



**Alliance of  
Latino Leadership  
& Policy**

***Telling the  
“Story of You”  
To Write Superb ECQs***

Bill Valdez

CEO

Alliance of Latino Leadership & Policy

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*Integrity - Service - Excellence*



# The Current Vision For SES/Career Leaders

## Government needs strategic leaders with:

- **An enterprise view** of public policy that transcends a commitment to a specific agency mission, political party, profession, or technical track.
- A world view that embraces the belief that **American democracy dynamics** provide a positive and continuing vehicle for change
- An understanding the importance of the **Merit System Principles (MSPs)** and **Prohibited Personnel Practices (PPPs)**. [The Merit System Principles: Keys to Managing the Federal Workforce \(mspb.gov\)](https://www.mspb.gov)





# Assessing Your Leadership Style

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## Your Journey Begins with a Bit of Self-Reflection:

- Have you ever been humbled?
- Who influenced your leadership style?
- What have you learned from your leadership experiences?
- Have you taken StrengthsFinder or Myers-Briggs or other assessments, and, if yes, have you applied the lessons learned?
- Do you have your leadership elevator speech developed?

**Why is This Self-Assessment Even Necessary?**



# Documenting The Story of You

Step #1: Create a Master Resume, which should contain:

- Normal job and education status.
- A skills catalog aligned with the 5 ECQs & Fundamental Competencies.
- A listing of honors/awards/published papers & speeches/presentations.
- A section devoted to your leadership positions.

Step #2: Use the Master Resume to:

- Inform your ECQs and Tech Quals.
- Prepare job-specific resumes.
- Prepare the OPM ECQ Resume.
- Create cover letters.
- Prep for interviews.

Step #3: Create an ECQ Resume

- Reflect on the ECQs and think about how your past experiences and education relate to each ECQ.
- Read the vacancy announcement carefully. Agencies often note that written narratives addressing the ECQs will not be considered.
- Adhere to any page limitations that may be noted in the vacancy announcement.
- Quantify your accomplishments

# Master Resume

**WILLIAM J. VALDEZ**

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**ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT • UNIVERSITY LECTURER  
MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP CONSULTANT • ENERGY/ENVIRONMENT EXPERT**

More than 30 years of unique public/private sector experience, including strategic management consulting for multinational companies and leadership of complex national and international programs in the U.S. Federal government. A recognized expert and leader in the fields of Federal government leadership and administration, business and economic development, energy and environment policy, public and private sector management, science and technology policy, science education, and DOE National Laboratory and university research program management.

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**KEY KNOWLEDGE AREAS**

- Strategic Planning
  - Non-Profit Association Management
  - Program Management & Evaluation
  - Corporate Financial Solutions
  - Communications/Journalism
  - Investment Planning/Execution
  - Innovation & Entrepreneurship
  - Technology Partnerships
  - Science & Technology Policy
  - Building and Retaining Talent
  - Small Business Development
  - Enterprise Risk Management
  - Diversity and Inclusion Policies/Programs
  - Budget Controls & Fiscal Discipline
  - Economic Development
  - World Bank Project Financing
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**CAREER SYNOPSIS**

**Senior Executives Association, Inc., Washington, DC – President**

**2016-present**

Leader of the Senior Executives Association (SEA), which represents the interests of all career Federal Senior Executives. Provide strategic direction for SEA's legislative initiatives and serve as the voice for the Senior Executive Service (SES) before Congress, OMB, Federal agencies and other key stakeholders. Also President of the SEA's Professional Development League (PDL), which creates training opportunities for Federal senior managers.

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**ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

**Senior Executives Association (SEA), Washington, DC  
Chair and Board Member**

**2005 – 2014**

Elected by peers as a Board Member of the association that represents all Federal career Senior Executive Service (SES) members before Congress and the Administration.

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**EDUCATION & AWARDS**

**The Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, DC  
MA in International Economics & Energy Policy**

**1992**

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**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

"The Handbook of Federal Government Leadership & Administration," William Valdez, Patrick, Malone and David Rosenbloom. Co-Editors. Taylor and Francis Press (November 2016).



## **Gene Works**

**12354 Memory Lane San Diego, California 45638  
(672) 394-9322 Home, (672) 988-2410 Cell  
Geneworks@employment.net**

### **EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership & Execution / Strategy Development / Innovation / Business Process Improvement**

### **PROFILE**

**Accomplished and results-driven executive with proven track record of leading organizations in creation of new products and services that increase profitability, expand customer base and propel annual sales of 100+ million. Accountable for driving profitability by managing profit and loss success for budgets of over \$50 million and up to 350 staff. Acknowledged talent in innovating and launching complex, solution-oriented technical systems, including a government system currently managing over 5 million documents. Proven leader with the ability to identify and capitalize on individual strengths, motivate teams and implement vision to achieve business goals on a global level. Core competencies include:**

- Developing Winning Teams • Developing Strategy • Leading Change • Innovation • Negotiation • Program Management**

### **SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Led innovative transformation of Federal agency's digital information operations to keep pace with market needs for publishing. (Leading Change)**
- Developed innovative transformation strategy to convert agency's digital information systems and launched an award winning, world-class content management system, scaled to accommodate 100s of millions of documents (Leading Change)**
- Established and executed strategy to provide bulk data, in collaboration with the White House and the Office of the Federal Register. (Leading Change)**
- Established a comprehensive Enterprise Architecture program to guide the agency on technology selection, migration, and management. (Business Acumen)**



**Ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals; and ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment. The six ECQ 1 competencies are:**

- **Creativity and Innovation** – Develops new insights into situations; questions conventional approaches; encourages new ideas and innovations; designs and implements new or cutting edge programs/processes.
- **External Awareness** – Understands and keeps up-to-date on local, national, and international policies and trends that affect the organization and shape stakeholders' views; is aware of the organization's impact on the external environment.
- **Flexibility** – Is open to change and new information; rapidly adapts to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.
- **Resilience** – Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks.
- **Strategic Thinking** – Formulates objectives and priorities, and implements plans consistent with long-term interests of the organization in a global environment. Capitalizes on opportunities and manages risks.
- **Vision** – Takes a long-term view and builds a shared vision with others; acts as a catalyst for organizational change. Influences others to translate vision into action.



## ECQ 2: Leading People

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Involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals; requires the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. The four ECQ 2 competencies are:

- **Conflict Management** – Encourages creative tension and differences of opinions. Anticipates and takes steps to prevent counter-productive confrontations. Manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner.
- **Leveraging Diversity** – Fosters an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the organization.
- **Developing Others** – Develops the ability of others to perform and contribute to the organization by providing ongoing feedback and by providing opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods.
- **Team Building** – Inspires and fosters team commitment, spirit, pride, and trust. Facilitates cooperation and motivates team members to accomplish group goals.





## ECQ 3: Results Driven

Involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations; requires the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks. The six ECQ 3 competencies are:

- **Accountability** – Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost-effective results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.
- **Customer Service** – Anticipates and meets the needs of both internal and external customers. Delivers high-quality products and services; is committed to continuous improvement.
- **Decisiveness** – Makes well-informed, effective, and timely decisions, even when data are limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; perceives the impact and implications of decisions.
- **Entrepreneurship** – Positions the organization for future success by identifying new opportunities; builds the organization by developing or improving products or services. Takes calculated risks to accomplish organizational objectives.
- **Problem Solving** – Identifies and analyzes problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations.
- **Technical Credibility** – Understands and appropriately applies principles, procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise.



## ECQ 4: Business Acumen

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**Requires the ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically. The three ECQ 4 competencies are:**

- **Financial Management** – Understands the organization’s financial processes. Prepares, justifies, and administers the program budget. Oversees procurement and contracting to achieve desired results. Monitors expenditures and uses cost-benefit thinking to set priorities.
- **Human Capital Management** – Builds and manages the workforce based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. Ensures that employees are appropriately recruited, selected, appraised, and rewarded; takes action to address performance problems. Manages a multisector workforce and a variety of work situations.
- **Technology Management** – Keeps up-to-date on technological developments. Makes effective use of technology to achieve results. Ensures access to and security of technology systems.



## *ECQ 5: Building Coalitions*

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**Requires the ability to build coalitions internally and with key stakeholders, including other Federal agencies, State and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals. The three ECQ 5 competencies are:**

- **Partnering** – Develops networks and builds alliances, collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.
- **Political Savvy** – Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Perceives organizational and political reality and acts accordingly.
- **Influencing/Negotiating** – Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.



# *Do you know what the ECQs are really asking for?*

## **28 Total Competencies: 6 Fundamental + 22 ECQ-specific**

- Leading Change:
  - Is leading change an agency or enterprise requirement for SES?
  - What are your change management principles?
- Leading People:
  - What is your leadership philosophy?
  - How do you lead in a political environment?
- Results Driven:
  - What is the primary result that SES should drive towards?
  - Are you a risk taker or risk adverse?
- Business Acumen:
  - Do SES need to be expert in financial, HC and technology management?
  - Which leadership competencies are important for business acumen?
- Building Coalitions:
  - Why is it important for leaders to be skilled at building coalitions?
  - What is the primary reason building coalitions is important?



## Telling the Story of You through the ECQs.

Step 1: Adapt the OPM CCAR Model.

- Lead with the *Context*.
- *Challenges* align with your leadership competencies/philosophy.
- *Actions/Results* are at executive/strategic/enterprise level.

Step 2: Treat the ECQs as a story with:

- A summary paragraph.
- 2-3 examples that align to the summary paragraph.
- A conclusion.



- **Candidates are encouraged to:**
  - Adhere to 1” margins, 12pt font, page (numbered) limit.
  - No Intro or limit intro to 1 para; counts toward 10-page limit.
  - Quantify experience - numbers, percentages, timelines.
  - Use measurable results whenever possible.
  - **Use action oriented verbs - active voice vs. passive.**
  - Describe experience, accomplishments in clear, organized manner - be succinct.
  - Use “I” instead of third person, and **don’t succumb to the “We” syndrome.**
  - Write in layperson’s terms and PROOFREAD.
  - Spell out, avoid use of acronyms.
  - Demonstrate enterprise/executive/strategic level actions/results.



- **Candidates should avoid:**
  - Using the same example for more than one ECQ.
  - Vague statements, grammar errors, typos.
  - Statements that describe personal beliefs, philosophies, commitment to social/political cause.
  - **Hiring an ECQ or resume writer.**
  - Referring readers to other parts of the narrative.
  - Making disparaging remarks about former managers.
  - Revealing info about political affiliation, activities.
  - Using bureaucratic words, expressions.
  - **Including ECQ definitions.**
  - Using tactical, narrow examples.
  - **Lie or mislead about accomplishments.**



When leading change, my goal is to adapt best practices I've learned to new situations, keeping in mind that change is always hard to achieve unless everyone – staff, senior career management, political leadership – is bought in. I've been successful in this approach multiple times, including when I introduced a new financial accounting system to our office and worked with our program offices to implement OMB Circular A-123's Enterprise Risk Management framework recommendations.





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our community  
alliancelatinx.org

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