

HOW TO DEVELOP EFFECTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE SECRETARY/OFFICER TEAM:

Good working relationships are key to the success of all team members. Any team is based on a degree of mutual dependence which can be a significant factor since team members can be helped or hindered professionally by each other's actions. You also need honesty, co-operation, reliability and mutual respect. In DEA teams are dynamic. It is essential that team members develop effective working relationships as quickly as possible. Give and take is a must.

*** CLARIFY ROLES AND MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS**

Roles and responsibilities need to be clarified so secretaries know what is expected by each of the officers and what aspects of that role are the most crucial to each. If officers are unrealistic or unclear about their expectations, secretaries can offer ideas for discussion, point out how they can be of greater help, and suggest additional responsibilities they might assume. When a secretary has to assist several officers in a team, all members must agree on the secretary's role and priorities, and determine how the team can be as effective as possible.

*** UNDERSTAND THE OTHER PERSONS AND YOURSELF**

Strengths, weaknesses, and work styles need to be melded in order to create a compatible relationship. These personal characteristics can include how, and when you work best (whether you are a "morning person" or are an "afternoon person" can affect other team members) your work style, level of formality, your organization of the work, etc. Awareness of individual characteristics can help everyone work together more effectively, to contribute, to complement, to improve, to manage and, to adapt when necessary.

*** UNDERSTAND THE OTHER'S GOALS AND PRESSURES**

Officers and secretaries need to understand the goals and pressures for the long and short term in order to contribute effectively towards achieving them. Ask for information, clarify assumptions, question regularly. Naturally, when working with more than one officer, it is very important to clarify goals and priorities to avoid conflict as much as possible.

*** DETERMINE THE FLOW OF INFORMATION NEEDED: HOW MUCH AND WHEN**

The basis for an effective team is good communication and this is a two-way process. Secretaries must have the information that is needed to do the work well. "Second guessing" can be time-consuming and frustrating. INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM CONCERNS NEED TO BE DISCUSSED IMMEDIATELY SO THEY CAN BE DEALT WITH AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.