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Foreign Service Officers

As America's lead foreign affairs agency, the U.S. Department of State is dedicated to protecting and strengthening America's interests abroad. America's foreign policy is designed to amplify the nation's voice and extend its reach to positively impact the daily lives of our citizens. We work to ensure that our country's diplomatic leadership enhances our economic, food, and energy security and stability, and reflects American values.

With your diverse educational and cultural backgrounds, perspectives, and knowledge, and exceptional analytical and problem-solving skills, you can become part of America's foreign policy leadership, contributing your innovative thinking and global perspective to support and expand our efforts worldwide.

As a U.S. citizen, you are America. And you can represent America to the world.

All Foreign Service Officers enter by selecting one of five career tracks. All career tracks engage with host government officials, private sector leaders, civil society members, and international organization officials.

1. **Consular Officers** assist Americans overseas and manage visa operations.
 2. **Management Officers** provide the operations support platform for diplomacy.
 3. **Economic Officers** promote economic partnerships, free markets, and trade.
 4. **Public Diplomacy Officers** explain American values and policies.
 5. **Political Officers** analyze and report on political issues.
- All tracks build communication between the United States and the host country.
 - All officers have opportunities to serve in different career tracks over a career. We seek the same qualities for all career tracks and applicants are judged by the same skills criteria.
 - **The Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) is offered in February, June, and October each year.** Prospects are eligible to take the test once per year.

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Becoming a Foreign Service Officer

- Choose a career track.
- Submit Personal Narratives (PN) and Register for the Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT).
- Take the FSOT (multiple choice questions and a timed writing exercise). If you pass the FSOT multiple choice elements your essay and PNs will be evaluated during the Qualifications Evaluation Panel (QEP).
- QEP passers will be invited to schedule and take the Oral Assessment (OA).
- If you pass the OA, you must obtain Medical and Security clearances.
- Once you pass the clearance process, you will go through a Final Suitability Review.
- Once fully cleared, you will be placed on a hiring register. As new orientation classes are formed, those on the register are invited to join the Foreign Service.

Additional considerations after you are on the register: Veterans preference and foreign language proficiency.

The basis of the QEP is to evaluate the PNs based on the following six precepts or skills: Leadership, Interpersonal, Communication, Management, Intellectual, and Substantive.

All successful candidates will demonstrate the 13 Dimensions that reflect the skills, abilities, and personal qualities deemed essential to the work of the Foreign Service.

These dimensions, along with additional information, can be found in the Oral Assessment Study Guide for Foreign Service Officers: careers.state.gov/downloads/fso-oa-study-guide

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