where the workforce can safely raise concerns about AI?

ENGAGING OTHERS

- How am I creating a culture where AI enhances learning and collaboration?
- How can I develop strategic partnerships to inform our organizational approach to AI?
- What am I doing to understand how AI is affecting employee engagement, deliverables and organizational culture?

LEADING CHANGE

- What is my enterprise-wide vision for AI and how am I implementing it?
- What governance can I put in place for AI that offers both safety and responsible risk-taking?
- How can I prepare to lead the organization through AI-related risks and crises?

ACHIEVING RESULTS

- What am I doing to ensure our AI strategy drives toward long-term organizational outcomes?
- How do I demonstrate and create a culture of accountability for responsible AI use throughout the organization?
- Could I clearly explain our AI decisions to oversight bodies, funders, employees, constituents and other stakeholders?
- How am I ensuring that AI investments produce measurable mission outcomes?

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Public Service Leadership Institute

We develop effective public service leaders at every level, preparing them to drive change, strengthen government and harness AI and data in service to the public.

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AI Center for Government

We recognize the potential of artificial intelligence to enhance the government's ability to deliver solutions and services to the public and aim to ensure that public sector leaders are effective users and smart regulators of the technology.

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