

Readiness Indicators for Potential Candidates

How can you tell if a person is ready for the Ag Leadership Program? Affirmative answers to most of the following questions will serve as strong indicators that your candidate should apply to the program:

MATURITY

Has the candidate...

- Had the life experience (in years and/or in life's challenges) to be ready for the program?
- Articulated personal and professional goals?
- Identified steps to achieve these goals and started the journey?
- Shown confidence (without being arrogant) in some of the skill areas needed for his/her job, while being appropriately humble about what he/she doesn't yet know?
- Successfully navigated his/her way through conflicts in the workplace?
- Taken responsibility for his/her actions?

OPEN-MINDEDNESS

Is the candidate...

- Tolerant of others' views that differ greatly from his/her own?
- Curious about the beliefs and values of others?
- Able to see the merits of positions others take, even though he/she holds a different opinion?

SELF-AWARENESS

Is the candidate...

- Aware of the impact he/she has on others (co-workers, family, neighbors, friends, etc.)?
- Able to talk about and learn from failure without being defensive?
- Able to honestly recognize his/her own strengths and weaknesses?

LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

Does the candidate...

- Have influence on others? If so, in what way?
- Earn the respect of others? Is he/she viewed as a role model?
- Demonstrate actions that inspire others to do more?
- Rely on others to achieve results that he/she could not accomplish alone?
- Rely on more than positional authority to motivate others?
- Serve as a mentor?

PROPENSITY TO SERVE

Does the candidate...

- Have a pattern of giving back to the community by volunteering?
- Serve in a leadership capacity within the industry or on a nonprofit board?
- Successfully balance work commitments, family or personal time (e.g., hobbies or travel) and volunteer activities?
- Show enough humility to assist a person in need of help or guidance?

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE AND HORIZONS

Is the candidate...

- Informed about pressing national and global issues?
- Able to see connections between what happens in remote corners of the globe and California agriculture?

LIFE/WORK TIMING

Will the candidate...

- Be able to get away from work commitments to engage fully?
- Have employer and spouse (if married) support of their decision to be in the program?
- Be able to devote his/her full attention and energies to participate in the program and take from it all they can? (To the extent that major life events can be anticipated – e.g., starting a new job, getting married, having a child, caring for an aging parent, etc.)

THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

Those who have gone through Ag Leadership are the best recruiters because they have first-hand program knowledge. The recent curriculum focusing on "leadership from the inside out" has not been experienced by most of our classes, and may therefore be a bit unsettling when it comes to aligning talent with the program. There are a few constants, however, that apply to all applicants, past and present:

- A sense of readiness for the program.
- A desire to continue to grow and to develop.
- Enough life and work experience to make a solid contribution to the group learning dynamic.
- An indication of service to others and leadership potential (likely not fully developed, but expressed).
- A long-term commitment to California agriculture.

Leadership is about the future, and there is a constant and even urgent need for leadership in today's world. As alumni, you are best suited to identify the next generation of talent. Thank you for taking an interest in making a difference in the lives of others.