



# NIH Executive-to-Executive Partnering Guidance

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## Introduction:

At the National Institutes of Health, executive partnering is an important component in enhancing employees' careers as executive leaders. For executives new to their positions and/or the NIH, executive partnering is designed to:

- Assist in assimilating an executive into their new leadership position
- Create a knowledge sharing environment and facilitate networking and relationship building
- Gain a broader perspective on NIH/HHS and Federal government issues and make political connections
- Assist in navigating how to get things done at the NIH
- Strengthen executive leadership proficiencies

## Adviser Profile:

Executive partnering is an active relationship that is aimed at fostering professional and personal support. Successful partnering relationships are the result of commitment and involvement from both the advisor and new executive.

An effective Adviser:

- Demonstrates past collaborative successes and is recommended by his/her peers
- Demonstrates constructive relationships with individuals by being able to effectively communicate and actively listen. Has the ability to resolve conflicts and offer appropriate feedback
- Values and takes pride in NIH and its work; understanding its mission, vision, and values, and supporting its initiatives
- Exhibits patience and willingness to spend and provide adequate time serving as an advisor
- Maintains confidentiality of the partnering relationship
- Serves as a role model—teaching and demonstrating high standards of performance, integrity, and ethical conduct
- Provides ongoing technical advice and guidance when appropriate
- Provides visibility through securing or recommending challenging projects and assignments for the new executive they advise and by discussing his/her accomplishments with others
- Motivates and inspires the new executive to achieve breakthroughs by challenging his/her potential
- Generally has a minimum of five years experience in their executive position at NIH



## General Responsibilities of the Adviser:

- Listen
- Share lessons learned and mistakes made
- Create an open and trustworthy environment
- Act as a sounding board
- Advise and counsel as well as challenge
- Open doors to new experiences and professional contacts
- Be nonjudgmental and maintain confidentiality

## General Responsibilities of New Executive:

- Listen
- Take responsibility for their professional and personal development
- Set goals and commit to action plans
- Initiate meetings, respect time frames and act on decisions
- Reflect on what is learned
- Seek feedback and respect confidentiality

## 12 month Executive-to-Executive Partnering:

### The first 100 days

- Meet with the new executive within the first week of appointment and proceed bi-weekly after that
- Facilitate “Welcome to NIH” meeting with NIH Director and/or Deputy Director (if necessary)
- Introduce new executive to other key leaders in the NIH Office of the Director and across the NIH
- Provide an overview of the NIH-wide governance structure, committees, and working groups
- Advise on NIH, HHS, Congressional, etc. related issues (formal and informal)
- Offer tactics and strategies for success
- Share insight into the NIH culture

### Post 100 days

- Meet in person monthly and communicate regularly to discuss organizational questions, strategic priorities, challenges, and achievements
- Guide in building robust relationships
- Share your organization’s point of view and encourage learning others’ perspectives
- Encourage “hard to ask” questions and “hard to find” answers
- Listen, help new executive think differently, and offer constructive feedback
- Be a sounding board

### 6 months

- Ask about reflections and observations of orientation/on-boarding experiences and help identify other areas where you can assist with understanding or transitioning
- Facilitate a mid-year check-in with NIH Director or Deputy Director