

Advance. Inspire. Deliver.

The SA Public Sector Leadership Excellence Framework

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**Government
of South Australia**

Office of the Commissioner
for Public Sector Employment

Why have a Leadership Excellence Framework?

We strive for our sector to be well governed, well led and well managed. We require strong leadership at all levels of public sector organisations in order for our workforce to successfully deliver for our community, and to fulfil our purpose of making a difference so South Australia thrives.

- In 2021, the I Work for SA – Your Voice Survey sought feedback from all agencies and employees on their experiences at work and their perceptions and perspectives of leadership and collaboration. The resulting survey action plan identified the need for a sector-wide definition of leadership excellence and what that looks like.
- The SA Public Sector Leadership Excellence Framework has been developed using global benchmarks, research and insights for building and sustaining organisational excellence and embedding quality management systems.
- It provides a succinct, easily accessed and applied set of principles which are focused on governance, leadership and management, and are necessary to deliver organisational excellence.
- Principles are the most effective way of addressing complex challenges rather than hard-and-fast rules, especially when encountering volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous situations.
- These principles work to support already established standards including the SAES Competency Framework and Charter, the Code of Ethics and Public Sector Values and agency-specific competency frameworks.

What is the Leadership Excellence Framework?

The South Australian Public Sector Leadership Excellence Framework draws on extensive consultation and is intended as a beacon for leadership excellence across the sector. It is informed by the sector's data and shaped by credible research findings from relevant global studies.

It recognises the equal importance of management and governance, which are often overlooked because the notion of leadership can be over-emphasised. No one function is more important than the other, they all intersect and define leadership excellence. As a result, leadership excellence in the SA public sector is defined by three core functions:

- Governance
- Leadership
- Management

- Each has a distinct but interdependent role in contributing to leadership excellence. Those who demonstrate leadership excellence govern well, lead well and manage well.
- There are 5 'mindsets' that are required to deliver desired public sector outcomes and underpin all 3 of the framework's functions.
- The framework is applicable to everyone but the extent to which someone will need to govern, lead and manage will vary according to the individual's role and seniority.
- It provides a common language for what it means to govern, lead and manage well in the South Australian public sector context.
- It seeks to enhance and align, rather than replace any existing agency tools and frameworks pursuing similar outcomes.
- The framework is developed to be action-oriented, memorable, practical and simple. Its acronym, AID, assists people to easily recall its key call to action to: Advance, Inspire and Deliver. This core message is further enhanced with the framework's tagline, 'govern well, lead well and manage well' which serves as an additional nudge to encourage action.
- As a succinct set of high-level principles spanning governance, leadership and management, the framework fosters organisational excellence. It is not intended as a leadership strategy or a document to define competencies.

Develop strategy, monitor performance and drive assurance

- Establish and clarify purpose
- Develop strategy and outline conditions for success
- Drive integrity
- Assess and mitigate risk
- Monitor results
- Invest in strategies and capabilities which create public value



Inspire optimism, creativity and growth

- Set the example
- Generate enthusiasm and positive energy
- Articulate the vision and bring purpose to life
- Communicate for shared understanding
- Create an environment where everyone does their best work
- Build organisations that are stronger tomorrow than today
- Foster collaboration and innovation
- Develop capability

Take action and implement effectively

- Focus on what matters and use a process approach to deliver improvements
- Drive accountability
- Enhance employee engagement and support wellbeing
- Facilitate and coordinate resourcing and operations
- Embrace technical solutions and new ways of working

Leadership Excellence Mindsets

Adopt a growth mindset

Cut through complexity and make sense of context

Collaborate to reimagine and deliver customer-centric, agile solutions

Tenaciously pursue outcomes that make a positive difference

Apply adaptive problem solving and make data driven decisions

How to apply the Leadership Excellence Framework

Organisational excellence can only be achieved when there's leadership excellence, and we all have a role to play.

All functions are relevant to all public sector employees but the focus, time or size of each function may vary for every individual. This is why under each function, high-level actions are outlined which can be adapted to all contexts.

Governance

The most senior leaders have a primary responsibility for developing strategy, monitoring performance and driving assurance. Others might be accountable for contributing insights, actioning their part of the strategy, and complying with the Code of Ethics.

Leadership

Everyone can exercise leadership and play some role in inspiring optimism, creativity and growth.

Management

Managers have a primary responsibility for taking action and implementing effectively, while also ensuring they lead well and attend to the governance component of their individual roles.

At the sector level, the framework provides a common language for what it means to govern, lead and manage well in the South Australian public sector context. It aligns and defines leadership excellence.

At the organisational level, the framework can be used to audit and ensure that all three functions, govern, lead and manage are appropriately and adequately exercised.

At the individual level, the framework identifies areas of strength, focus or potential development. Everyone can strive for leadership excellence, and the model is flexible to allow for targeted interpretation and application according to role and level of seniority.

The 5 mindsets which underpin the model ensure that any actions taken are in alignment with delivering positive outcomes for the sector.

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