

AN IDENTIFICATION OF THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE  
GRADUATE SATISFACTION  
WITH A MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

by

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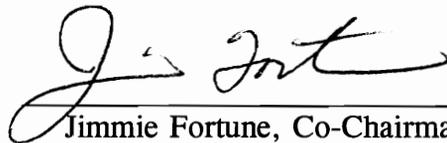
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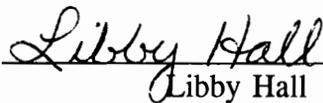
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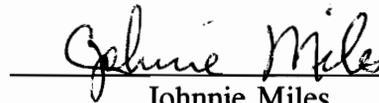
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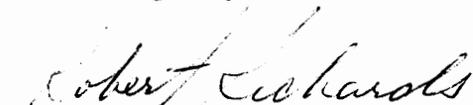
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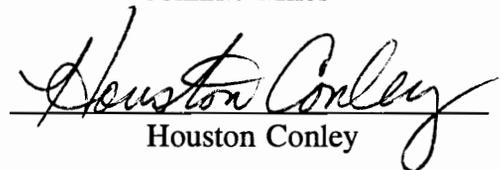
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(Abstract)

Many organizations, both public and private are implementing total quality management processes and procedures to ensure customer satisfaction, promote effective leadership, and enhance productivity. The sudden emphasis on customer satisfaction is observable governmentwide as federal agencies respond to the President's Executive Order to create a government that works better and costs less. Finding ways to improve customer satisfaction is now a high priority of these service-oriented organizations.

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that influence graduate satisfaction with a management development training program. In order to fulfill this purpose, data were collected from a respondent population of the United States Department of the Interior graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership Program. Two surveys were used in this study to identify the factors and determine the level of importance of the factors. Based on the objectives of the research, in addition to demographic data, survey one contained open-ended questions designed to assess the graduates' perceptual fields relative to their expectations, strengths and weaknesses of

the management development training program. Twenty-eight items were identified from the qualitative data obtained from survey one and using a Likert-type scale, graduates were asked to rate the level of importance of each item in survey two.

Graduate responses to survey two were subjected to standard statistical procedures. Results of these procedures led to the following conclusions: 1) Graduate satisfaction is influenced by professional advancement, personal growth and career development opportunities, program instruction, and program administration and management; 2) Graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership Program are overwhelmingly satisfied with the training they received in the program; 3) Expectations of the Department of the Interior graduates are met; and 4) Further research is needed to determine the relationship between trainee satisfaction/dissatisfaction and expectations as well as the relationship between satisfaction and certain demographic and biographical characteristics.

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Finally, I am forever grateful to my mother, Mrs. Laura Diggs and my husband, Toney for the encouragement, love and support they give me. Throughout this process, they were always there to provide the necessary motivation.

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the loving memory of my father, Louis Diggs and my grandmother, Mollie Casey who always believed in and supported me in all my endeavors. The passing of these two significant persons made concentrating on this project extremely difficult, but their memories gave me the strength and courage to continue.

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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

Within the past decade, a number of organizations have expended numerous resources to find ways to improve service quality and satisfy the customer. Managers in virtually every work group ranging from manufacturing to government are analyzing the basic tenets, quality and customer satisfaction, of the Total Quality Management (TQM) philosophy sweeping the nation. Few concepts have stirred as much interest among managers and workers nationwide within the last decade or have been as widely discussed. This philosophy has gained national attention in both the public and private sectors and a growing number of organizations have implemented continuous improvement, employee empowerment and customer satisfaction programs to improve their operations.

The focus on customer satisfaction at all levels of an organization has never been as widespread nor as visible as it is today. Since 1986, when Dr. W. Edwards Deming, the father of TQM outlined his philosophy for managing quality and productivity, customer satisfaction has been recognized as the cornerstone of all application efforts. The importance of understanding customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction within American business and industry is now vastly documented in the literature. Organizations that implement TQM principles stress improving the quality of their products and services by responding to the customer, the ultimate consumer.

As a philosophy eliciting organization-wide participation, it seeks to improve quality and increase customer satisfaction by restructuring traditional management and organizational practices. According to Osborne and Gaebler (1992), the innovative organization points out that the customer is the most important person for any organization or business.

The success of TQM in business and industry has inspired administrators in educational settings to take a serious look at the quality revolution. The drive for reform in American education and the demand to restructure the educational system has prompted educators to assess the "quality" movement sweeping the nation. The popular industrial-management philosophy is working its way into academia with the organizational principles of customer satisfaction and continuous improvement of products and services being applied to educational practice (Lewis and Smith, 1994).

The acceptance of TQM in higher education is an ongoing debate. Despite the documented success of TQM in many areas, the implementation and application of TQM into the academic arena is reported to be controversial. Education can learn from the quality revolution occurring around the nation (Danne, 1992). Secondary educators tend to agree with statements adapting quality and customer satisfaction principles to secondary education. A growing number of colleges and universities are exploring these as solutions to the many problems facing academia. Several leaders in the field of education agree that TQM inspired methods involve students more fully in their own learning and TQM statistical process control encourages accountability

and ongoing assessment (Cornesky,1993).

Principles such as customer satisfaction, teamwork and employee empowerment are being used as tools to improve learning in the classroom and outside. In a 1991 survey conducted by Daniel Seymour, a consultant who lectures on TQM in higher education, it is reported that while many of the benefits of TQM were hard to quantify, institutions often reported that employees felt better about their jobs, students were happier, and that the process had helped to improve communications between faculty, staff and management (Lewis and Smith, 1994).

Adapting TQM to education and training settings requires change. It means changing the traditional instructor and student roles. New roles based on the tenets of customer satisfaction and using employee ideas to institute quality must occur. TQM in education will fade out unless the principles of gradual transformation and continuous improvement are understood and applied. Proper implementation must stress teamwork and customer satisfaction. Although it offers no panacea for an ailing educational system, it offers a new way to view educational management (Weaver, 1992).

### **Background**

The beginning of the nineties has seen a remarkable rise in initiatives addressing internal and external customer satisfaction in every organization. On March 3, 1993, Vice President, Al Gore, stated , "the customer comes first and, if

you can't serve your customers efficiently, effectively, and responsively, then you're not doing your job." Federal agencies have responded to TQM, the National Performance Review (NPR) and the Executive Order entitled "Setting Customer Service Standards" in a multitude of ways.

Consequently, the Secretary of the Department of the Interior directed that every agency implement the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM). Adhering to this directive required that many offices restructure and reassess how the work is performed. In the area of training and employee development this required identifying the external and internal customers and conforming to their measurements to determine if training programs were meeting their needs. It became quite clear early in the initial process that there is a need to understand how to integrate the TQM principle of ensuring customer satisfaction into the analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation of training programs, especially the management development programs.

Several authors argue that the usefulness of TQM for public sector agencies is limited because of the stress on products rather than services. In 1992, James Swiss argued that the orthodox form of TQM expressed in the works of W. Edwards Deming and others would not work well in government agencies. He recommended a "limited reform TQM approach" for government. Therefore, Federal agencies in many instances are adopting a limited mandate to implement the principles of the latest management approach; quality is the buzzword of the decade. The search for

quality service is combined with reinventing government concepts and for the first time in decades, federal agencies are concentrating on customer satisfaction, cost reduction and teamwork.

In 1993, Nichols conducted a study to determine why federal-sector organizations decide to implement TQM. He concludes that agencies are unlikely to adopt TQM in its pure form and that the commitment to adopt TQM is usually the result of motivation and benefit that can be derived from such an association. He describes TQM as an array of organizational behaviors that, proponents assert, orients employees and managers to stress quality thereby, producing significantly improved products and services. Quality in his context is defined as "customer service" (Nichols, 1993).

The Office of Personnel Management in 1992, conducted a survey of recent studies and literature about customer needs and expectations to identify the criteria for quality of service. Unfortunately, the criteria was directed solely toward enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of frontline customer service more specifically, training employees to meet the needs of the general public, the external customer. Meeting the needs of the internal customer was not addressed.

Increasing internal as well as external customer satisfaction is the desired outcome of the quality movement. Administrators, educators and trainers must recognize that students are internal customers and to fully implement TQM requires satisfying their pre and post training needs. It is essential to understand that trainees

are "customers" paying for a quality product (Cornesky, 1993; Lewis and Smith, 1994).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The major purpose of this research is to determine the factors that influence customer satisfaction of a management development training program. The study will examine the determinants of post training customer satisfaction and explore specifically, the entry of customer satisfaction principles and practices into the areas of education and training.

The study will also determine whether the graduate's satisfaction/dissatisfaction of a management developmental training program is influenced by individual expectations, grade level, years of government service, sponsor agency support, year of completion, promotions, changes in career fields, bureau of present employment or educational level. The study will also identify the reaction of graduates to the strengths and weaknesses of the Women's Executive Leadership Program in preparing them for career advancement in the Federal government.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The recent emphasis on customer satisfaction has inspired educators and

trainers to investigate the factors which may be associated with customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. A review of the literature indicates that information on customer satisfaction with education and training programs is very limited. Therefore, further research is needed to understand what variables may serve to influence internal customer satisfaction when the customer is a graduate of a management development training program.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions to be answered by this study are as follows:

1. What are the factors that affect graduate satisfaction with management development training programs?
2. How important are the factors that affect graduate satisfaction as perceived by Department of Interior graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership (WEL) Program?
3. Are Department of Interior graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership Program satisfied with the training they received in the management development training program?
4. Is there a relationship between graduate satisfaction/dissatisfaction, individual expectations, general schedule (GS) grade level, educational level, sponsor agency support, year of completion, grade level promotions, career field changes, bureau of present employment or years of government service?

5. What are the major strengths of a management development training program as perceived by graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership Program?
6. What are the major weaknesses of a management development training program as perceived by graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership Program?

### **Significance of the Study**

The single most powerful tool for achieving and sustaining a competitive advantage in any organization is customer satisfaction. Increasing customer satisfaction and being customer-driven will require a restructuring of the traditional management and organizational practices of training and education programs. Currently, formal evaluation programs assess student reaction, learning, behavior and results with very little research concentrating on customer satisfaction after the initial training period.

The customer-focused approach to service within the Federal government is centered on government frontline personnel. Training programs are rapidly being revised and developed to assist federal employees in meeting the needs of the external customer. It is extremely important for the human resources functions to have a better understanding of the needs and expectations of both, the internal and external customers in order to assist the overall organization. Therefore, identifying the trainee as an internal customer is critical for the training and employee development

departments. Consequently, the identification of the factors that determine satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the trainees must be identified.

Training departments are being impacted as organizations refine their procedures and policies to respond to new and innovation ways to keep customers satisfied. Such dramatic changes are resulting in training departments being re-engineered. The requirement to establish and sustain successful management development training programs is critical and these programs can be better designed and implemented if we know how to satisfy our internal customer, the graduate.

There is an obvious absence of research on graduate satisfaction with training programs and specifically, with management development training programs. This omission intensifies the need for this study. Training programs are often purchased products that are evaluated according to various evaluation models, yet they are seldom assessed against the same standards of quality as other consumable goods.

The results of this study offers numerous implications for training departments in the public sector that are responsible for coordinating and implementing management development training programs. If training departments know the factors that influence the satisfaction of their graduates, they will be able to avoid the waste of resources and focus the revision of their programming on ways to increase customer satisfaction and add value to the training experience.

## **Basic Assumptions**

Assumptions underlying this study were:

1. Evaluations of students' opinions and perceptions are unbiased and a valuable source of information (Startup, 1972).
2. The information generated by the questionnaire is valid and will add to the body of systematically gathered data through which the Office of Personnel Management and Department of Interior may evaluate the quality of several management development training programs.
3. Generalizations from this study will be applicable to subsequent populations in the Department of Interiors' management development programs who will be affected by the administrative decisions involved as a result of this study (Cornesky, 1993).

## **Definitions of Terms**

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions of terms are provided:

1. Customer - used interchangeably with consumer; one who buys goods or services.
2. Durable goods - manufactured products designed to withstand wear and decay such as automobiles and appliances.
3. External Customer - An individual outside of an organization who is a

consumer of products or services.

4. Internal Customer - An individual within the organization who is a consumer of a product or a service.
5. Management Development Training Program - a program within an organization allowing it to develop employees who demonstrate managerial talent or observed potential. For the purposes of this study, this is differentiated from management development programs that service existing managers and aim to improve their managerial capabilities.
6. Quality Management - A process designed to maximize customer satisfaction at the lowest overall cost to the organization.
7. Satisfaction - Satisfaction is generally defined as a "feeling" state. The Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (Merriam-Webster Inc., 1990) defines satisfaction as the fulfillment of a need or want. The Random House Dictionary defines satisfaction as the state of being satisfied, meaning to fulfill the desires, needs, or demands of. Although specific terminology varies in defining the word, fulfillment of a need is present in many of the definitions in the literature. In a previous dissertation by Philip Mendel, he indicated he could not find a widely accepted definition of satisfaction in his review of the literature. Therefore, for purposes of this study, I will define satisfaction as "the general feeling state of trainees about specific aspects of a training program."

8. TQM - Total Quality Management; the application of quality principles for the integration of all functions and processes of the organization. The ultimate goal is customer satisfaction (Lewis and Smith, 1994).
9. Trainee - used interchangeably with student and graduate; an individual enrolled in a course or program of study designed to impart knowledge and develop skills and abilities.
10. WEL - Women's Executive Leadership Program; a long-term developmental program that provides training and development opportunities for high-potential Federal employees.

### **Delimitations**

To make this study manageable, it was delimited as follows:

1. Trainees' opinions and perceptions are a valuable source of information on satisfaction and dissatisfaction.
2. This study was delimited to a long-term management development training program conducted by the Office of Personnel Management.
3. This study was delimited to the Department of the Interior graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership (WEL) Program.

## **Limitations**

The results of this study were limited by the following:

1. The population size used in the study represents a small number of subjects when compared to the total number of graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership program. Only graduates of the WEL program that were sponsored by an agency of the Department of the Interior were surveyed.
2. Data collected from this study are applicable only to programs that are cited as developmental, and inferences are not valid for any other population.
3. This study is an exploratory study to identify the satisfaction factors of graduates of a management development training program designed for federal employees.

## **Organization of the Study**

The main body of this study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I presents an introduction to the nature of the study, a background discussion, assumptions, statement of the problem, purposes of the study, research questions, significance of the study, definitions of terms, and an enumeration of delimitations and limitations. Chapter II reviews related research and literature on customer satisfaction, training, and management development. Chapter III describes the methodology including the type of research, the population, the data gathering

instruments and techniques. Chapter IV is a presentation of data and finally, Chapter V offers conclusions and recommendations for further research. The appendices include pertinent materials such as the research instruments, transmittal correspondence and qualitative data.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Literature Review**

The review of literature presented in this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section includes an overview of customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction research and the value of satisfaction in training and education settings. The second section discusses management development training. The final section describes a public sector management development training program, the Women's Executive Leadership Program.

#### **Customer Satisfaction**

There is a lack of agreement concerning precisely what is meant by customer satisfaction (Cromwell, 1986). Not only is there an absence of uniformity in definition there is also a lack of empirically verifiable approaches to investigation (Barsky, 1991). Throughout the literature, the terms customer satisfaction and consumer satisfaction are used interchangeably. A review of the context in which these terms are used revealed many more similarities than differences.

Schlossberg (1990) views customer satisfaction as the ability to better serve and preserve customers. Akerson (1991) defines customer satisfaction as measuring customer reactions to a company and its policies. Bell and Zemke (1992) define customer satisfaction as the point at which experience exactly matches expectation,

however, finding that point is extremely difficult because expectations are shaped by many factors (Braus, 1990).

Today, customers are aggressive in demanding that products and services meet or exceed expectations. Outstanding product performance is not just expected but required. Consequently, customer satisfaction is based upon the evaluation of how a product performs and how that corresponds to a person's expectation of that performance. Therefore, expectation is a fundamental construct in the satisfaction process (Buckler, 1991).

Customer satisfaction has taken on new meaning for business as well as Federal agencies. Federal agencies have adopted a customer-focused approach to service delivery. Efforts aimed at putting the customer first have emerged in response to the Report of the National Performance Review (NPR) and the Executive Order entitled, "Setting Customer Service Standards."

Federal agencies want to serve customers better (Warner, 1993). Frank (1993) reports that to show commitment to the implementation of the TQM principles, a Federal Quality Institute was inaugurated in 1988. Implementation of such principles have already yielded benefits such as cost savings and seem to empower and invigorate the public service employee with a customer focus similar to that found in many private sector organizations (McKenna, 1991).

Managers and employees agree that customer satisfaction is not just a fad but a big concern to organizations around the world. Customer satisfaction is an integral

part of TQM (McDermott, 1991). The customer defines total quality management by establishing expectations, standards, and performance requirements. TQM has effectively redefined internal and external customer's needs (Schauerman and Peachy, 1993 & Wylie 1993). According to Kirker (1994), customer satisfaction has emerged as the single most powerful tool for achieving and sustaining a competitive advantage.

Traditionally, businesses and organizations have strived for customer satisfaction. However, until recently, this was always described by the ability to meet the external customer's needs. Numerous studies have been conducted to determine the factors that affect job satisfaction and external customer satisfaction of consumable goods. However, very little if any research has focused on customer satisfaction when the customer is internal to the organization (Christensen and Philbrick, 1993; Bleuell, 1990).

Recent literature indicates that the ability to meet the external customer's needs depends directly on how well the needs of the internal customers are met (Braum, 1990; Buckler, 1991; Dodson, 1991). As a result, companies are now implementing service and quality improvement programs that enhance their own employees' knowledge and skills, thereby boosting internal customer satisfaction and loyalty (Pfau, Detzel, Geller, 1991).

Spreng (1992) hypothesizes that satisfaction and dissatisfaction of both internal and external customers are primarily the result of the discrepancy between the product performance and the customer's desires. Customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction is

viewed by Donnelly (1991) as having two separate continuum, one with customer satisfiers and one with customer dissatisfies. He indicates that the opposite of dissatisfaction is not satisfaction, but simply no dissatisfaction and the opposite of satisfaction is not dissatisfaction, but simply no satisfaction. Using Donnelly's definition, identifying the satisfiers and dissatisfies of the internal customer, the trainee can be extremely valuable for areas such as training that rely on support from former customers.

The difficulty of measuring customer satisfaction is illustrated by the work of Bleuell (1990). He concluded from his research that there is not a one-to-one correspondence between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. He suggested that between the extremes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction is a "zone of uncertainty," which is mainly a reflection of the mood of the customer. Recently, numerous theoretical structures have been proposed to examine satisfaction and develop meaningful measures of the construct. Many of the studies have used some variant of the disconfirmation paradigm which holds that satisfaction is related to the person's initial expectations (Churchill and Suprenant, 1982; Spreng, 1992).

### **Customer Satisfaction Research**

The volume of consumer satisfaction research has been impressive over the last two decades. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Index of Consumer Satisfaction was the first study to report direct information on consumer satisfaction to

policy makers. Early studies by Olshavsky and Miller (1972) and Anderson (1973) examined disconfirmed expectancies and their influence on product performance ratings. These studies and the 1964 experiment by Cardozo formed the foundation for much of the later theory testing and experimental research on consumer satisfaction (Churchill and Suprenant, 1982). Recent literature on customer satisfaction focuses on understanding the expectations and requirements of the customer and determining how well those expectations and requirements are being satisfied (Dutka, 1992).

Customer satisfaction research is a growing field that is being used diagnostically within organizations to improve performance. However, according to Churchill and Suprenant (1982) most satisfaction research has concentrated on durable products and ignored variations in product performance for nondurables. He also indicates that more research is needed on the satisfaction process for durable products and that researchers must extend their findings beyond the realm of consumer package goods.

Customer satisfaction research is one of the fastest-growing segments of the marketing research industry (Patterson, 1993; Churchill and Surprenant, 1982). The demand for "satisfaction" has helped push total revenues among research companies to their highest level in four years. It now claims one-third of research revenues generated by the leading U.S. research companies (Wylie, 1993) and can be used to develop long-term strategic plans and as a valuable addition to training programs

(Hayes, 1993).

A search of the literature reveals an abundance of research exploring student satisfaction as a level one evaluation within the Kirkpatrick model of program evaluation; however, it appears that no research has been completed on the satisfaction and expectations that trainees have of management development training programs. Several studies examining the level of satisfaction and role-relationships experienced by students have been conducted.

In 1968, Levine and Weitz, studied satisfaction and dissatisfaction and found that a major source of dissatisfaction among students was the lack of voice in influencing departmental policy. Neuman and Neuman (1981) noted that student satisfaction may influence course selection, attrition and post-graduate behavior, and it may in fact, reflect attitudes toward the information given to outsiders. In a 1980 study, Pascarella found that there is a positive association between informal student/faculty contact and students' educational aspirations, academic achievement and institutional persistence.

### **Satisfaction in Training and Education**

Customers are vital to the operation of any organization (Weaver, 1992) whether they are internal or external (Blankstein, 1992). Organizations that are successful will be those that clearly identify their mission and the customers they serve (Lewis and Smith, 1994). Spanbauer (1987) described education as a service

with customers just like any other business; those customers express satisfaction and dissatisfaction about the service they receive.

Educational institutions or training offices cannot be successful without customers. They must aim to keep the customers (students) satisfied by providing them with quality products and services (Cornesky, 1993). Creating training and management development programs that not only support the organization's mission but also satisfy the trainee or student is the challenge for educational and training settings. Expanding the knowledge of factors that are related to customer satisfaction with training exceeds the popular and traditional program evaluation models.

Several studies have been conducted to evaluate student levels of satisfaction. A study conducted in 1989 by Berg revealed a clear relationship between student satisfaction and instructors' teaching and subject matter skills. Additional factors that influence student satisfaction were class size; large classes produced consistently lower ratings than small or moderate size classes. Friederich (1988) concluded in a study of advanced degree graduates' that; students' opinions of the difficulty and structure of their academic programs of study were independent of their biographical characteristics; students' level of satisfaction with organizational characteristics of their department was independent of their biographical profiles; students' overall satisfaction with their programs of study was independent of the type of student enrolled in the department; and overall satisfaction was influenced by formal departmental offerings and informal interaction with the faculty.

Applying TQM principles in the education and training settings will allow the customer (the student) to communicate with decision-makers to continuously improve the learning process. In a successful TQM program at Mt. Edgecumbe High School in Sitka, Alaska, students track their own progress and have input into the education they receive (Weaver, 1992). In a 1992 survey of 22 colleges and universities, Mangan found that students were happier when the staff demonstrated a commitment to TQM. When the internal customers (managers and supervisors of trainees, parents, alumni and students) are satisfied with the learning experience, they'll recommend the institution to others and likely continue the relationship (Cornesky, 1993).

Listening to the voice of the customer and implementing principles to ensure "quality" will become the principal means by which higher education institutions will attempt to differentiate themselves from their educational competitors (Mazelan, Green, Brannigan and Tormey, 1990). While colleges and universities have been successful, their future success will increasingly be determined by how responsive they are to meeting the needs of the customers. Customer-driven organizations are successful because they have a unified focus on what they do and who they serve (Lewis and Smith, 1994). The growing assumption is that quality and service performance can be improved if institutions can create an entrepreneurial culture that fosters individual and team accountability for achieving the highest levels of internal and external customer satisfaction (McDermott and Emerson, 1991).

## **Management Development Training**

The definitions and approaches to management development training are varied and diverse. According to Eastburn (1987), management development is a multifaceted, complex, and long-term process. He describes it as the preparation and education of managers to effectively manage their people while at the same time achieve the strategies and goals of the organization. He further describes management development as a process within the organization allowing it to develop employees who demonstrate managerial talent or observed potential to help prepare them for growing responsibilities and new tasks. More than two decades ago, H.C. de Bettignes (1983) described it as "must" requirement of the economic system, a process imposed on a company as a result of organizational growth, changing technology, and a changing competitive environment.

According to Dyer (1983) a significant factor in the success of any organization is the effectiveness of its managers. The value of management development training is well documented. Dyer contends that it is to the benefit of any organization if time and effort are expended to prepare managers to be more effective. Management development is no longer a choice made by top management, an extravagance of profitable corporations, or a fringe benefit of major organizations, it is a must requirement; It is necessary to move an organization ahead.

Traditional assumptions about management and the development of managers are no longer valid. As we enter the 21st century, it is evident that the nature of our

organizations has changed. Organizations are faced with challenges emerging from a volatile mix of technological, economical and demographical changes (Eastburn, 1987). The most prominent challenges lie in the demographic changes taking place in the workplace and how these changes affect the human resource development field particularly the attainment and retention of managers, supervisors and executives. As a result of the national decline in the productivity rate, a shortage of managerial talent, a growth in the complexities of our organizations the effective use of the human resource is an ever increasingly significant concern.

Organizations are changing the way they train their managers in an attempt to survive the transformations occurring in the workplace, adjustments in business strategy, changes in technology and a competitive environment (de Bettignies, 1983). Significant changes in the approach to management development is evidenced by an increase in the role of senior executives in the design and implementation of management training and development programs; the significance of courses related to formulating and implementing strategies for managers; and replacing off-the-shelf courses with internal, customized courses as the primary source of management training and development (Bolt, 1987).

Historically, training and development programs have consisted of anything that a particular organization wanted to do. Unfortunately few, if any have been scientifically validated, and many of them do not even have the distinction of having been developed systematically. Many have been adopted with little regard for their

real value or application in the organization and used without assessment of their validity. They are nevertheless extensively used and increasing in cost and variety.

Management development training programs can help prepare managers for growing responsibilities and more complex tasks (Eastburn, 1987). There is ample evidence that management development training efforts have by no means been universally successful (de Bettignes, 1983). Not only have some had no demonstrable or measurable effect, but frequently, some have been known to cause problems. We know more about management development techniques and tools than about the impact of management development training. Among the reasons for this unfortunate situation is the frequent lack of clear definition of the training objectives. Most programs are still not developed systematically, not assessed in terms of organizational and individual needs, and not integrated within a long-term plan for human resources development.

Wexley and Baldwin (1986) noted that effective management development training should begin with an individual's basic educational experiences, continue with the person's progressive career experiences, and be augmented with periodic training that the individual completes throughout his or her organizational tenure. They report that management development training activities should be in concert with organizational objectives.

An explicit linkage should exist between the developmental function and general organizational strategic objectives (Hayes, 1993). Organizations must set a

tone that stresses stability, organizational sensitivity and concern with growth and development of each employee (Koonce, 1991).

### **Women's Executive Leadership (WEL) Program**

The WEL program began in 1984 as an effort to provide the Federal government with a pool of trained and capable women interested in pursuing management and executive careers. Designed as a management development training program females in grades GS-9 through GS-12 who had demonstrated management potential were targeted for this initiative. Sixty-three participants from Federal agencies in the Washington area completed the 18-month pilot training program. The program successfully provided a breadth of experience and visibility for the participants.

In the fall of 1986, the program was revised to allow the enrollment of men and reduce the training period to 12 months. One hundred sixty-one women from Federal agencies across the nation were selected for the 1987 program. The 1988 program expanded to include 174 participants representing 29 Federal agencies. In 1989, the program was further modified to allow only GS-11 and GS-12 federal employees into the program. The 1990 class graduated 245 participants. Each year program enrollment has risen and the 1991 program began with 317 participants representing 25 Federal agencies.

This program was selected for this study because it is characteristic of the

typical long-term management development training program available to government employees. Each trainee completes an individual development plan based on the feedback from a number of assessment instruments. The training components provide training and development experiences that require trainees to be away from their positions of record for approximately 5 months throughout the program year.

Trainees participate in 5 weeks of residential training; an orientation session, a core I training session, a core II and a close-out training session. In addition to the residential training, trainees must complete a 30-day and 60-day developmental work assignment and design and deliver a leadership development team presentation. Other program components include a one-week shadowing assignment, three executive interviews, three book reviews and a program impact paper.

The program is managed governmentwide by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). However, each Federal agency appoints a program coordinator who serves as liaison between the agency and the OPM program office. The sponsoring agency is the federal agency paying the tuition for the trainee. Trainees, program coordinators and the OPM program office work together throughout the year to ensure that the developmental needs of the trainees are met.

## **Summary**

This chapter began with a description of customer satisfaction. The rise and significance of satisfying the customer within the last decade and the importance of

customer satisfaction research is discussed. The interrelationship between customer satisfaction, education and training is reviewed. Finally, an overview of management development training is addressed, and the Women's Executive Leadership Program (WEL) is profiled as a federal management development training program where graduates of the program are both, internal and external customers.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Methodology**

This research project is a descriptive and exploratory study designed to identify the factors that influence the satisfaction of a graduate of a management development training program. The Department of the Interior trainees who had completed the Women's Executive Leadership Program were selected as subjects for this study. This chapter addresses the methods and procedures used to fulfill this purposes.

#### **Selection and Characteristics of the Population**

Data collection began with a compilation of a list of Department of the Interior trainees who graduated from the Women's Executive Leadership program between and inclusive of the years 1984 to 1992. A list of 1033 names and addresses of the program graduates was obtained from the Office of Personnel Management, Long Term Development Training Office. After sorting, a total of 137 graduates were identified as Department of the Interior graduates. Out of the 137 graduates contacted, one was deceased, 21 had addresses unknown, and one did not complete the program, bringing the entire sample population for the study to 114.

Members of the sample population were full-time, permanent Federal employees in general schedule grade 11 or 12 positions, non-supervisors or

supervisors with less than 1 year's supervisory experience. Subjects were nominated by a sponsoring agency (federal agency paying the tuition) and accepted into the program by the OPM program office.

### **Instrumentation**

The original instrument presented by the researcher during the prospectus was subsequently, divided into two instruments based upon the recommendation of the Examining Committee. Therefore, two instruments were used in this study. Both instruments were field-tested using U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service subjects and were revised using the input from the field tests and the recommendations from the researcher's advisors to improve the validity of the instruments.

On the advice of the Examining Committee, survey one consisted of two sections. Section one contained nine open-ended questions designed to give subjects the opportunity to qualitatively describe whether they were satisfied with the training received in the management development training program, and explain their perceptions, expectations and opinions of the program. Section two included fifteen biographical items (occupational information, level of education, program and career development data). A copy of the instrument as used can be found in Appendix A. Subjects were asked to respond to all items and provide additional comments if desired.

The second instrument used in this study is referred to as survey two. It was

designed to identify the satisfiers and determine their level of importance. The 28 items were identified from the qualitative comments in survey one. Subjects were asked to rate the level of importance for the 28 items and add other items if desired. Responses to the items were measured on a five-point scale with a rating of zero equal to "not important"; one equal to "slightly important"; two, the middle point on the scale indicating "moderately important"; three equal to "very important"; and a rating of four equal to "extremely important." A copy of the instrument as used can be found in Appendix B.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

The first mailing of the survey, together with a cover letter and a stamped, self-addressed envelope, was mailed to the entire population the week of January 11, 1994. Using an alphabetized listing, the questionnaires were numbered sequentially as a matter of reference, not as a means to identify individual subjects. A copy of the cover letter for the first survey can be found in Appendix C. This letter solicited the graduates' help to improve the quality of customer service in the area of training and management development. The letter assured subjects of their anonymity and requested that they return the completed questionnaire by February 1, 1994.

The first mailing produced 49 returns, a 35.8 percent response rate. A reminder postcard was mailed to the entire population the week of February 7, 1994. A copy of the postcard for instrument one can be found in Appendix D. This effort

increased the total responses to 65 returns or a 57.01 percent response rate.

Telephone calls were made to 12 graduates which resulted in the receipt of 5 responses via facsimile for a cumulative total of 70 responses and a 61.4 cumulative percent response rate. A summary of responses can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of Responses - Survey Instrument One

CONTACTS	NUMBER CONTACTED	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	PERCENT
Initial	137*	49	35.8
Second	114	16	14.0
Facsimile	12	5	41.6
Total	114	70	61.4

\* Of the initial contacts, one was deceased; 21 had addresses unknown and one did not complete the program.

Instrument two, together with a cover letter and a stamped, self-addressed envelope, was mailed to the identified population of 114, the week of April 8, 1994. Once again, the surveys were numbered sequentially as a matter of reference, not as a means to identify individual subjects. A copy of the cover letter for Instrument two

can be found in Appendix E. This letter thanked those who had responded to survey one, encouraged those that had not responded to do so and once again solicited their help with this project. The letter also assured subjects of their anonymity and requested that they return the completed survey by April 20, 1994.

The first mailing of instrument two produced 37 returns, a 32.4 percent response rate. A reminder postcard was mailed to the identified population the week of April 21, 1994. A copy of the postcard for instrument two can be found in Appendix F. This effort increased the total responses to 55 returns or a 53.4 percent response rate. Instrument two was subsequently sent by facsimile to 12 graduates which resulted in 7 additional responses for a total of 62 responses and a 60.1 cumulative response rate. A summary of responses can be found in Table 2.

Table 2

Summary of Responses - Survey Instrument Two

CONTACTS	NUMBER CONTACTED	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	PERCENT
Initial	114*	37	32.4
Second	103	18	17.5
Facsimile	12	7	58.3
Total	103	62	60.1

\* Of the initial contacts, 11 had addresses unknown and could not be located within the Department of the Interior.

### **Follow-up of Non-Respondents**

Following the deadline date for data collection of instrument one, a follow-up telephone survey of 12 non-respondents was conducted. In an attempt not to weaken the research design, 12 instruments were sent via facsimile. The researcher's explanation of the need for the questionnaire was effective in eliciting the non-respondents' cooperation and 5 additional questionnaires were received over four consecutive days.

Following the deadline date for data collection of instrument two, a follow-up telephone survey of non-respondents was conducted. Again, the researcher's explanation of the need for the responses was effective in getting the non-respondents' cooperation and 7 surveys were returned via the facsimile machine over the next six days.

### **Statistical Methods Used**

Data from the completed instruments were coded for file creation. Data input was verified by comparing frequencies against the original data. Data analyses were conducted using Number Cruncher Statistical System, version 5.03.

Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the extent to which the items in scale in survey two are consistent with each other. The test was performed on each of the items in survey two. Factor analysis was completed to determine the

interrelationships among variables in an effort to identify a smaller set of items (i.e., factors that contain highly correlated variables). Frequency distributions were used to calculate preliminary statistics.

### **Summary**

This chapter discussed the research design and the methods used to address the focus of the study. The discussion included selection of the population; the types of instruments used; how the data was collected; follow-up of non-subjects; and finally, the statistical methods used. The next chapter will relate the findings from the study.

## CHAPTER IV

### Results

Findings of statistical analyses are presented in this chapter. The sample consisted of the Department of the Interior graduates who completed the Women's Executive Leadership Program between 1984 and 1992.

Each of the six research questions addressed in this study are now presented with corresponding results:

**Question 1: What are the factors that affect graduate satisfaction with management development training programs?**

In order to answer question one, a two-step process occurred. In step one, based on frequencies, subject responses to the qualitative questions from survey instrument one were used to develop a composite listing of the 28 items identified in Table 3. Step two consisted of factor analysis for the 28 items. Items 1, 6, 8, 10 and 28 did not factor strongly enough to be included in any factor.

Table 3

Composite Listing of Responses to Survey One

1.	Improve performance in my present position.
2.	Preparation for future positions.
3.	Increase chances of being promoted.
4.	Learn about career advance opportunities.
5.	Use the knowledge (concepts, facts) acquired in the program frequently.
6.	Ability to demonstrate the skills (presentation, etc.) acquired in the program frequently.
7.	Identify immediate promotion opportunities.
8.	Receive professional recognition within my organization.
9.	Opportunity to network.
10.	Challenges offered by the program.
11.	Participation in self-enrichment activities.
12.	Opportunities to change perspective and/or attitudes.
13.	Exposure to other people and their ideas.
14.	Attention is given to this program when compared to other management programs.
15.	Assistance in getting promoted after graduation.
16.	Bureau/Agency selection process.
17.	Bureau/Agency follow-up after graduation.
18.	Program coordinator support during program.
19.	Quality of instruction in the program.
20.	Structure/flexibility in the program.
21.	Level of difficulty of assignments.
22.	Extent to which a blend of theory and practice was developed in the program.
23.	Quality of the instructional materials used by instructors.
24.	The variety of program components.
25.	Contact with supervisor.
26.	Contact with program coordinator.
27.	Site of program components.
28.	Size of cluster groups.

## Factor analysis

In step two, a factor analysis with varimax rotation was completed to determine the underlying factors of the items. Five factors were identified and included 23 of the items.

In the factor analysis, the five factors accounted for 96% of the variance. Items within each factor were summed to provide a factor score. Averages were computed to provide scores ranging from 0-4 that would be consistent over all 5 factors.

A cutoff point of .50 as the factor loading was selected to retain an item in the factor analysis. Tables 4 through 8 indicate the location of the items following factor analysis.

Table 4

### FACTOR ANALYSIS 1

FACTOR 1 - PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT		
Item	Description	Loading
16	Bureau/Agency Selection Process	.79
26	Contact with Program Supervisor	.73
18	Program Coordinator Support	.70
14	Attention Compared to Other Programs	.69
17	Bureau Follow up	.68
15	Assistance Getting Promoted	.66
25	Contact with Supervisor	.66
27	Site of Program Components	.60

Table 5

FACTOR ANALYSIS 2

FACTOR 2 - PROGRAM INSTRUCTION		
Item	Description	Loading
22	Blend of theory and practice	.80
24	Variety of Program Components	.72
20	Flexibility	.72
23	Instructional Materials	.71
21	Difficulty of Assignments	.57
19	Quality of Instruction	.50

Table 6

FACTOR ANALYSIS 3

FACTOR 3 - PERSONAL GROWTH		
Item	Description	Loading
11	Self-Enrichment Activities	.75
13	Exposure to Others Ideas	.69
12	Change Perspective and Attitude	.62

Table 7

FACTOR ANALYSIS 4

FACTOR 4 - PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT		
Item	Description	Loading
2	Preparation for Future Position	.66
3	Increase Chances of Being Promoted	.61
5	Use Knowledge Frequently	.58

Table 8

FACTOR ANALYSIS 5

FACTOR 5 - CAREER DEVELOPMENT		
Item	Description	Loading
4	Learn About Career Opportunities	.64
7	Identify Promotion Opportunities	.62
9	Opportunity to Network	.51

**Question 2: How important are the factors that affect graduate satisfaction as perceived by Department of Interior graduates of the Women’s Executive Leadership Program?**

Reliability of instrument two was first determined in order to assess consistency of responses over repeated applications. An overall, Cronbach’s Alpha equal to .9052 indicated a highly reliable instrument. Additional reliability estimates indicated that all 28 items should be included; coefficient alpha’s completed with individual items omitted ranged from .89 to less than .91. Furthermore, correlations between each individual item and the total of all other items ranged from .19 to less than .73 indicating that no items are redundant.

Subjects were asked to rank how important the 28 items were in determining their level of satisfaction with the Women’s Executive Leadership Program. The satisfaction items were measured from zero to four, with anchor labels of "not

important" to "extremely important," zero indicating the lowest level of satisfaction and four indicating the highest level of satisfaction. Although rankings are ordinal data, a mean was also calculated for each item. Additional items added by the subjects will be described qualitatively.

Using mean scores, a rank distribution was created to determine the ranking of each item as it related to the level of satisfaction. Table 9 is a ranking of the 28 items showing mean ranges from high to low.

Table 9

ITEM RANKING USING MEAN SCORES	
RANK	ITEM
3.41	2 Preparation for future position
3.20	24 Variety of program components
3.19	19 Quality of instruction
3.12	13 Exposure to other people and their ideas
3.06	5 Use the knowledge acquired in program frequently
3.04	10 Challenges offered by the program
3.04	12 Opportunities to change perspective, attitudes
3.03	20 Structure/flexibility in the program
3.00	23 Quality of instructional materials used
2.96	11 Participant in self-enrichment activities
2.93	3 Increase chances of being promoted
2.91	22 Extent to which a blend of theory & practice was developed
2.82	6 Ability to demonstrate skills acquired in program frequently
2.77	9 Opportunity to network
2.62	21 Level of difficulty of assignments
2.59	4 Learn about career advance opportunities
2.54	1 Improve performance in my present position
2.43	8 Receive professional recognition within my organization
2.24	28 Size of cluster groups
2.09	14 Attention given to this program in comparison to other managerial programs
2.00	15 Assistance in getting promoted after graduation
1.90	7 Identify immediate promotion opportunities
1.82	27 Site of program components
1.79	18 Program coordinator support during program
1.70	25 Contact with supervisor
1.62	26 Contact with program coordinator
1.33	16 Bureau/Agency selection process
1.33	17 Bureau/Agency follow-up after graduation

Factor scores were averaged and ranked to determine the perceived levels of importance as indicated in Table 10.

Table 10

**FACTOR SCORES**

	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>MEDIAN</b>	<b>STANDARD DEVIATION</b>
PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT	3.13	3.3	.75
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH	3.04	3.0	.75
PROGRAM INSTRUCTION	2.99	3.0	.70
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	2.42	2.66	.88
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT	1.71	1.75	.98

**Question three: Are the Department of Interior graduates of the WEL program satisfied with the training they received in the management development program?**

The numbers and percentages of the response population in Table 11 indicate they were overwhelmingly satisfied with the training received. A summary of the

subjects explanations is presented in Appendix G.

Table 11

Satisfied With Training Received

	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>YES</b>	69	98.6
<b>NO</b>	1	1.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	70	100

**Question four: Is there a relationship between graduate satisfaction/dissatisfaction, program expectations, General Schedule (GS) grade level, educational level, years of government service, sponsor agency, year of completion, grade promotions, and career field changes.**

Table 12 presents the responses indicating whether the management development training program met the graduates' expectations. A summary of the subjects' expectations of the WEL program is presented as Appendix H.

With only one subject indicating dissatisfaction with the training received in the program, the relationship between satisfaction/dissatisfaction, and biographical characteristics cannot be determined.

Table 12

Program Met Expectations

	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>YES</b>	61	87.1
<b>NO</b>	5	7.1
<b>PARTIAL</b>	4	5.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	70	100

**Non-Statistical Analysis of Questions 5 and 6**

**Question five - What are the major strengths of a management development training program as perceived by graduates of the Women’s Executive Leadership Program?**

A listing of the professional and personal benefits cited by the subjects is located in Appendix I. Specific comments in response to the question on the major strengths of the program are located in Appendix J. An analysis of the professional and personal benefits and the specific comments cited by subjects indicate that the top five strengths include the following:

- a. networking opportunities-the opportunity to share ideas and work with participants from other agencies. Specific agency programs do not offer the opportunity to broaden the list of contacts for lateral or promotion opportunities.
  - b. teambuilding opportunities- interaction with other participants, team building, exposure to a variety of individuals and different ideas and concepts. Working on various group projects allowed subjects an opportunity to create synergy.
  - c. flexibility of program design - to design the program to meet individual needs and interests. The opportunity to obtain specialized experience in certain areas based on individual areas of improvement is extremely valuable.
  - d. valuable work experience gained through details - having the opportunity to work in an outside agency. The opportunity to do work in another area or field is most important and career enhancing.
  - e. opportunity to learn about self through many assessment instruments.
- Management development is self-development. Programs can make trainees aware of their strengths and developmental needs, but the real application of the knowledge gained will be through individual efforts. Many opportunities to look at the person in the mirror.

**Question six - What are the major weaknesses of a management development training program as perceived by graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership Program?**

The most frequently cited weakness was that the class was too large and did not allow for the individual attention subjects wanted. The lack of organization specifically, the changes in schedules were mentioned by several subjects as a major weakness. The lack of support within the agency, as well as the absence of formalized follow-up was expressed by several subjects. The other comments cited in response to this item and suggested changes are located in Appendix K.

**Summary**

This chapter discussed the results from the research conducted to determine the factors that affect graduate satisfaction with a management development training program. The results were organized around the six research questions; (1) what are the factors that affect graduate satisfaction with management development training programs; (2) how important are the factors that affect graduate satisfaction; (3) are Department of Interior graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership Program satisfied with the program; (4) what is the relationship between graduate satisfaction/dissatisfaction, program expectations, general schedule (GS) grade level, educational level, years of government service, sponsor agency, year of completion,

grade promotions, and career field changes; (5) what are the major strengths and finally, (6) weaknesses of a management development training program?

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this chapter was to present a summary of the conclusions based on the findings, and to offer recommendations for further research. The conclusions are based on the statistical and non-statistical findings using the qualitative data from survey instrument one and the quantitative data from survey instrument two. The discussion of this study is presented in accordance with the six questions that this research addressed. Overall, several of the findings are consistent with earlier research on customer satisfaction and management development. The literature revealed that a better understanding of graduate satisfaction is fundamental to improve the quality of management development training programs. A similar conclusion was reached by Braskamp, Wise and Hengstler (1979) when they addressed the fact that student satisfaction represents a unique perspective, which should not be overlooked in assessing program quality.

1. What are the factors that affect graduate satisfaction with management development training programs?

This study identified five factors as satisfiers for graduates of a management development training program. The five factors that were identified are career development, personal growth, professional advancement, program instruction, and

program administration and management. Three of these factors, career development, professional advancement, and personal growth are also ranked as major satisfiers in nationwide job satisfaction survey data. This finding indicates that employees are satisfied when occupations and training opportunities contribute to their professional and personal growth. This finding is significant because it indicates that when graduates are satisfied with training programs there is some degree of job satisfaction and vice versa. This was noted in studies as early as 1946 reported by Schuyler Hoslett who described factors in employment relations, such as, opportunities for advancement and participation, free interchange of ideas and the opportunity to use one's ability as major factors related to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The extent to which training program satisfaction is transferable to satisfaction on the job however, is still an area requiring further study.

Overall, graduates are satisfied with the opportunities to network and share ideas and experiences with others inside and outside of their agencies as they seek advancement. They are interested in preparing for future positions, promotions and using the knowledge acquired in the program. Conclusions from non-statistical findings were in agreement with the statistical conclusions. In addition, non statistical conclusions revealed subjects dissatisfaction with the availability of promotion opportunities and the opportunity to use the skills and knowledges gained during the training experience.

2. How important are the factors that affect graduate satisfaction as perceived by Department of the Interior graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership (WEL) Program?

The findings in this study indicate that the most important factor is professional advancement. This indicates that graduates participate in management development training programs because they are seeking promotion opportunities and ways to enhance their professional and personal competencies. Geromel (1993) reached a similar conclusion when he revealed that graduates of an advanced management program entered the program to gain skills and continue their education. This finding is further supported by Rampasan (1988) who concluded that the majority of doctoral students were satisfied with the relevance of their academic preparations to their professional careers.

It is the speculation of the researcher that graduates of developmental training programs are more highly satisfied when promotion or advancement opportunities exist in the workplace. A conclusion drawn from non-statistical findings indicate that the Department of the Interior agencies could do a much better job of assisting graduates to find promotions.

These findings revealed that the graduates that had received promotions and who had entered the program with limited expectations described levels of satisfaction equal to those of respondents without expectations. However, respondents entering the training program with specific expectations were able to cite both strengths and

weaknesses of the training program. This finding is inconsistent with the disconfirmation model described by Spreng (1992) and warrants further study.

A significant conclusion in this study is the marketing value in understanding the expectations and requirements of the graduates of management development training programs. Recognizing the graduate, the trainee, the student as an internal customer with needs and expectations has great implications for training program developers. This conclusion is supported by Berg (1989) when he addressed the importance of understanding the construct of service quality in general and of internal customers in specific. Using customer satisfaction research to actively market training programs is also supported by Curtis (1984).

3. Are Department of the Interior graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership (WEL) Program satisfied with the training they received in the management development training program?

Graduates were overwhelmingly satisfied with the training received in the Women's Executive Leadership Program. This implies that overall, the training experiences from the program was consistent with the graduates' perceptions and met their expectations. This finding is supported by a similar study to assess and analyze graduates' perceptions of program effectiveness of a degree program. Sunn (1989) concluded that although differences were observed in preparation for career change among graduates, students are satisfied when the program does what it is intended to

do.

Although graduates indicated that they are satisfied with the training they received in the program there was some indication from the statistical and non-statistical findings that expectation levels were either not met or undefined. Therefore, this finding is inconsistent with previous research conducted by Churchill and Suprenant (1982). According to them, when graduates' expectations are not met, they will not be satisfied. Such a finding is significant for training administrators because trainees have expectations about the value and benefits of training programs very similar to pre-use expectations that a consumer has about a product and the post-use perception of product performance. This is certainly an area requiring more research but, possible explanations such as fear of expressing dissatisfaction with such a well-known program or the wording of the question could possibly contribute to these findings.

Based on non-statistical findings, future program support concurred to a great extent with the findings in graduate program satisfaction research which compares departmental satisfaction to course/faculty satisfaction. Previous research reveals that graduate satisfaction with a chosen department, may influence course selection, post-graduate behavior, and may reflect attitudes toward the college and the information given to outsiders about the college itself. This is considered true of these findings based on the qualitative responses of the respondents. Respondents tended to rely on program reputation and recommendations in forming opinions about the value of the

program. This is extremely important to the continuation of a management development training program since application to the program is reflected in attitudes toward the program and the information given to inquiries about the program. Pate (1993) addressed the importance of satisfying the consumer to increase the likelihood the consumer will support the institution later. Several other researchers such as Chadwick and Ward (1987) have addressed the impact satisfaction can have on future behavior of graduates. This finding is significant for federal training programs since the success of many programs is dependent upon further support and funding by graduates advancing within an organization or acquiring supervisory positions. Federal agencies whether developing their own development training programs or purchasing off-the-shelf products must be aware of trainee needs and expectations if the programs are to be successful.

4. Is there a relationship between graduate satisfaction/dissatisfaction, individual expectations, general schedule (GS) grade level, educational level, sponsor agency support, year of completion, grade level promotions, career field changes, bureau of present employment or years of government service?

The findings in this study do not indicate whether the graduates' level of satisfaction with the training received in the program is related to their biographical characteristics. The limited number of subjects who expressed dissatisfaction is not sufficient to suggest any relationship. Therefore, the findings indicate no significant

relationship between satisfaction/dissatisfaction and educational level, years of government service, sponsor agency support, year of completion, grade promotions or change in career fields. This finding is somewhat consistent with the research of Friederich (1988). Friederich's study of undergraduates' satisfaction and biographical characteristics led to the conclusions that student opinions of the difficulty and structure of their academic program programs of study were independent of their biographical characteristics, the overall characteristics of their departments and the type of student enrolled in the program.

5. What are the major strengths of a management development training program as perceived by graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership Program?

A major strength identified from the non-statistical findings was the importance of networking that the management development training program allowed. The opportunity to interact and merely associate with other government employees was a tremendous benefit for program participants. The finding that this is an element in graduate satisfaction is supported by research that was conducted by Friederich (1988) when she found a high correlation between overall satisfaction levels and informal interaction between students and faculty.

These findings indicate management development training programs can contribute to the development of the self-confidence that graduates need in order to implement what they have learned, seek new opportunities and explore the unknown.

These findings indicate that graduates' who express greater satisfaction with the training program also described increased self-confidence and self-expression as a result of the training experience. Koonce (1991) reports that Research has repeatedly shown how individual desire is not only important to the students' success, but also to the success of the training program and/or the organization. Although this study did not assess the impact of sex differences on satisfaction, expectations or self-confidence, these findings support the conclusion by Radar (1979) that describes training programs as valuable vehicles to increase self-confidence and prepare women for assuming new roles in an organization.

The opportunity to interact with diverse groups was revealed as a major strength of the management development training program examined in this study. Nearly every respondent provided some indication that the teambuilding opportunities had a positive effect on either their attitude, opinions or work assignment success. This benefit is extremely important for federal agencies as organizations lose employees through downsizing, attrition or rightsizing. In order to meet the mission and accomplish the work, the development of teams will be more critical than ever before. Training programs, especially management development training programs must be responsive to helping trainees build and maintain teams. This is evidenced by the number of off-the-shelf courses stressing team management principles and techniques presently available to agencies.

The results of this study indicate that graduates view the organizational

characteristics of the management development training program as important. The flexibility and design of the program were cited as major strengths of the Women's Executive Leadership program. The individualized planning that the program offered supported the findings by Wexley and Baldwin (1986) and Koonce (1991). This implies that management development training programs will continue to meet the needs of organizations in positive ways if they also meet the needs of the trainees.

The opportunities to use details (work assignments) to gain work experience in a non-threatening way and the formal training sessions such as the core I and core II training sessions provide a foundation of knowledge and allow trainees access to content experts that they would not otherwise have. A similar conclusion was reached by Friederich (1988) in a study to determine graduate satisfaction with academic programs when she found a high correlation between overall satisfaction and formal departmental offerings. Rampasan (1988) also noted that in terms of professional development, graduates benefited most from research, structured course work and independent reading.

A major benefit of a management development training program is evidenced by the graduates' willingness to pursue opportunities following the training period.

6. What are the major weaknesses of a management development training program as perceived by graduates of the Women's Executive Leadership Program?

The findings in this study indicate that the major weaknesses of the

management development training program are variables of program management and administration. The respondents expressed concern about the management and "quality" of the instruction. Abnormalities in the program scheduling, large classes, unclear directions and vagueness are expressed as weaknesses of the program. The management and administration of the training program which includes variables such as class size, time allotments, attainment of objectives, etc. has a direct relationship to satisfaction. This finding is supported in the studies conducted by Berg (1989) in which large classes produced consistently lower ratings than small or moderate size classes. However, additional research is warranted to determine the strength of the relationships between these variables.

As previously explained in the literature review, there is limited quantitative research about the effect of management development training programs which precludes any clear understanding of the "quality of instruction. Non-statistical findings indicate that government training programs could do more to emphasize the knowledge, skills and abilities gained as the result of management development training programs. Presently, the successful completion of such programs is viewed merely as getting one's ticket punched or fulfilling a requirement that has little or no merit. This finding has great implications for departmental training offices, as well as the Office of Personnel Management to offer training as a growth endeavor with real benefits for the sponsoring organization or agency. This finding is addressed by Hayes (1993) and Koonce (1991).

The success of management development training programs during an era of reduced training dollars will be dependent upon how much internal support there is for the continuation of the programs. Cornesky (1993) identified that not only must there be a clear measurement of the trainees' knowledge, skills and abilities, but there must be evidence of the attainment of individualized objectives. Successful developmental training programs must identify the needs and expectations of all customers and make the necessary provisions to satisfy those needs and meet those expectations.

The specific presentations and instruction for The WEL program varies from year to year. This implies that certain satisfiers that may exist for one group of trainees may not be present for future groups. Further investigation of this discovery revealed that the topics of presentations are the same but the content and instructors may vary depending on which contractor receives the government contract for the year. Since this study was not a program evaluation of the Women's Executive Leadership Program, additional research in this area is needed to assess the successfulness of the program in meeting its objectives. In a similar study, Berg (1989) concluded that additional measures are necessary to evaluate both instructors' skills and student satisfaction with training.

Consistently the graduates revealed the anticipation of potential advancement either within their agencies or outside. This finding implies that sponsoring agencies should find a way to utilize "trained" employees in their present positions and offer

non-competitive opportunities for promotion. The present structure of the federal government personnel classification system is very limiting. Graduates cannot be placed in positions that afford an advantage that other applicants did not have. Finding a way to promote the graduate of the management development training program without further competition is a challenge faced by training offices in every organization. The present process is currently under review and suggested changes have been submitted to the Office of Personnel Management and a way to benefit from the dollars and time invested in graduates of management development training programs is expected during fiscal year 1995.

The implications that downsizing and takeovers have for organizations are largely negative, and today's manager legitimately has a set of concerns that were not held by managers years ago. These are real issues that management development training programs should address both in and out of the classroom.

To remain relevant, management development training programs will need to continue to be sensitive to the challenges of the 1990s. The role of these programs will be one which prepares managers to handle change and challenges more effectively.

Responding to the needs and expectations of the trainee before, during and after the management training experience is a must requirement for any training office.

## **Further Study**

The following recommendations are made for further research:

1. A similar survey should be administered to graduating trainees as part of a cyclic review in order to provide an ongoing indication of customer service.
2. A small percentage of subjects indicated that the program did not meet their expectations, however they were still satisfied with the training received in the program. Since this is inconsistent with the research literature which suggest that satisfaction is directly related to individual expectations, further investigation is needed to determine the possible reasons for the disparity.
3. The findings from this study are based on a selected population and small sample size. It is recommended that this study be replicated using subjects from other agencies and graduates of other management development training programs.
4. It is recommended that correlational studies be conducted to determine how various biographical factors affect graduate satisfaction. The analysis of the selected biographical items in this study should be replicated with a larger and more diverse sample.
5. Further research should be conducted to clarify each factor identified in this study that influences graduate satisfaction.
6. Further research is needed to explore the relationship between job and training satisfaction factors.

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## APPENDIX A

### Survey Instrument One

## SATISFACTION FACTORS QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Please use a pen or pencil to complete this questionnaire. There are no right or wrong answers and your responses will be treated **confidentially**. This form contains an identification number that will be used for follow-up purposes only. You may use the back side of the page or attach additional sheets if needed. Thank you for taking the time to help with this project.

### Section A

1. Were you satisfied with the training you received in the WEL program?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

2. Please explain your response to question #1.

3. What were your expectations of the WEL program?

4. Did the WEL program meet your expectations?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

5. What were the major strengths of the WEL program?



**Section B**

1. Present Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Occupational Series: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Grade: \_\_\_\_

4. Highest educational level:

high school/GED	____	Master's Degree	____
some college	____	Advanced Certificate	____
Associate's Degree	____	Ph.D./Ed.D. Degree	____
Bachelor's Degree	____		

5. Number of years of government service:

less than 2	____	6-9	____	14-17	____
2-5	____	10-13	____	more than 17	____

6. Number of years employed by Department of the Interior:

less than 2	____	6-9	____	14-17	____
2-5	____	10-13	____	more than 17	____

7. Number of bureaus in Department of the Interior for which you have worked:

one	____	three	____
two	____	more than three	____

8. Bureau where you are presently employed:

Bureau of Indian Affairs	____	Minerals Management Service	____
Bureau of Land Management	____	National Park Service	____
Bureau of Mines	____	Office of Surface Mining	____
Bureau of Reclamation	____	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	____
U.S. Geological Survey	____	Office of the Secretary	____
Office of Inspector General	____		

Other (dept/bureau or company name): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Bureau or agency you worked for when you entered the WEL program:

Bureau of Indian Affairs	___	Minerals Management Service	___
Bureau of Land Management	___	National Park Service	___
Bureau of Mines	___	Office of Surface Mining	___
Bureau of Reclamation	___	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	___
U.S. Geological Survey	___	Office of the Secretary	___
Office of Inspector General	___		

Other (please name): \_\_\_\_\_

10. Year you completed the WEL program:

1984 \_\_\_ 1987 \_\_\_ 1988 \_\_\_ 1989 \_\_\_ 1990 \_\_\_ 1991 \_\_\_  
1992 \_\_\_

11. Number of grade level promotions since you graduated from the WEL program:

none \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_ more than 5 \_\_\_  
1 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_

12. Highest number of employees you have managed or supervised in one position since graduating from the WEL program:

none \_\_\_ 1-3 \_\_\_ 4-6 \_\_\_ 7-9 \_\_\_ more than 9 \_\_\_

13. Have you changed career fields since you graduated from the WEL program?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

14. Have you completed other management training programs since the WEL program?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

15. What other career development activities have you been involved in since you graduated from WEL? (list or describe)

Return to: M. J. Tucker, 12203 Holm Oak Dr., Waldorf, MD 20601

## APPENDIX B

### Survey Instrument Two



## APPENDIX C

### Cover Letter - Instrument One

Dear Women's Executive Leadership (WEL) Graduate:

I am conducting research to identify the factors that determine if customers are satisfied with the training they received in management development training programs. As a graduate of the Women's Executive Leadership Program and former customer of the Office of Personnel Management, your needs and expectations are very important.

Recently, the Federal government adopted a customer-focused approach to improve the quality of government service as part of President Clinton's effort to "reinvent government." The results of this study will help the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of the Interior Training Offices improve the quality of service experienced by the customers of training programs. The information you provide will be used to improve customer service in the area of training and management development.

Enclosed is a questionnaire which all Department of the Interior WEL graduates are being asked to complete. This questionnaire is the first part of a two part study. You will receive part two, once this form is completed and returned. The form contains an identification number that will be used for follow-up purposes only.

Any personal information you provide will be treated confidentially. The results will not be identified with you in any way, so your frank and honest opinions are solicited. If you have any questions concerning this survey you can contact me at (703) 358-1817 or (301) 843-4886. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it by Feb 1, 1994 in the stamped, self-addressed envelope which has been provided.

Your participation in this study is truly appreciated.

Sincerely,

M. Janet Tucker  
Senior Training Specialist

Enclosure

## APPENDIX D

### Reminder Postcard - Instrument One

February 7, 1994

Dear Survey Participant:

Last week you were mailed a questionnaire regarding the Women's Executive Leadership (WEL) program. Your assistance is vital to the successful completion of this research effort.

If you have already completed the form and returned it, thank you for your promptness. If you haven't, please do so as soon as possible.

M. Janet Tucker  
DOI/OTE

## APPENDIX E

### Cover Letter - Instrument Two

April 8, 1994

Dear Women's Executive Leadership (WEL) Graduate:

Thank you for responding to part one of my research study. I certainly appreciate the sincere and detailed responses. It is obvious from your responses that you had a valuable training experience. If you did not respond to part one, that's ok, I still need your response to this survey.

I am enclosing part two of the study. Once you have completed it, please return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by **April 20, 1994**. The form contains an identification number that will be used for follow-up purposes only.

Any information you provide will be treated confidentially. The results will not be identified with you in any way, so your frank and honest responses are solicited. If you have any questions, you can contact me at (703) 358-1817 or (301) 843-4886.

Thank you for your help throughout this project. Your contribution to this research is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

M. Janet Tucker  
Senior Training Specialist

## APPENDIX F

### Reminder Post Card (Instrument Two)

April 21, 1994

Dear WEL Graduate:

If you have returned survey #2, thank you.  
If you have not completed and returned survey #2,  
it's not too late. I still need your response.  
Please complete the survey and mail it by May 4.  
If you didn't receive a survey, please call me  
at (301) 843-4886.

Thanks!

Janet Tucker

## APPENDIX G

### Satisfaction Explanations

## **Satisfaction explanations from survey one, question 2.**

The overall experience of the WED Program helped me develop a realistic understanding of organizational structures and the power and strategic resources essential to effective management.

The training and work assignments provided a broad overview of management and management issues.

I thought the training I received was excellent. The contract trainers were some of the best and the other elements of the program (interviews, details and shadowing were rigorous but very rewarding).

The program was a great opportunity to develop management skills, view upper management and increase abilities and self confidence.

Both the formal training, the group experience and the other elements were very interesting and educational.

Variety of training was helpful (i.e., how Congress works), quality of instructors--weld training

I found the program allowed me to grow personally and professionally based on my experiences. The interactions with individuals outside my agency were very enlightening and provided a great network. The way the components were structured allowed one to experience how a team operates--good and bad. I would not have been ready for the job I'm in without WEL.

The training was excellent. It was very intense, forced me to get out of my box, take time to network and learn a lot about myself and management skills.

It was exciting, fulfilling, challenging, and of high quality. It was energizing and immensely supportive of "growing pains."

The program is well run. It's focus is broad (meaning comprehensive). The intent is to make/create a better workplace by creating better individuals.

WEL training was an adventure in seeing the government through a new perspective. Overall the program encourages one to take a close look at yourself as an individual and how as individuals, we relate, both positively and negatively, towards others. It's (WEL) a strong and powerful tool to use to many advantages.

The program presented a good cross-section of issues and problems likely to be encountered as participants rose through the ranks.

The training was extensive, the instructors excellent, the developmental assignments incredible and the networking opportunities abundant.

The training received in the WEL program provided me with the knowledge, skills and networking contacts to utilize when deemed necessary for career advancement.

Training was excellent. Topics covered prepared participants to successfully accomplish their goals.

Details were helpful. Teamwork was very useful. It's what you make it.

Gave me an appreciation for how others perceive me, a sense of the diversity in the workplace, and a sense of confidence.

The program was well organized and the contract programmers on the whole were excellent. The lack of adequate support from the WEL program office was unfortunate.

I thoroughly enjoyed my participation in the WEL Program. It provided valuable training in areas such as coaching and counseling, leadership/supervisory skills, teambuilding, etc. All of these skills are used in my current position.

Program provided a chance to take a broad look at the workings of the Federal government, which one rarely gets to see in one's position.

The developmental year was exhilarating--and exhausting, a true growth process! I learned how management leaders generate success for organizations, whether they are manufacturing a product or providing a service. Thanks to the WEL program, I expanded my vista--"thinking big," as an earlier graduate had suggested at our orientation. I was able to meet managers about whom I had only read or whose programs interested me. For example, after reading a Washington Post article about the "glass ceiling," I wrote to the Vice President for Human Resources of the Marriott Corporation who was quoted in the story and who agreed to be interviewed as part of my training. What an interesting opportunity--a look into the private sector on a major topic!

The training itself (core classes) was very beneficial. I had an opportunity to experience many different assignments and meet with other agencies I would never have had the opportunity if not for WEL.

Overall I enjoyed the program/travel/meeting people. It has benefitted me personally more than professionally.

WEL gave us the opportunity to design training that benefitted our career--however I do not believe that the FWS Personnel staffer or the OPM counselor provided adequate critical feedback when WEL participants devised their year's plan. Many details could have been improved if the WEL participant had more structured guidance.

It was an excellent year. I learned a lot about myself and my agency.

Overall yes. Of course there were some training sessions that were not as well done as others. Calvin Jamison was not as professional or experienced as many other instructors. He did not seem to grow with our group.

The WEL Program gave me opportunity that no other Program would have been able to give. The uniqueness of being an "all female" program at that time was a definite plus. The Program was reality, the difficulties encountered during that year because of it being totally women. The networking that took place was great.

Personal growth and identification of goals was excellent--But I was extremely displeased with the fact of allowing false expectations to develop--I expected an end result from my agency--not anticipating to return to my same job with the same duties.

Overall, I was satisfied/pleased with the training. However, due to my background in Employee Development and Training, I knew several of the instructors and was familiar with many of the course topics. After awhile some of the topics became redundant to me even though the courses were well presented, etc.

The program was excellent. A problem was that my bureaus could not provide the financial support for me to as assignment any distance from my duty station.

The WEL program has been by far the best training I have been offered. The class room work more than adequately prepared us for supervisory. The discussions on the ADA and including people of all cultures were extremely gratifying.

I really enjoyed the core training provided by OPM.

I felt very fortunate to be selected to participate in the WEL program. The training I received definitely enhanced my skills which enabled me to do a better job on the projects I worked on.

I was very pleased with the training I received because it provided valuable enrichment for my professional and especially for my personal growth and development.

#1 - On the whole, yes--minor adjustments were recommended. i.e., orientation - too long, wrap up and reentry should have included more time on the Hill. Reentry did not begin to prepare me for the situation I would return to.

I chose to maximize the effort, therefore gained what I wanted not what was offered.

Most of the classes were worthwhile and well taught--a couple weren't. The team as a whole was a positive experience.

Very good foundation training that included formal, hands-on and practical experiences. Target grade levels are good.

The training program design provided many opportunities I had not previously had.

I enjoyed the training, travel and details into new, more challenging jobs. While much of the material was familiar to me from prior training to work experience, I thought the training was more progressive than standard federal "supervisory" training and the people in the program were very open and forward thinking. I particularly enjoyed working with the people in my cluster group (all outstanding federal employees) and the wide variety of other federal agencies.

I enjoyed the intense one-year training received from the WEL program. I especially enjoyed the many contacts made and the 30-day and 60-day details away from my duty station. The details put me on a daily work schedule with professionals from another Federal agency and gave me greater self confidence in everything I do. I cannot say enough positive things about how the WEL program training benefitted me personally.

I feel every participant gets as much out of the program if they put in. My expectations were for personal and professional growth through my efforts. The WEL program helped me achieve that goal.

Overall, I was pleased with topics and information from consultants. There was, however, too much emphasis on role playing/teamwork especially given that there was no accountability for participants who did not work as/contribute to the team or who handicapped a team.

Met a lot of people outside FWS, other agencies, some excellent trainers, good coverage of management topics.

The program training courses virtually every aspect of what it takes to be a successful manager from setting personal goals and developing an individual development plan through development of skills such as conflict management, negotiation, oral and written communication and hands on supervisory experience.

There were several aspects of the program that helped me to "grow," gave confidence in myself. The developmental assignments and teambuilding exercises were the most critical to my confidence building. Many people, contacts, as well as friends, were gained through the program.

The personal growth of participating in the WEL program was greater than what I got from B.A. and M.A. degree rolled up in one.

Excellent exposure to a much greater variety of viewpoints and life experience.

Instructors were excellent. Interacting with other participants and learning also from them was a great opportunity. It was a great year for me--the best training I ever had. Improved my speaking skills immensely.

In general, trainers and material presented during class programs/sessions was very good.

The training was intensive, challenging and enlightening.

I thought the range of training was very good--especially the exposure to the world of SES and how Congress works. In general those selected to provide the training were excellent.

I thoroughly enjoyed the program.

I improved/developed management skills that have proven to be quite useful. The WEL program inspired me to obtain an advanced degree.

Yes, good variety of training that included 30 and 60 day assignments.

Well planned; diversity of training activities and modes of training; opportunity to meet counterparts in other agencies.

The program was quite thorough and provided training in almost all administrative categories.

I had numerous opportunities via details, shadowing and training. Networking with people in my agency and externally.

Overall yes. The program offered a variety of programs which provided an "inter" to upper management, other agencies and experiences I would not ordinarily have.

The most extensive management, administrative training I have received in my career. I feel that it continuously serves me in my jobs.

All elements at the WEL program (classroom training, details, interviews, shadow assignments) were invaluable in providing the skills (and experiences) necessary for a highly trained manager.

Personally I learned a great deal--particularly from the 30 and 60 day assignments as well as the scheduling assignments.

Excellent trainers, great class, good cooperation made it a super learning and growing experience.

The training was all excellent. I received a lot of beneficial information during the training session, both in Washington and in Lancaster.

The courses taught me about myself, my future employees and how I would interact with them. It helped me open up many doors that wouldn't have been available otherwise. I enjoyed and felt every facet of the training requirements were so beneficial in preparing for the next level of my career. The experience and knowledge I gained can be carried through throughout my federal career.

I was more than satisfied because of the opportunities available in carrying out the details, shadow assignments, and executive interviews. I was satisfied because I put a lot of effort into the program. This program is designed, to an extent, to let you get out of it what you put into it. I must add that I have a very supportive supervisor who made sure I did everything I wanted in the WEL Program. Without that support, I may not have been so fortunate.

I am very pleased with the training I received through the WEL program. The training was quite diverse and intensive. It gave me an opportunity to become familiar with, and knowledgeable about, many areas of government service. Most importantly, it provided countless opportunities for personal development. In

addition, the opportunity to interact with such a large number of participants from so many different agencies was a unique and valuable experience in and of itself. My level of satisfaction with this program was/is extremely high.

## APPENDIX H

### Expectation Comments

### **Expectation comments from survey one, question 3.**

To gain an insight to management to determine if I wished to pursue a management track, to gain a better understanding of organizations.

Opportunity to assess my potential as a manager. Opportunity to observe our top leaders, witness their methods of decision-making, network opportunity with other government employees of different departments.

A program that would teach me where I need to improve to become a valued, desired and dynamic employee. The Myers-Briggs and the peer relations survey provided me very valuable information. I strongly endorse keeping these components in the program. I expected the program to enable me to soar in my career. It just hasn't happened. I can't say that I fault the WEL program though. At this point, I don't believe the powerholders in my agency are fully committed to the same ideals of the WEL program. It appears that I was allowed to participate in the program because I showed I have the potential to succeed.

That I would learn the tools to become an effective manager within the Department of the Interior and that successful completion of the program would be an avenue for me to move into a managerial position.

That I would receive training applicable to supervision and work assignments outside my normal routine.

Network with other Federal women and receive management training.

Networking, learning how other departments worked.

I was nervous and scared about the program and questioned if I'd be able to be successful and productive. I wanted to learn from my experiences. I wanted to see how other agencies operated and see if I'd like to transfer.

I expected to learn new skills on human relations but not to the extent actually provided.

Enable me to open doors in terms of contacts and job opportunities within my agency.

When the program began I did not have well defined expectations.

I didn't know what to expect except that it would be a year of challenges. both professionally and personally. And it was. I'm the just let me work by myself kind of person, knowing in advance about cluster groups, I was terrified. I almost didn't apply to WEL. Also, extended details away from home really scared me. But I chose to take the challenge.

To get training recognized by OPM to qualify for promotions; to gain a "government" perspective on management to complement the MBA I was working on; to broaden my vision if my role as federal employee and manager.

To learn the skills and techniques to become a better manager/employee.

I expected the WEL program to provide me with a vehicle to view the "big picture" of government/agency operations.

To better equip me for the job I had prior to entering the program. Upon completion of program, management determined I should be transferred to a new job for a promotion.

Management Training, experience in details, learning Washington, DC and Congress.

Learn about hoe to be a supervisor.

I expected a program that would prepare me for management positions and would give me more self-confidence with upper management.

To obtain supervisory/managerial skills and to enhance existing skills.

To gain an insight into what was required t progress upwards in federal employment.

I looked forward to developmental assignments, as well as classroom instruction from OPM. At orientation, i learned immediately of the possibilities. Another Fish and Wildlife Service participant, Dee Butler, was already so prepared that she was planning to do a detail in Hewlett Packard's Total Quality Management Office at its California headquarters, and, to save money, she was planning to stay with her in-laws in Menlo Park.

I don't think I could have envisioned the opportunities that WEL made realities.

I think I expected more out of the program. At the completion of the program I felt I was just a number. There was not individual attention. Debra Eddington was very busy and didn't have time for personalizing the IDP phase. I felt that this was a

money making program for OPM and they were encouraging too many participants without adequate staff to handle the amount of people who were in attendance. I also had the misconception that after graduation a raise would follow. This just didn't happen. I realized that the only way anything happens is if you make it happen.

Individualized attention in developing a program. Details to other organizations, individualized training by class needs, meeting other women and follow-up classes.

A promotion sooner after graduation. We've been so well trained. However, FWS doesn't assist it's WEL grads to find better or higher grades. Since applying for 15 positions in different agencies, all of which were filled by political appointees, I've found a position where it looks like I may get a chance at a 12/13. The system is really corrupt. I'll give you details if you want them.

One of my expectations was that I would move into management and this still has not happened.

To learn, experience, and practice leadership and management techniques.

To gain knowledge in management/supervision in the U.S. Government.

Professional growth and opportunities; I thought I would be more competitive for management positions.

My expectations were to receive training to prepare myself for an executive position, gain more exposure to various agencies and people.

Learn and practice management skills and techniques. I did think some personal friendships would endure but that did not happen except for the one person I knew going in.

I was very tired when I entered the program, and really didn't have any expectations.

To recognize management as a second profession and know the implications for federal management in terms of mastering a unique set of skills and behaviors.

My expectations were to receive management and supervisory training which had been off limits to me because of my low grade. I also expected that with this training my chances for promotion would be greater.

I expected training and work experiences that would enhance my leadership skills. With these experiences, I further expected to advance in my career or transfer into a position which would allow for career growth.

Training: My expectations were high. They were met primarily through good quality training.

Mentoring: One expectation was to have had a high level mentor, Once I was selected, I was on my own. No one was assigned to help me see the big picture so I could make good choices about my details.

Management training.

I thought it would be a spring board for career advancement. It has not been. The program itself was valuable. It just didn't help my career.

Further develop management style, skills, a potential for a new position and get awareness of higher levels SES, and policy levels.

Gaining greater understanding of my agency and management techniques.

At first, I didn't know what to expect. But after orientation, I realized that it wouldn't be very different to do the tasks, but that working in other details (30 & 60 day) would be hard while keeping my present job covered and my personal life normal. This turned out to be the case. I also had the mistaken expectation that WEL training would make me more eligible for promotion in FWS--it has not. WEL may have made me a more valuable Federal employee, but not in Alaska and not in FWS. If I were geographically mobile, I'm sure I could have capitalized more on the opportunities in D.C., or some other region.

I did not expect the training year to be so intense. I guess it was intense for me because I had to maintain my job as well as juggle the training schedules and assignments. I expected management training and I received it.

To determine if my goal towards management was realistic and reachable through training and opportunities made available.

For specific information on how to succeed in federal service which would be made available in a professional environment.

Didn't really know. Thought there would be a lot of details into other programs.

To learn the skills necessary to be a successful manager.

I suspected to gain more skills in people management.

I didn't go in with any expectations.

To become or to obtain the skills to become an effective manager and eventually obtain an executive level position.

To be able to improve my skills in management. To become a better manager.

Uncertain as I didn't know the WEL program existed until I was asked to apply - since another woman and I did the program in '89/'90, people have become very familiar with it!

I hoped it would help me focus on some career decisions, i.e., management position vs. staff work. I expected the program to be challenging and arduous. I expected the program to rejuvenate my professional life. I hoped it would expand my horizons and inject creativity into my work.

To someday be able to break out of my field (personnel) and have a new challenge that would rejuvenate me.

To grow professionally and personally.

I thought I would improve management skills and learn more about other agencies.

career development; learn management skills

To give me additional skills to move into top management.

I had none, really! So, was frustrated, pleased, and rewarded.

What I described above but also training that concentrated on skills that women are usually less proficient than men. Some examples are conflict (dealing with it in a male oriented world) briefing skills and communication skill enhancement.

To provide a higher level of management training for my future career development.

To develop me into a highly-trained, highly-competent manager.

To learn what "top management" is really like - to learn from top managers and their different styles of achieving "success"

To test the waters of management and to see if I'd like it.

Leadership training.

To gain leadership and supervisory information. To grow as an individual.

To give me management training and exposure to high level managers. I wanted to know how and why they make decisions the way they do. I also expected to "hone" or "cultivate" my supervisory skills.

I expected to receive quality training, something a step or two above the quality offered within the Dep. of Interior. I hoped to get enough good exposure that it would generate some mentors for me. I wanted the opportunity to do something different.

Once accepted, and after I made the decision to complete the WEL program, I concentrated on "stretching" myself. In other words, I saw my participation in this program as a personal challenge. I have to admit that at first I was somewhat intimidated by the assignments, the level of commitment required by the program, and the aggressiveness of many of the other participants. I soon learned to focus on myself, to not compare myself to others, and to concentrate on improving my own skills and abilities. I found the program to be very exciting and rewarding because I learned so much about myself and increased my self confidence. In short, my expectations were to become a better employee and to "broaden my horizons." I believe I accomplished this and much more...

## APPENDIX I

### Subjects Attitudinal Comments

**Individual subject responses from survey one, questions 7 (professional benefits) and 8 (personal benefits).**

**Professional Benefits**

Good management training; Developed good contacts; Received lots of visibility

I gained confident exposure within my agency.

Learned a great deal of "more progressive" thinking for government management exists outside my agency to outside AK. If I ever become a manager, I will use the materials and experiences from WEL. I will also make use of a large number of contacts made through WEL to help bring FWS into the 21st century.

Because of WEL training, I received another job with a grade increase. Advanced into a managerial position and have been called upon on several occasions to lead work groups and task forces for the entire National Park Service.

The details gave me visibility in my agency, and this seemed to have helped me.

Met most of the Directorate in D.C., plus a lot of other managers. May have been instrumental in my getting a job here. Widened my horizons - which were pretty parochial.

By gaining experience in different departments through the developmental assignments. Meeting new friends through the program. Individual assessment in test such as Myers Briggs. Development of public speaking skills.

I gained confidence in myself and work. I have joined several committee and an even "chairing" a law enforcement training session. Before, I would have never volunteered for anything, lacking the confidence in my knowledge of the subject. Gained new contacts out in the field.

My goals have moved up also.

The self-confidence I gained and supervisory skills.

Helped me to attain a GS-13 manager position.

I have much more self-confidence and feel I interact much better with others.

Made some great contacts. Had opportunity to "manage" a small office during one detail, favorably impressed some people above me, all of which contributed to my obtaining a promotion to a field supervisor, management position this past year. Note - it took me 3 years until I chose to apply for such a promotion because I ended the WEL program 4 months pregnant and took advantage of the opportunity to stay in my old job where I knew the job well and was given permission to work 3/5-4/5 time for 3 years--a great advantage for a new mom!

I am much more confident and willing to initiate my own ideas. I am more relaxed with superiors. Major challenges do not automatically engender fear and anxiety. I am more cool under pressure. After completing the program, I made a career move to Washington, D.C. for two years. The program helped me to make this decision and it was a good one.

So far, I haven't benefitted professionally from the program and sincerely doubt if I will--too close to retirement (5 years), downsizing or rightsizing and the glass ceiling in the organization I work for.

The experience and growth - especially the networking - helped to expand my views - I am more flexible and open to change ideas.

The training enhanced marketable skills; increased opportunities; opened up contacts with other agencies.

I have increased respect from management. I was accepted into law school and will graduate in May 1994.

New skills I learned in a 60 day assignment have been carried over to some new projects of ours. These were technical, not managerial skills though.

I was given a promotion to a GS-12 from GS-11. However, there were reasons beyond for not progressing further. Perhaps follow-up by a WEL coordinator could have helped as a go between or for myself and top management.

New job, new contacts, new vision

Yes - I since have been promoted and I am now the Assistance Chief of Human Resources Development.

No direct results - did expand my background of knowledge and skills.

From my increase in technical management skills. I dealt with personnel management and issues much easier and with more confidence.

Because of the type of experience and knowledge I gained, I was selected for a GM-13 supervisory position. I also have been called upon by FEW and internal agency programs to speak about my experience and what it did for me. Because of my 30-day assignment at Headquarters I am recognized by name and recognized by my reputation in the workforce. I have been selected to serve on a Bureau wide operations working group regarding QI issues.

Made some great contacts within my Bureau. Greatly increased my personal visibility in the organization.

Had considerable bearing on receiving a 2 grade promotion into an excellent position.

Extremely informed, competent, developed, confident professionals.

I know I have to make the opportunities in my career happen for me. I can't sit around waiting for someone to do for me. That's how you get ahead. I have also found that the SESers that I worked with have been willing to help me out with advice, and looking for a new job. People are there for me when I didn't expect it.

Upon completing the WEL program, I had two offers for promotions in the Washington Office. I accepted a GS-12/13 position in the Office of Training and Education in Arlington, Virginia. In early 1993, I was able to move into a position in an unrelated field (Employee Relations). I believe this opportunity was made available to me partly because of my WEL experiences.

### **Personal Benefits**

Learned time management, made good friends, built confident, & learned communication skills.

Ultimately I received a promotion which I attribute, in part, to my WEL program experience.

My husband and I had to renegotiate our dual career expectations. My WEL year also exposed him to how adding travel demands on a working wife changes household management. (He says he's now more understanding of women who have kids and

work to travel, too. He's probably a better supervisor for having to play the support role for a change.) After my successfully completing my WEL year, he's more open to my idea of going back to school and he now understands that I'm more ambitious than he realized.

The personal benefits are stated above, but I want to reemphasize the personal self-confidence, interpersonal skills, group interaction, etc., received from WEL. These are rewarding in my personal life as well as my professional life.

I had a very strong marriage, with children and I learned they could survive without me and do fine. It was a growing experience for me, my spouse, and my children. They were very supportive.

Provided personal measurement against other participants. I felt I gained better self-evaluation of human resource skills, inter-personal/peer skills, social skills.

By developing better public speaking and written communication skills, learning the importance of setting goals.

Gained many new friends.

Self-confidence gained, personal relationships better, goal setting.

Exposure to Washington, D.C. and politics was invaluable.

Even though I have strong family ties, if I had to make it on my own, the WEL program helped to prepare me for this.

I learned about myself, my styles, the way I interact with and respond to some people in my personal life and manner so that I better understood our conflicts

I had lots of personal growth and I think the most important thing I learned is that I cannot do it all myself and physically and mentally I am responsible for myself and have to learn to suggest alternatives at times and perhaps even say no at times.

The expansion of friends and new experiences. Better organized.

I have close friends whom I continue to communicate with. I feel more confident of my personal abilities and skills. I am more willing to take risks.

The 30 and 60 day assignments took me out of my "comfort zone" and revealed a lot of things about how I handle new situations.

Personal friendships with other participants.

The training allowed me to regain confidence I had lost during a legal matter.

More cooperative planning of assignments (guidance). Assistance in finding promotional opportunities.

Personal growth and confidence and maturity.

I was able to continue with many contacts which have been beneficial. I continue to try to insist new WEL participants find details and shadow assignments. In addition the WEL experience provided an opportunity to stretch my skills and affirm that I am able to perform in and under a variety of circumstances successfully.

My confidence and assertiveness was enhanced greatly from all my WEL participants.

Grown in aptitude, attitude, experience, knowledge, confidence.

I learned more about my strengths and weaknesses. I learned I was capable of doing many different things and have the ability to manage.

The friends I have made and hopefully kept.

Developed interpersonal skills

The self-evaluation segments.

I made many new friends, and saw a lot of new country I'd never seen before. I also feel I've stretched and challenged myself where I might not have before.

It certainly boosted myself esteem and confidence. I'm a little bit more organized in my personal life because I learned not to let go of things that aren't really important.

The personal benefits that I have obtained through the WEL program are countless. Among the most important to me are increased self-confidence, an enhanced ability to function effectively in a wide variety of personal and professional situations, a better understanding of myself (including my abilities, interests, and desires), more independence and a stronger commitment to my own individuality.

## APPENDIX J

### **Major strengths of the Women's Executive Leadership Program.**

**Subject comments from survey one, question 5.**

develop broad network of contacts

broaden understanding of organizations and management strategies

interaction with other participants, team building, exposure to a variety of individuals

structure of the developmental assignment

cluster group experience

breath of training

flexibility - design own program

use of non-federal instructors

opportunity to explore career choices

components provided opportunities for self-growth and organizational understanding

developmental assignments, book readings and shadow assignments.

Wesley and Hines Associates was a great consulting group.

team building, teaching one to manage multiple priorities simultaneously, negotiation and skill building

core training sessions, transition workshop, rotational assignments.

exposure to legislative branch of government, ability to meet others in the fed government who had similar goals.

exposure to peers in a range of government agencies.

core training courses, freedom to chose assignments and meet other managers.

meeting a board and diverse group of women in all areas of government, exchanging ideas and information, details.

seminars on management trends, self-analysis,k and details.

personal evaluation networking, management training.

shadow assignment, detail assignments, most of training sessions.

guidance received by Allis Jones and her staff. The interest given to the participants by supervisors and higher officials in your Department.

develop stronger personal skills, better understanding of strengths and weaknesses. tailored to meet individual needs

provided basic framework where individuals could take as far as they could. Core I and II were excellent. detail assignments were valuable. I read 18 management books which proved useful. I find that I often refer to those books and class notes to help in my new current job.

classroom sessions were excellent, detail opportunities to meet other people were also very good.

core training meeting other participants and the interaction with other participants.

working as a team in the cluster groups, receiving management supervisory training, meeting in a place away from my work place, performing as managers and supervisors in completing our task, developmental assignments, shadow and conduct interviews.

dynamic , quality instructors and consultants, program offered training for personal growth allowing me to understand my own strengths and weaknesses

program provided opportunities for networking wit current executives and managers, program maintained a personal touch in spite of enrollment size, autonomy and flexibility of the participant, offered experiences of a lifetime through coursework, work experience and networking opportunities

Formal training, details

Formal training classes, evaluation of personal management skills and style, executive interviews

cluster group, networking, DC experience

cultural diversity

success is up to the participant

rotational and shadow assignments

most of consultants were good, networking new job experiences, exposure to executives

participation with cluster group members and learning to work in a team environment and as a team leader

networking with other mid-level managers, training sessions details and shadowing opportunities

cross-program diversity among participants

quality of training staff, thoroughness of material, realization of importance of setting goals

developmental assignments, shadowing assignment, executive interviews, core II training and team building exercises, most of all, Debra Eddington

the total program, it covered every aspect of one's life

exposure to government wide expectations of management

provided excellent training in cultural diversity, working in the year 200, presentation skills, team building, shadowing assignment, and details. very impressed with the instructors in the program

opportunities to include details, shadowing assignment and interviews. meet and learn from people at higher levels, opportunity to observe and learn from different management styles, learn about oneself and management theories, processes through course assessments, training sessions and readings

team building, personality analysis, skills assessments learning to work with others, learning to accept other and different ways of accomplishing projects.

the kinds and quality of training, the mandatory interactions with such a diverse group of individuals; the team activities and presentation was an invaluable experience in learning to interact with others who had a totally different approach and personal agendas

variety of formal training, opportunity to experience new ideas, work experiences with developmental assignments

team building, with cluster group activities, interviewing and shadowing senior executives, using detail to learn more about other departments and agencies  
opportunity to interact with a variety of people, make many contacts

supervisor support, small group interaction and development of support network,  
diversity of training activities

very well organized, training sites and projects were effective

opportunity and visibility

offered a variety of program which provided an "entre" to upper management, other agencies and experiences

Individual training sessions for personnel management, cultural diversity, ethic,  
details valuable

extraordinary in its breath, scope, diversity and training components, structured to allow for independent choices. Team building, support of peers through the sam process.

Trainers were outstanding

allowed individuals to design their own development program with little restriction on detail assignments

interaction with other participants from a variety of agencies

competency of instructors, interaction with other agency participants

opportunity for exposure and a chance to explore and do something different.

## APPENDIX K

### **Major Weaknesses of the Women's Executive Leadership Program**

Comments from survey one, question 6

All of the mandatory classroom sessions were held at one geographic location--I feel such should be at different locations--thereby--allowing participants the opportunity to view other parts of our country. More centralized geographic locations would be more cost effective for participants.

Sometimes practical application of training was impossible--e.g., training for situations which might arise during a career as a manager.

The lack of follow-up after graduation. I have heard nothing except one Christmas card from the program director. Also - a major - weakness is the lack of non-competitive assignment and a higher graded position after completion. I know this is afforded and those who complete other, less regions, programs.

1. 300+ participants was too large. Needs to be broken into modules with start/finish times that are different.
2. Uneven support from sponsoring agencies left some participants underfunded.

Trainers inconsistent inequality; No formalized follow-up

Although I didn't personally feel this way, many individuals complained over the lack of guidance/structure for picking and choosing assignments. The toughest part was keeping up with my own job and homelife.

1. Debra at OPM cannot manage this tremendous program alone.
2. DOI and Bureau's need to be more involved with OPM and participants.
3. Cluster groups composition must be more diverse.

- Occasional glitches in organization due to insufficient WEL staffing (i.e., Debra needed more assistants!)
- A few less than satisfactory instructors (Joan Olpin, Mr. Hines)
- Too much emphasis on cluster group participation.
- Difficulty in making home supervisors live up to their promises (not a fault of the WEL administration!)

I was not on training status and therefore was responsible for my regular job. This is good to teach "juggling," but distracts from the program.

Having people like the barbie doll. The blonde from the South who "taught" people how to "walk and talk like a regular lady." She was a joke and her classes were a waste of

time, in my opinion, Joan Olpin--that's her name! Our cluster group sort of took her classes as a comedy session. I hear she's still around?!!!!

Participants were not well screened. Some agency did send their best and brightest--others seemed to be "parking" problem employees. The program also seemed quite disorganized--it's very difficult to plan travel (for single moms) especially when the dates changed constantly.

- Not enough contacts with other cluster groups.
- Sometimes communication/organization did not filter down the channels.
  
- Supervisor not happy with his contacts with program managers.
- Book reports and some other paperwork exercises, i.e., team leader reports seemed unnecessary for managerial development.

Certain instructors were poor--hence those periods of instruction were not helpful.

Orientation (too long) and too much team building throughout year. Graduation/transition week was also not as useful.

Feedback from OPM WEL program office on submittals. Reentry workshop especially the Capitol Hill segment.

Can't really remember any.

If there were any, they were probably understaffing at OPM in the wake of an unexpected departure, and a few instructors who were not what I would have hoped for. However, I was impressed with one woman instructor who, I felt, could handle any challenge!

Debra Eddington was overworked and understaffed. Hagerstown, Maryland was a drag. Eating in the same restaurant for that long of a period was almost unbearable.

It built you up that you could conquer the world. However, management didn't believe this. I'm still not supervising--nor have I received a grade increase. Timeliness of OPM never did receive our graduation pictures--nor were there any follow-up classes/newsletters, etc., as promised.

Little guidance (on part of FWS and OPM) provided the participants.

No pressure on management to use graduates of the WEL program. At a time when our agency is downsizing flattening management, they don't need new managers.

The cluster group assignments were rather disorganized. With only one program advisor (Debra), it was difficult to get answers to your specific questions.

Some participants were unable to do assignments at the places they chose because of funding problems.

There is no commitment of the Government upon completion. In some developmental programs completion of the program allows employees to have non-competitive status when applying for positions at the next higher grade.

The major weaknesses were: inability to get a new job/promotion based upon graduating from WEL program (currently, a few other programs certify promotion for one year). Also, I disliked the cliches that naturally formed in the program based on race, etc.

The cluster group experience was the least satisfying and I feel it contributed very little to learning management skill and technique. Hagerstown was a negative element for some.

The weakness of the WEL program lies with the Fish and Wildlife Service. Managers in the FWS do not see the WEL program as a serious and valuable program, and do not offer participants important detail assignments.

The Agency I worked for did not fully support the training as they would not allow me to complete my rotational assignments outside of the Bureau of Internal Affairs. It would be nice if OPM could require each Agency to allow at least one rotational assignment outside to the Agency where employed.

One weakness was that OPM did not reinforce the independence the WEL program participant has in setting up work development assignments, etc. My personnel office was confused as to what latitude I had in setting up my assignments--especially in private industry. Even OPM calling my personnel office did not help me. I was very frustrated because of the limitations put on me.

Too much time spent on some classes, while not enough quality time scheduled for other classes.

Lack of feedback from Program Administrators, too female.

The director is too busy. Consultants were on a yearly contract - some could have been replaced.

Only minor weaknesses: 1. Only the facilities (Hagerstown) were minor adjustment in the that it was when very hot or very cold. Many of us had colds during the training.  
2. And other cultures could've been represented (other than black or white).

- The selection of participants at my Region was not thoughtful. Now we have a competitive process. Managers at my Region were not aware of the extent of program requirements. Now they are. I would have benefitted from indepth study of personnel issues that managers need to know = time and attendance policies, guidance procedures.

Classroom trainers skill and effectiveness varied. no promotion opportunities available.

The administration of the WEL program by just two people for 335 participants made it almost impossible for Debra Eddington to "stay on top of the program." Tracking of all the required task completion dates was disorganized and resulted in lost reports, wrong submitted dates, etc. Debra needs one or two staff to help. Another weakness was the wide range of experience found in the 11-12 grade participants. Some were very new 11's and many of us had 15 years or more experience. For some, the material was all "deja vu," for others too advanced. Consultants had to teach to a "lowest common denominator" level.

I cannot think of any weaknesses right now because the positive benefits overshadow any weaknesses I remember from the WEL program.

Funding sources need to be identified for potential candidates who are being kept out simply from lack of funds. Training locations need to be also held on west coast along with east coast.

Participants were not evaluated for their participation, and there was no accountability for performance or conduct. Participants who did no work, hindered teammates, or showed racist behavior were condoned.

Mired in paperwork, things like book reports.

Book reviews can be eliminated without adverse impact on candidates.

Professional Image - Don't need anyone telling us how to sit, shake hands, roll over, etc.! Most of us are more professional than the woman giving the programs;  
Management Book Reviews - Who reads them after they are done? Waste of time;  
Congressional Briefing - What congressional briefings? Waste of time!;  
Reentry Workshop - Waste of time.

Cluster group could have been able to spend more time together.

The segment on negotiations needed more meaningful examples than car buying. More meat on personnel regs and performance evaluations.

It was difficult at times to communicate with staff in the program, probably due to they're not having sufficient staff.

I was somewhat disappointed that there were not more women from the natural resource agencies in particular, those outside the administrative/budgeting/clerical field. I would have liked the opportunity to network more with other professional women biologists, geologists, etc.

Perhaps provide more guidance on rotational and shadow assignments. Provide more presentation skills training. In 1990, program needed more marketing at FWS Directorate level.

I could have used better advice from my advisor on picking my WEL assignments - this has been an afterthought. Perhaps this could be emphasized more when individuals first go into the program. Also lack of local support.

Motel; Food; A few - (i.e., how to walk - sit) classes were not beneficial

Some people were not really interested in management positions or didn't care to become committed to completing the program requirements.

The classes on giving presentations were not useful. The classes on teambuilding were not useful. The major problem is, the WEL program "dresses you up" for management, but there are very few "places to go" once you return.

Large class size, some contract trainers were not as good as others.

Actually, the overall program was done very well. Any weaknesses, if that is what they would be referred to, are in items 7 and 9 below.

Perpetual schedule changing, etc., administrative.

In my specific case the timing of core training - two week - prior to Christmas. Participants were cranky, not wanting to be there at the time. This took away from that important focus.

Critique of my performance in the program. I didn't feel like my weak points were identified and then improved on.

None. I urge all managers/supervisors undertake this program.

Support by top management not always there. No feedback from the OPM staff on your IDP goals or progress.

Getting to Hagerstown and the size of the whole class when we were all together.

Too much to do the first week of class. If we could have had advance notices of what we were going to have to do it could have been smoother.

There were individuals who really didn't work at and/or complete the requirements and were still allowed to graduate. I believe only those who are truly sincere and willing to improve themselves should receive the honor of graduating from the program.

In my opinion, the major weaknesses of the WEL program were 1) not receiving a better understanding of what the program entailed prior to orientation (many people were overwhelmed during the first week--I know of a few who decided to drop out after orientation); 2) not receiving enough information about the program and the opportunities that it would open to those who participated (I include this because I really think more work needs to go into helping participants determine if this is the "right" program for them. I found that participating in the WEL program put me on a very "fast track." Looking back, I'm not so sure I was fully prepared for that...As a result, I have since made some major changes in my life and my career successfully advancing however, I may have moved too quickly in directions that were not right for me. In the Service I have often heard it said that sometimes you have to go East to get West...along that same line of thinking, I would add that sometimes you have to drop back in order to move forward...for me, this has been true. I certainly don't intend these thoughts as a criticism of the WEL program--in actuality, my journey since completing the program has been extremely positive although not always easy...along the way I have become more aware of what I value and clearer about what I enjoy and find rewarding.. My suggestion would be that participants (and nominees) be thoroughly briefed about the opportunities that will open up to them and the decisions that they will have to make. Perhaps even more emphasis needs to be placed on helping participants explore not only their skills and abilities but also where they feel they will fit best and do their best work both for the agency and for themselves...); 3) the program is geared toward success and advancement (not that these are bad things by any means), however, with all the talk about "personal power," "political savvy," "leadership," "assertiveness/intentional communication," and "career success factors - (including dressing for success...)," I felt that something important was somehow missing...perhaps a more holistic approach to working, managing, and interacting with others. Less power, more cooperation...A need

to concentrate less on personal success, advancement, and "breaking the glass ceiling" (is that really where we want to be anyway???) and more emphasis on balance, human interaction, creativity, group dynamics, etc., etc., etc.

### **Suggested Changes**

IPP's should be drafted and approved much sooner. Many of us waited until that date before really getting started. I'd like to see two 60 day rotational assignments. Optimum would be a year's sabbatical so one could be in several long-term assignments.

Hagerstown was a terribly depressing place to stay for 2 weeks at a time in the winter months. You work so hard and put so much (emotionally and otherwise) into the Program a more conducive environment is definitely in order.

More OPM supervisors in the WEL class for one-on-one interaction/discussions. Our leader had to handle over 250 WEL participants.

I believe I covered this in my response to question number 6. See above.

Develop more awareness at the participating agency level.

I believe WEL should limit its numbers of participants to 250 per year. Increasing size of each class 1) devalues the WEL accomplishment and 2) lowers the teaching level within classes. WEL class groups could also be sorted to allow consultants to tailor their material to "new" government employees and "old" government employees.

I cannot think of any changes. Keep the program the way I remember it. I hope it hasn't changed much from when I graduated in 1990.

Perhaps some new training on TQM and employee motivation from the managers to the field level. Need to set up some type of mentoring network with new candidates bring able to call on graduates.

Stress and establish more mentoring with top managers.

Limit the size of the overall class - don't let it get so big that it is spoiled.

Accountability and critique of performance during class exercise and assignments;

Accountability for behavior during cores sessions.

Have the "Public Manager Workshop" before any of the other elements are accomplished by the participants.

Other than skip the book reports, none.

Few. It's a very good program. Elimination of Book Review.

Do not ask for an "Impact Paper" until a year or two later. That is when someone can give an honest opinion on how the training benefitted them. How can you put a paper together when you haven't had the chance to utilize the training skills you gained?

Better facilities - I would not have changed the program at all - But would have change what I did in the program.

The segment on negotiations needed prove meaningful examples than car buying. Move meat on personnel regulations and performance evaluations.

More legislative training. I thought this portion of the program was too brief.

Perhaps assign a mentor to participants--preferably from the growing pool of people in their own agency who have completed the program!

Local commitment and sincerity - I know full well there is nothing OPM can do about this, but so many people mentioned this same issue.

More problem solving classes - More emphasis on TQM.

Limit class size. Make sure agencies recommend people who are sincerely interested in management. Agencies should follow through and make sure graduates are aware of management opportunities.

Better preparation is needed for returning back to work. When I returned I was expected to go back to my old, day-to-day job. No new assignments or increased responsibilities became of WEL. I was resented for getting the training, I felt no longer a part of our group at work, and all of my work was permanently given to other people. Better preparation for returning to work is needed. I would suggest people keep as much of their job responsibilities and ties with their jobs.

Smaller class size, more guidance with rotational and shadow assignments, more training on presentation skills

I would recommend you focus more on skills which both men and women (especially women) have been found to be less skilled, i.e., conflict, briefing techniques, fitting in the "male oriented" environment. In speaking with more recent WEL participants there seems to be an agreement in these program areas. Also, you may want to consider running different tracks within the program - those who have had more supervisory experience than others as supervisors - as opposed to those who have had none. I would not keep them completely separated because of what they can learn from each other. However, having all training or try to have all training meet the needs of a varied skill level audience does not best serve the participants development.

More manageable (perhaps smaller) groups; more follow-up (or thru)

Vita

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Training Course Development Handbook: Guidelines and Recommendations, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Training and Education, 1993.