



16th Annual USFS National Middle Leader Program “Being a Leader in the Forest Service”

Weeks One, Two, and Three

February 25- March 1, 2019, Double Tree Hotel, Missoula, MT

April 1 - 5, 2019, Double Tree Hotel, Missoula, MT

May 6 - 10, 2019; Double Tree Hotel, Missoula, MT

Hello and Congratulations! You are receiving this letter because you were selected from a very competitive pool of applicants to be a participant in the 16th Annual US Forest Service Middle Leader Program, “Being a Leader in the Forest Service”. My name is Mike Wood, and I am the President of High Ridge Leadership, LLC. The USFS MLP is the result of a collaborative effort between US Forest Service Regions One, Three, Four and Five; the USFS Training and Employee Development office (TED; located in the Albuquerque Service Center); and High Ridge.

Please read this letter carefully and thoroughly. It contains all the pertinent logistical information to get you started in the program, including some important deadlines and dates prior to your first day in class. I will be back in touch with some short pre-program readings, along with some additional information that is relevant to the pre-program and classroom components of the program. ***For now, this is the essential information you need to know.***

GENERAL POINTS OF CONTACT

For all questions related to your selection in the program, please contact Meghan Oswalt. Meghan can be reached at moswalt@fs.fed.us, 406-552-5987.

For questions related to paying your tuition, and any travel expense questions, please contact If you have any questions on payments or job codes etc., please contact Sarah Mayben, smayben@fs.fed.us; 406-791-7726.

For questions relating to your Coach assignment (see below for description) and/or your Learning Plan (see below for description), please contact **Diane Wheeler** in Training and Employee Development (TED). Diane can be reached at; dmwheeler@fs.fed.us; 505-944-4060.

For all questions relating to your 360 Assessment (see description and timeline below), please contact **Melanie Abeyta** in Training and Employee Development (TED) within ASC. **Melanie** can be reached at mabeyta@fs.fed.us, 505-944-4051.

For all logistical questions (e.g. hotel room blocks, hotel shuttles and/or transportation to/from the airport, classroom location, evening socials etc.), and for questions concerning the content of the program (i.e. class room curriculum), please contact **Mike Wood**, Program Lead, at mike@highridgeleadership.com; 928-607-6356.

TUITION PAYMENTS:

The total tuition for the program is \$4350, which will be pulled from the job codes you provided in your application. One third of the tuition is paid after each of the three one-week classroom sessions.

GRADUATE SEMINAR

Beyond the three classroom weeks of the program, your program tuition will fund the planning, design, facilitation and implementation of a two and half-day graduate seminar within one year of your graduation from MLP. The three one-week sessions, along with the graduate seminar, comprise the core elements of the MLP. For questions concerning the graduate seminar, please contact Mike Wood, mike@highridgeleadership.com; 928-607-6356.

COHORT DEMOGRAPHICS

You and your fellow cohort members were each competitively selected from USDA Forest Service Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Job Corps, LE & I, WO, State and Private Forestry, and Research.

R1 TIMELINE OF PRE-PROGRAM EVENTS

1. **October 18** - Welcome Letter sent out to all participants with instructions for personal assessments and all logistical information which needs immediate attention;
2. **October 18, 2018 – February 15, 2019** - Participants complete Myers-Briggs assessment (explained below);
3. **January 24, 2019** – OPM 360 Assessment Orientation Webinar and Survey Launch. **Melanie Abeyta** with the Training and Employee Development (TED) office in ASC, mabeyta@fs.fed.us, 505-944-4051, will be sending you information for the Orientation Webinar;
4. **January 25 – February 18, 2019** – Participants and their Raters complete 360 assessment (explained below, and during Orientation Webinar/Survey Launch);
5. **January 7 – January 25, 2019** - Participants will hear from their Learning Coaches (explained below) through an introduction call or email. Diane Wheeler with the Training and Employee Development (TED) office within ASC, dmwheeler@fs.fed.us, 505-944-4060, is the lead contact for the coaching element of the program. The purpose of this introduction contact, beyond a simple introduction, will be to schedule the first (and second if possible) coaching calls. There is a total of six one-hour coaching calls that are a *required* component of the MLP;
6. **February 21, 2019** - 360 Group Feedback Webinar for 360 results presented by OPM at cohort level. *Individual results will be emailed to participants the same day.* **Melanie Abeyta** will be sending you the webinar information (see Timeline above for Melanie’s contact info.);
7. **February 25, 2019** - Start of classroom portion of MLP.

PERSONAL ASSESSMENTS TOOLS

There are three (3) personal assessments utilized in this program: The purpose of each assessment, along with specific deadlines for completion of each assessment are explained below

OPM 360 Assessment – A “360” is an assessment tool that allows you to better understand how you perceive yourself and your leadership competencies in the workplace, and to compare your self-perceptions with those around you. In other words, it is a survey that is completed by you, your supervisor, as well as peers and direct reports selected by you. This results in a 360 degree perspective of you, with your own perceptions in the “center of the circle”. The 360 assessment process will be fully explained to you during the Orientation Webinar (see above timeline), and the survey will be open to use immediately following. The 360 will close for inputs one week

before you start in the classroom (see above timeline). A summary of the results for your cadre will then be covered at the 360 Feedback Webinar (see above timeline). This session is presented by OPM at the cohort level. After the session, you will receive your individual results. This then becomes a potential learning tool for use during your coaching sessions (explained below).

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) - The Myers Briggs Step II Type Indicator (MBTI – Step II) is an expanded version of the more common Myers-Briggs assessment with which most people are familiar. The MBTI is an assessment tool focused on understanding your “personality preferences” as characterized by the assessment tool. There are sixteen (16) personality types in the MBTI world and none of them are better, worse, right or wrong. The whole point of the assessment is to appreciate the diversity of perspectives expressed through our personality preferences. It is best to take your time with this assessment and answer the questions in a relaxed mindset.

We will be using this tool during the first week of the program in October, so **please complete the MBTI assessment prior to one week before the start of the classroom portion of the program** (see above timeline). Please follow steps one through four below:

1. *Either click on the link below, or copy and paste it into your browser;*
2. *Register if you have not already done so;*
3. *Fill out the brief demographics form, and;*
4. *Complete the assessment in one sitting.*

<https://Elevate.cpp.com/Respondent/ReturningUser?tokenId=7121b4de-87d1-e811-af11-000d3a32468a>

Emotional Intelligence Assessment, EQ-i 2.0 – Emotional Intelligence provides us with the capacity to notice and manage our self-perception, self-expression, stress levels, decision-making and interpersonal relationships. There is a tremendous body of research indicating a direct link between one’s emotional intelligence development and leadership effectiveness. Between the first and second week of the program, therefore, you will complete an on-line emotional intelligence assessment, which will be reviewed and discussed during our second week together. The link for completing the assessment, along with additional information regarding the assessment, will be emailed to you after your first week is completed.

COACHING

Each participant in the MLP will be assigned a professionally trained coach, with whom you will be working throughout the program. All MLP coaches are USFS employees that have gone through a coach training program. They are all at senior levels of the agency, and many have gone through the USFS Senior Leader Program. You and your coach will be meeting for six (6) one-hour sessions before, during, and after the classroom portion of the program. Your Coach will contact you prior to the start of your time in the classroom (see above timeline). You will also be receiving an email from Diane Wheeler (dmwheeler@fs.fed.us), 505-944-4060, shortly, with a link for a video on coaching that you will need to watch prior to the start of the residential (classroom) portion of the program.

Coach

As a key part of the program, you will be afforded a professionally trained coach, with whom you will work throughout the program. All MLP coaches are trained FS employees who have volunteered their time to help in your growth and development.

What is the role of a Coach? A Coach is an individual focused on helping the Client, MLP Participant, succeed. The Coach believes that the *Client* has the best answers for him/herself. Coaches guide a Client through the thinking process. In this manner, the Client identifies barriers and solutions that fit his/her style, needs, talents, etc. The Coach always strives for full objectivity while tapping into the Client's mind for the experiences and wisdom that have been built over time. A Coach will ask many questions and provide few direct answers. The Coach maintains a posture of curious questioning to allow the Client to think through issues and achieve a satisfactory, confidence-building solution.

Coaching

The International Coach Federation adheres to a form of Coaching that honors the Client as the expert in his/her life and work, believes that every Client is creative, resourceful, and whole. Standing on this foundation, the Coach's responsibility is to:

- Discover, clarify, and align with what the Client wants to achieve.
- Encourage Client self-discovery.
- Elicit Client-generated solutions and strategies.
- Hold the Client responsible and accountable.

“Through the process of Coaching, Clients deepen their learning, improve their performance, and enhance their quality of life. In each meeting, the Client chooses the focus of conversation, while the Coach listens and contributes observations and questions. This interaction creates clarity and moves the Client into action. Coaching accelerates the Client's progress by providing greater focus and awareness of choice. Coaching concentrates on where Clients are now and what they are willing to do to get where they want to be in the future.”

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS

During the MLP, each participant will receive feedback and valuable personal insight provided through the 360, MBTI Step II, and emotional maturity assessments. As a means of focusing your personal and professional growth, and in conjunction with the insights you will gain through these instruments, each participant will be *required* to complete at least one Learning Plan. Learning Plans can address an identified strength so that you can become even more proficient with that competency. You may also identify a competency area in need of further development. This may be in a competency area that is critical to Forest Service leadership expectations and one for which you received 360 feedback indicating a need for improvement. Leveraging the information you gain through the 360, MBTI (Myers-Briggs), and Emotional Intelligence discussions, along with your classroom learning will help you identify how to develop your Learning Plan.

All MLP Coaches will be briefed on LPs, so they can potentially work with you on your LP development during/after the program. A sample LP form will be included in your MLP materials on the first day of class, and you will learn more about LPs on the second day of class, when we have a “lead coach” presenting on the topic of coaching. Finally, a very good source to understand at least one version of an LP is: “Development First: Strategies for Self Development, found in books 24/7 in Ag Learn. This is just one example of an ILP. There are many others from which you may choose if you decide to develop an LP.

PROGRAM LOGISTICS

Lodging

We have established a sleeping room block for all three weeks in the Double Tree Hotel in Missoula. **Please book your room within the established room block by using the following links for each of the three weeks:**

Week One – https://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/R/RLMV-DT-FS2-20190224/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG

Week Two - https://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/R/RLMV-DT-FS4-20190331/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG

Week Three - https://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/R/RLMV-DT-FS5-20190505/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG

This will guarantee you a room at the prevailing government rate. I would strongly recommend just booking all your rooms in one sitting. The cutoff dates for these room blocks can sneak up on you...

Please also let me, Mike Wood (mike@highridgeleadership.com), know if you will NOT be staying at the Double Tree for any reason as soon as possible, so we can reduce the room block accordingly.

Classroom and Schedule:

We will be meeting in the Double Tree hotel for all three weeks of the program. You can check the signage in the lobby or ask at the front desk to find our meeting room. I will also be back in touch again as we get closer to the start of the classroom portion of the program to let you know the exact room.

Week One Daily Schedule

The first week of the program runs from Monday at 8 AM through Friday at 12:00 PM. Class begins at 8:00 AM and ends between 5:00 and 5:30 PM each day except Friday.

On Monday evening, we've also arranged an informal gathering from 5:30-7:30 PM with hors d'oeuvres at the Finn and Porter restaurant within the hotel.

Week Two Daily Schedule

The second week of the program runs from Monday at 8 AM through Friday at 12:00 PM. Class begins at 8:00 AM and ends between 5:00 and 5:30 PM each day except Friday.

Week Three Daily Schedule

The third week of the program runs from Monday at 8 AM through Friday at 12:00 PM. Class begins at 8:00 AM and ends between 5:00 and 5:30 PM Monday-Thursday.

Please also note that we will have a class photo taken on Monday of this week, just in case you have something you'd like to wear for the occasion.

Travel

The Double Tree Hotel has a free shuttle from/to the airport (about a 15-minute drive). Phones for all hotels with shuttles are near the baggage claim area in the airport.

On Friday, we'll hold our Commencement ceremony and finish by 1:00 PM.

Congratulations once again, Mike