NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FUTURE FEDERAL EXECUTIVES (NAFFE)
2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FUTURE FEDERAL EXECUTIVES
2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Our new logo is a visual roadmap of NAFFE's 9 Strategic Goals. The eagle reflects our commitment to building senior federal leaders. The seven stars show the core pillars that power our work (Goals 1–7). AI leadership and ECQ/EI alignment (Goals 8 and 9) flow across all pillars, ensuring our members are not only prepared for SES, but future-ready. And the single star is you — the member who makes this mission real.

29 DECEMBER 2025

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FUTURE FEDERAL EXECUTIVES (NAFFE)
2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

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Other Leadership workshops
Artificial Intelligence (AI) For Beginners workshops
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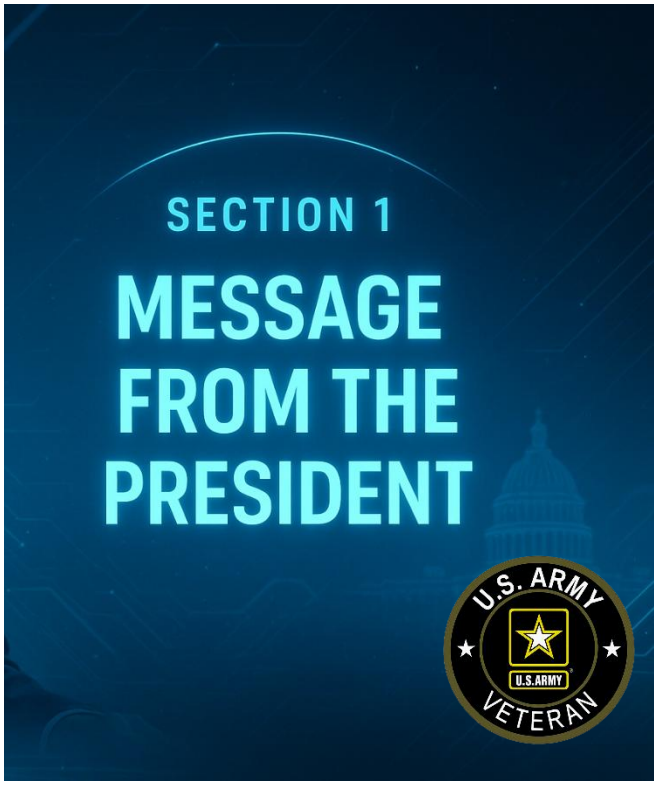
2026 STRATEGIC PLAN



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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FUTURE FEDERAL EXECUTIVES (NAFFE)
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SECTION - 1 - MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am excited to present the National Association of Future Federal Executives (NAFFE) *2026-Strategic Plan*. This Strategic Plan establishes a framework for our efforts to advocate for the development and advancement of federal employees to career senior level, policy-making positions in the Federal Government.

A central element of this plan is to take concrete steps to assist Federal agencies in recruiting and hiring qualified employees to meet the unique challenges of the 21st Century. We will underscore these objectives by inspiring a new generation of public servants striving to ascend to SES positions and enrich a base pool of candidates for SES and management level positions.

This Strategic Plan lays the foundation for an even stronger, more effective organization. The dedication and professionalism of the members help NAFFE meet its goals, position the organization to help employees advance in their career within the Federal Government, and to prepare them for the challenges ahead.

This year we added a new Goal – GOAL 8 – Build and Integrate AI Literacy and Responsible AI Leadership Capacity for Future Senior Executives.

WHY ADD THIS NEW GOAL –

1. **AI is cross-cutting, not just training. -** It affects service delivery, human resources (HR), EEO analytics, budget, acquisitions, and compliance (privacy, bias, civil rights). A stand-alone goal signals: "NAFFE prepares SES talent to lead AI, not just watch AI happen."
2. **Federal direction is moving this way. -** Agencies are being asked to use AI responsibly, ethically, and transparently — SES candidates who can talk risk, equity, and mission impact will stand out. A goal makes that explicit.
3. **It future-proofs our brand. -** A future without AI would look incomplete for NAFFE.
4. **It separates "learn to use AI" from "learn to lead AI." -** Goal 8 becomes about *digital/AI executive readiness*.

Sincerely,
Al Gallegos

SECTION 2
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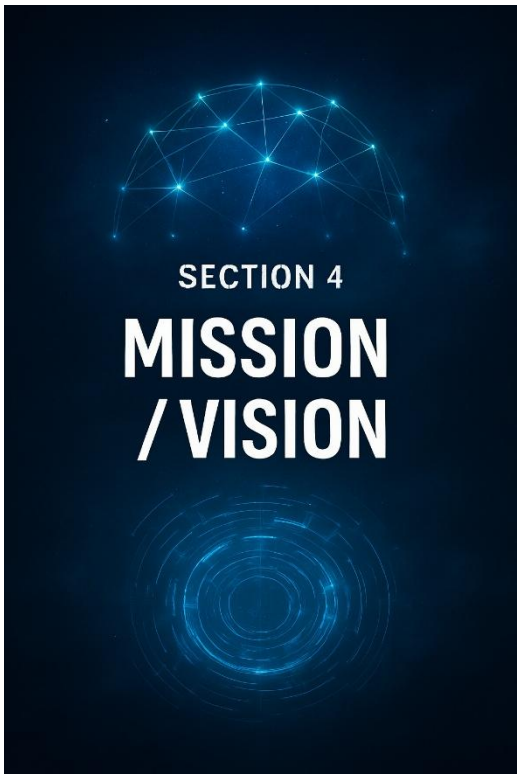
AI


SECTION 4
MISSION / VISION

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FUTURE FEDERAL EXECUTIVES (NAFFE)
2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

SECTION - 2 - INTRODUCTION

The NAFFE 2026 Strategic Plan provides the organization with a roadmap for member services and organizational development. This plan was developed with broad involvement and guidance from our Board of Directors and leadership team. The National Committee will review progress quarterly and will update the plan annually as needed.

SECTION - 3 - WHO WE ARE

We are a 501 (c)(3) private non-profit and non-partisan executive leadership association aiding the Federal Government in recruiting and developing highly qualified leaders for public service. We grew out of a need to promote Federal public service within the Federal Community and to provide executive leadership career development training. The association centers its efforts on senior leadership positions ranging from GS-11 through the SES.

We are composed of a group of volunteers that are managed by The Board of Directors, a National Executive Committee, as well as National Officers.

SECTION - 4 – MISSION / VISION

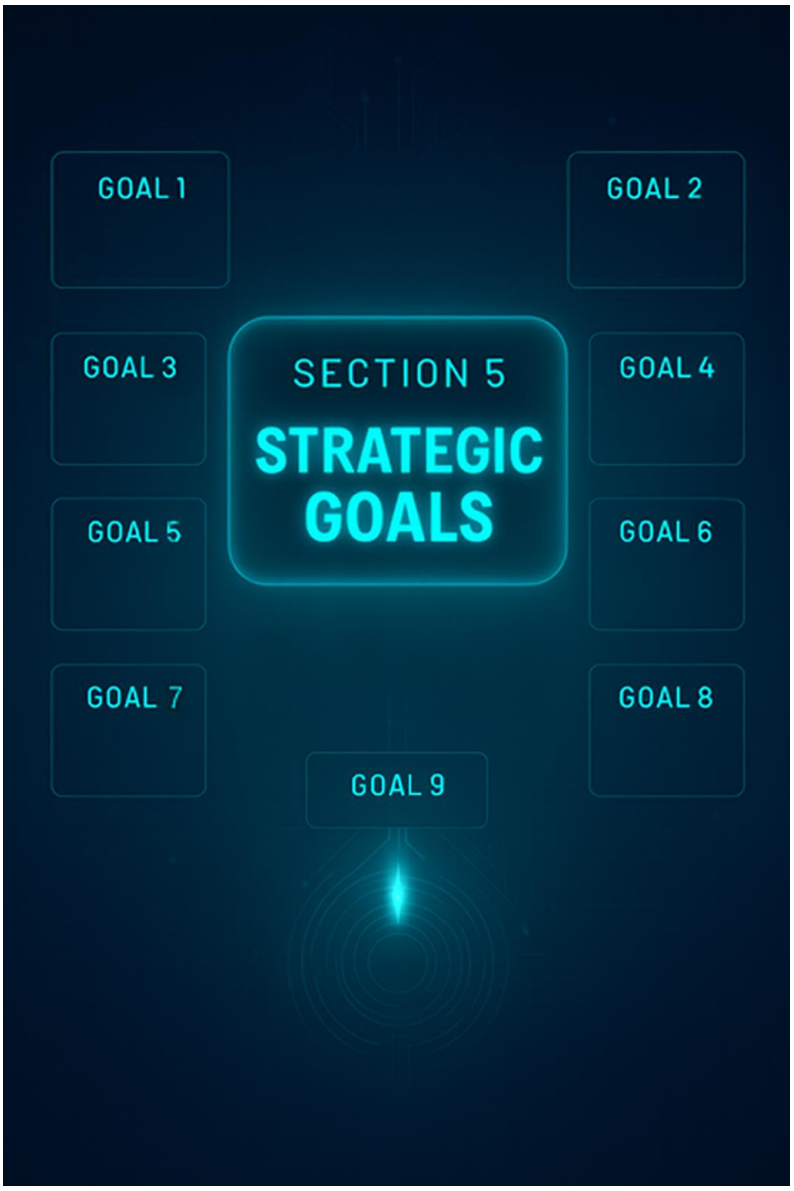
MISSION-

- To identify, cultivate and prepare candidates for advancement into the SES ranks.
- To energize, empower, and inspire a new generation of candidates from the GS-11 to the GS-15 levels into the Career Senior Executive Service ranks of the Federal Government.

VISION-

We envision a future where:

- The SES represents all the Federal Community.
- Collaboration and engagement foster innovation and effective decision-making.
- Opportunities for growth and advancement for all members.
- Employees thrive and contribute their unique talents and perspectives to create a more effective, and professional government that reflects the society they serve.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SECTION - 5 - STRATEGIC GOALS

The following goals, which will guide NAFFE over the next year, are the organization's response to the important issues identified. These goals provide a roadmap for fulfilling our strategic direction. Activities associated with implementation of the stated goals and objectives of this document will be created, reviewed, adjusted, and approved quarterly by the NAFFE Board of Directors.

GOAL 1 – Identify highly-qualified candidates GS-11'S through GS-15's in the Federal workforce.

GOAL 2 – Energize, empower, and inspire a new generation of Senior Executives.

GOAL 3 – Provide career development training.

ECQ'S workshops
Other Leadership workshops
AI For Beginners workshops.
AI for Leadership workshops (Under Development)

GOAL 4 – Provide SES Mentors and other highly qualified GS-15/14 Mentors for our members.

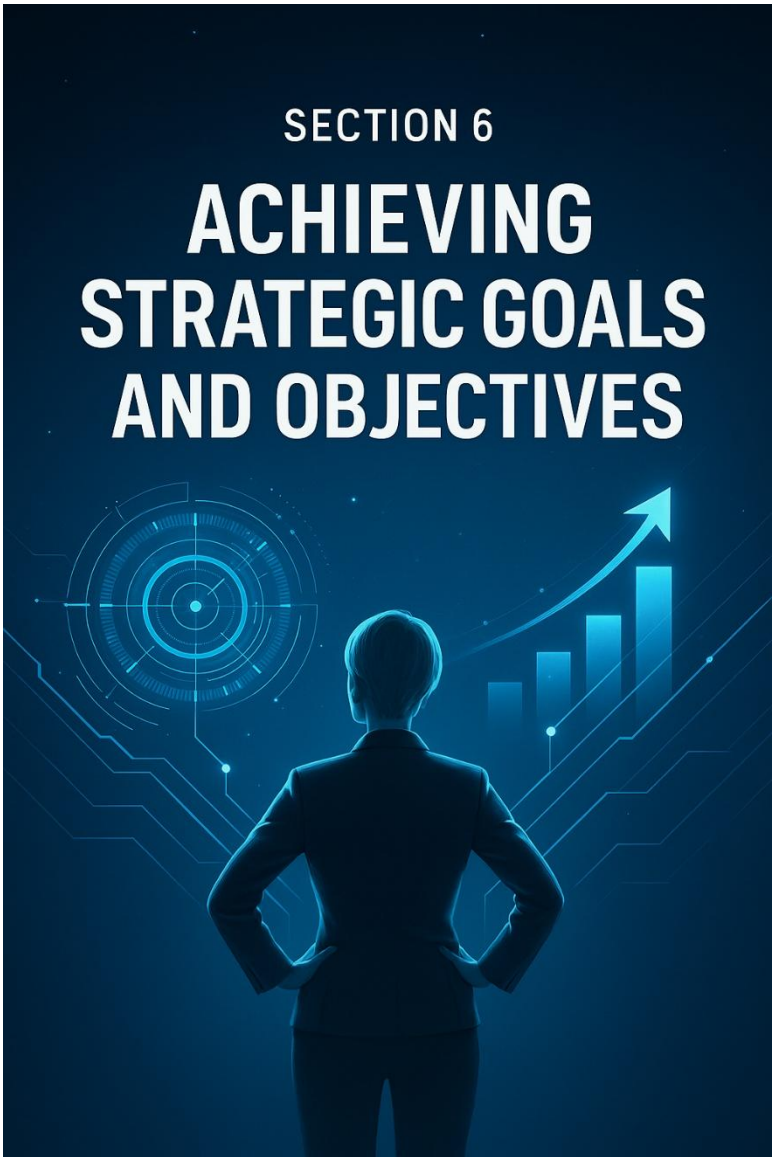
GOAL 5 – Promote qualified employee candidates for SES.

GOAL 6 – Advocate for increased employee representation across Government.

GOAL 7 – Expand the organization by creating new chapters nationwide.

GOAL 8 – Build Integrate AI Literacy and Responsible AI Leadership Capacity for Future Senior Executives.

GOAL 9 - Connect the NAFFE Strategic Goals with the ECQs, and EI Elements.


SECTION 6
ACHIEVING STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FUTURE FEDERAL EXECUTIVES (NAFFE)
2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

SECTION - 6 - ACHIEVING STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1 – IDENTIFY HIGHLY-QUALIFIED CANDIDATES IN THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

Establish methods to identify and communicate with the community within the Federal Government to ensure that NAFFE can effectively reach the maximum target audience.

OBJECTIVE 1.1
Increase membership by 50% percent.

STRATEGIES:
- Partner with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and agency Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and HR Offices to present NAFFE outreach sessions for all employees in each agency.
- Identify lead NAFFE members to work within each federal agency.

OBJECTIVE 1.2
Maximize the use of technology to further NAFFE's mission and goals.

STRATEGIES:
- Enhance/redesign the NAFFE website to simplify the membership application process.
- Develop a NAFFE working group on professional networking sites, like LinkedIn.

GOAL 2 – ENERGIZE, EMPOWER, AND INSPIRE A NEW GENERATION OF SENIOR EXECUTIVES

Establish effective processes and methods to encourage employees to aspire to the SES ranks of the Federal Government.

OBJECTIVE 2.1
Demonstrate the benefits of employee engagement in the Federal Government.

STRATEGIES:
- Work with OPM and the EEO Commission to publish relevant data or studies related to employees in the workforce.
- Develop and implement a mechanism to monitor the percentage of employees that apply to SES positions.
- Develop and implement a mechanism to showcase the accomplishments of employees in the SES.

OBJECTIVE 2.2

Encourage employees to pursue SES positions
.

STRATEGIES:

- Work with agencies' civil rights, EEO, and employee groups to increase interest in SES positions.
- Conduct SES information panels.
- Post SES vacant positions on the NAFFE website and/or the NAFFE LinkedIn Group.

GOAL 3 – PROVIDE CAREER DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Researches, delivers, and/or facilitates the appropriate education, training, skills, and experience that will prepare employees for successful placement in SES positions.

OBJECTIVE 3.1

- Provide NAFFE members with a competitive advantage in applying to SES positions.
- Provide members with resources to help them in Mastering the Leadership ECQ Competencies.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop and implement a mechanism for employee SES candidates to have their SES job applications reviewed by current SES members.
- Develop mock interview preparation with current SES members.
- Providing AI for Beginners workshops
- Providing AI for Leader (*Currently in the development stages*) as well as other Leadership Training workshops
- Develop opportunities for members to learn how to create each of the five ECQs.

- OPM has identified five ECQ's:

    - Commitment to the Rule of Law and the Principles of the American Founding
    - Driving Efficiency
    - Merit and Competence
    - Leading People
    - Achieving Results
    - **AI & Responsible Digital Leadership -** NAFFE-RECOMMENDED 6TH ECQ (GOAL 8)
        - The ability to evaluate, govern, and lead the ethical, transparent, and equitable use of AI and emerging technologies across mission, workforce, acquisition, data, privacy, and civil rights.

    - ECQs measure whether an individual has the broad executive skills needed to succeed in a variety of SES positions--not whether they are the most superior candidate for a particular position. (The latter determination is made by the employment agency.)

- Develop and implement mentorship programs.
- Conduct networking sessions with other SES interested employees and SES members.
- Present recurring conferences and workshops for SES development and training.
- Conduct post-interview surveys with interviewees to review feedback and prepare future candidates better.

GOAL 4 – PROVIDE SES MENTORS AND OTHER HIGHLY QUALIFIED GS-15 OR GS-14 MENTORS FOR OUR MEMBERS

Focus on fostering connections between members and seasoned personnel.

OBJECTIVE 4.1
Promote and increase the positive networking between our members and a diverse cadre of SES personnel.

STRATEGIES:
- Hold frequent speed mentoring workshops.
- Match up members with SES Mentors and other highly qualified GS-15 or GS-14.

GOAL 5 – PROMOTE QUALIFIED CANDIDATES FOR SES

Promote and increase the visibility of qualified GS-11's through GS-15's candidates for SES positions.

OBJECTIVE 5.1
Showcase the education, experience, and accomplishments of SES candidates.

STRATEGIES:
- Member engagement with the parent Federal Agency to assess and assist with the employee recruitment efforts and programs.
- Provide visibility of resumes of highly qualified SES candidates to current SES members for consideration and endorsement within their agencies.
- Partner with OPM to measure the percentage of employees referred to as highly qualified and selected for SES positions.
- Partner with the other organizations to raise public awareness and highlight the accomplishments of SES candidates and members.

GOAL 6 – ADVOCATE FOR INCREASED EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION ACROSS GOVERNMENT

Dedicate all our resources to advocate for greater employee representation throughout the Government.

Objective 6.1
Increase awareness of federal employment issues to Agencies, Congress, and the Administration.

STRATEGIES:

- Create a Congressional Liaison position to collaborate with members of Congress on employment issues.
- Develop a NAFFE policy arm to conduct fact-based research and provide guidance on federal issues affecting employees in the workforce.
- Develop a scorecard method to measure the status of employee SES representation within the Federal Departments and Agencies.

GOAL 7 – EXPANDING THE ORGANIZATION BY CREATING NEW CHAPTERS NATIONWIDE

Broaden our reach and impact by establishing new chapters nationwide.

OBJECTIVE 7.1
Increase the number of chapters.

STRATEGIES:

- Market our organization nationwide and solicit members to start new chapters.
- Hold nationwide workshops and encourage the start of new chapters.
- Create additional memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with Departments and Agencies and encourage them to start NAFFE Chapters.

GOAL 8 – BUILD AND INTEGRATE AI LITERACY AND RESPONSIBLE AI LEADERSHIP CAPACITY FOR FUTURE SENIOR EXECUTIVES.

Objective 8.1 – Foundational Literacy.
Strategy:

- Provide tiered AI learning paths (Beginner → Practitioner → Executive/Policy) tailored to GS-11–15 and SES candidates.

Objective 8.2 – Responsible / Equitable AI.
Strategy:

- Embed AI governance fundamentals — fairness, transparency, accountability, privacy, security, and accessibility — into all AI sessions, aligned with federal AI policies and risk-management frameworks, so future senior executives can evaluate, approve, and oversee AI solutions responsibly.

Objective 8.3 – AI for Leaders.
Strategy:

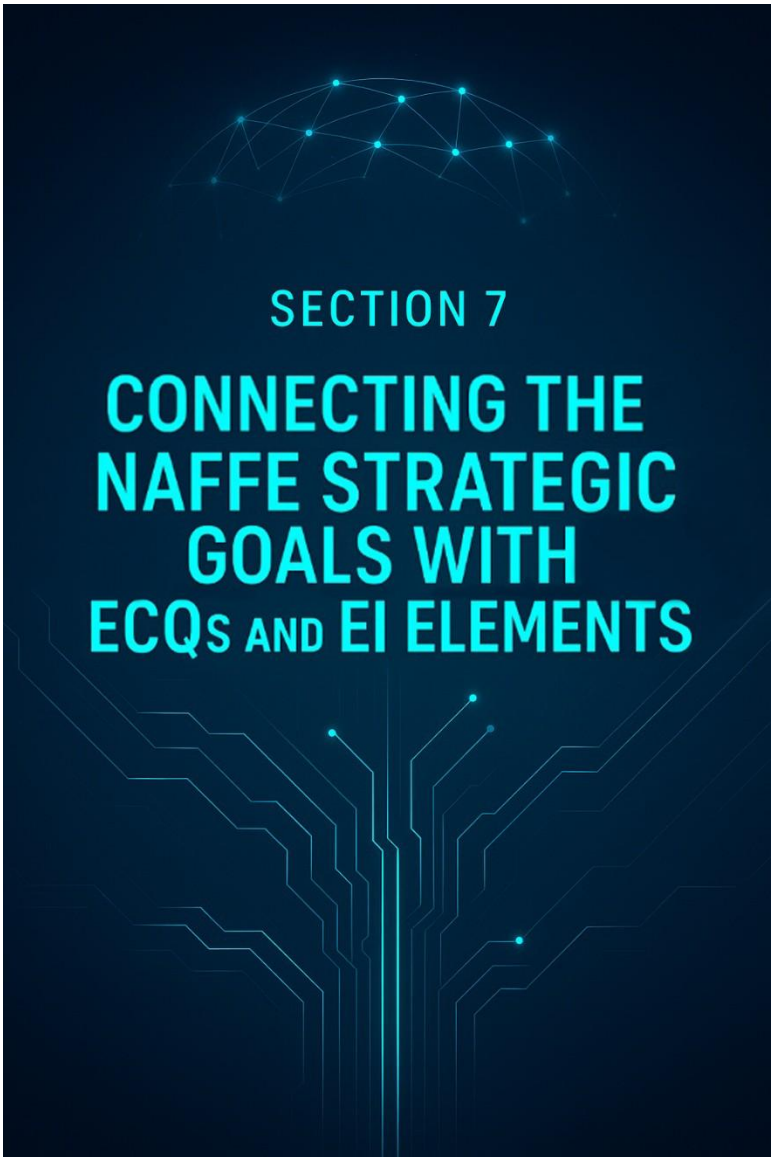
- Teach future SES how to ask the *executive* questions: cost, data quality, cybersecurity, workforce impact, acquisition, and change management.

Objective 8.4 – AI in the SES Hiring / ECQ Narrative.
Strategy:

- Help members write ECQs that show they can lead digital/AI transformation.

GOAL 9 - CONNECT THE NAFFE STRATEGIC GOALS WITH THE ECQS, AND EI ELEMENTS.

Defined in the next Section 7


SECTION 7
CONNECTING THE NAFFE STRATEGIC GOALS WITH ECQs AND EI ELEMENTS

SECTION - 7 - CONNECTING THE NAFFE STRATEGIC GOALS WITH THE ECQS, AND EI ELEMENTS.

CONNECTING THE NAFFE STRATEGIC GOALS WITH THE ECQS AND EI ELEMENTS

Here is an analysis tying the **NAFFE 2026 Strategic Goals** to (1) the updated **META ECQs** from OPM and (2) the **EI** elements. Noted goal by goal and, under each goal, we show the **ECQ connection** and then the **EI connection.**

GOAL 1 – Identify highly qualified candidates in the Federal workforce (GS-11 to GS-15)

A. Connection to ECQs

- **Merit and Competence** – the whole point of "identify" is to surface people who already demonstrate technical skill and the ability to produce reliable, high-quality work. This is straight out of the "Technical Skill" and "Problem Solving" sub-competencies.
- **Driving Efficiency** – using tech (website redesign, LinkedIn working group) to reach more candidates is resource-smart outreach. That's "leveraging technology" and "managing resources."
- **Achieving Results** – you have a measurable outcome ("increase membership by 50%") which is classic "operational mindset."

B. Connection to EI

- **Self-Awareness / Motivation** – you are asking members and agencies to be intentional about their own growth and to see themselves as SES-track, which requires internal motivation.
- **Social Skills –** identifying candidates in other agencies requires building networks with EEO/HR/OPM contacts.

GOAL 2 – Energize, empower, and inspire a new generation of Senior Executives

A. Connection to ECQs

- **Leading People –** this goal is basically the leadership ECQ written in NAFFE language: inspire, set vision, showcase SES role models, and build a high-accountability culture.
- **Achieving Results –** you want mechanisms to monitor the percentage of employees who apply for SES and to showcase accomplishments—this is performance tracking.
- **Commitment to the Rule of Law / Civic-Mindedness** – by encouraging people to rise into SES to serve the public, you are aligning with "commitment to serve the American people."

B. Connection to EI

- **Motivation –** this goal is about intrinsic drive and purpose ("why SES?").
- **Empathy –** showing employees "what's in it for them" and addressing fears about SES selection requires reading the room.
- **Social Skills –** conducting SES info panels and collaborating with employee groups is high-EI relationship management.

GOAL 3 – Provide career development training (ECQs, leadership, AI for Beginners, AI for Leaders)

A. Connection to ECQs

- **Merit and Competence –** training to "master the ECQ competencies" is literally this ECQ.
- **Driving Efficiency / Leveraging Technology –** offering AI workshops and using tech to deliver training fit the ECQ language on incorporating technology to enhance results.
- **Achieving Results –** mock interviews, SES application reviews, and recurring conferences are all "translate strategy into actionable steps."
- **Agility and Resilience –** adding AI content shows you are adapting to "new ideas, new information, new conditions."

B. Connection to EI

- **Self-Awareness –** good ECQ writing and SES interviews require people to name their strengths, gaps, and impact. That is EI 101.
- **Self-Regulation –** mock interviews and SES panels are emotionally demanding; training people to stay composed is self-management.
- **Social Skills –** networking sessions, conferences, and mentoring prep rely on relationship management.

GOAL 4 – Provide SES Mentors and GS-15/14 Mentors for members.

A. Connection to ECQs

- **Leading People –** Developing Others – matching members to mentors is a textbook example of "providing opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods."
- **Achieving Results –** speed mentoring and structured matching are operational mechanisms to deliver development, not just a nice idea.

B. Connection to EI

- **Empathy –** good mentors read mentees' needs, career stage, and barriers.
- **Social Skills / Relationship Management –** speed mentoring, matching, and keeping mentors engaged are all high-EI activities.
- **Self-Awareness –** mentors must model reflection on their SES journey.

GOAL 5 – Promote qualified employee candidates for SES.

A. Connection to ECQs

- **Achieving Results –** you are creating visibility pipelines (resumes to current SES, partnerships with OPM) and measuring referrals/selection. That is results alignment.
- **Merit and Competence –** by "showcasing the education, experience, and accomplishments," you are elevating those who meet the merit standard.
- **Leading People / Executive Judgment –** current SES endorsing candidates are using judgment about who is ready.

B. Connection to EI

- **Motivation –** publicizing success stories boosts aspirational energy among GS-11–15s.
- **Social Skills –** promotion of members requires coalition building with agencies and other orgs.
- **Empathy –** when you "raise public awareness," you are also acknowledging underrepresented employees' need to be seen.

GOAL 6 – Advocate for increased employee representation across Government

A. Connection to ECQs

- **Commitment to the Rule of Law and the Principles of the American Founding –** advocacy for representation connects to fairness, equal opportunity, and serving "the American people."
- **Achieving Results –** developing a scorecard to measure SES representation is a concrete performance tool.
- **Driving Efficiency –** creating a policy arm to do fact-based research is an efficient way to support advocacy with data.

B. Connection to EI

- **Empathy –** this goal is ultimately about listening to marginalized or low-visibility employees and taking their concerns to Congress/agencies.
- **Social Skills –** creating a Congressional Liaison and working with departments is high-level relationship management.
- **Motivation –** you are asking members to stay committed to a mission that may take time to show results.

GOAL 7 – Expand the organization by creating new chapters nationwide.

A. Connection to ECQs

- **Achieving Results –** expansion, MOUs, and nationwide workshops are strategy → execution.
- **Leading People –** new chapters mean new volunteer leaders; you need the ECQ's "drive a high-performance, high-accountability culture."
- **Driving Efficiency –** scaling through chapters is a resource-efficient way to increase reach.

B. Connection to EI

- **Social Skills / Relationship Management –** recruiting chapter leads, keeping them aligned, and managing MOUs is pure EI.
- **Self-Regulation –** chapter building across agencies and regions will surface conflict; leaders will need composure.
- **Empathy –** understanding local needs (e.g., DHS vs. HHS vs. DoD environments) is empathy in practice.

GOAL 8 – Build And Integrate AI Literacy and Responsible AI Leadership Capacity for Future Senior Executives.

A. **Connection to ECQs**
- **Driving Efficiency –** AI to enhance service delivery, analytics, HR.
- **Merit and Competence –** executives who can evaluate AI proposals, data sources, model risks.
- **Achieving Results –** AI pilots → scaled programs.
- **Leading People –** managing workforce anxiety and reskilling for AI.
- **Commitment to the Rule of Law –** using AI in ways consistent with constitutional principles and federal civil rights. (This is the piece many technical AI trainings ignore.)

B. **Connection to EI**

AI change fails mostly on **people**:
- **Self-Awareness** – leaders must admit what they do not know about AI.
- **Self-Regulation** – resist "shiny tool" adoption; pace change.
- **Empathy** – understand employee fear of automation and community fear of bias.
- **Social Skills** – communicate AI changes to unions, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), affinity groups, Congress.

GOAL 9 – Connect the NAFFE Strategic Goals with ECQs and EI Elements (the "alignment" goal)

A. Connection to ECQs

This goal is meta: it is trying to make sure every NAFFE activity can be traced to at least one of the five META ECQs in the 2026 OPM appendix—
- Commitment to the Rule of Law and the Principles of the American Founding
- Driving Efficiency
- Merit and Competence
- Leading People
- Achieving Results

So, this section is creating the **through-line**: "If it doesn't build an ECQ, we shouldn't be spending NAFFE time on it."

B. Connection to EI
- **This section is also saying:** "If it doesn't build EI, it won't build SES-ready leaders."
- EI underpins "Leading People" (empathy, relationship management).
- Supports "Achieving Results" (self-management under pressure).
- This goal is a quality-control device for the whole plan.