



Consular Officer Career Development

At the beginning of your career as a Consular Officer (years 1 - 4), you may:

- devote considerable time to interacting with the local residents as you consider applications for temporary visas
- have the responsibility of deciding whether to approve or deny immigrant visas to those whose life dream has been to live in the United States
- help with American citizens abroad seeking to adopt a child, or requiring assistance because they have been arrested, or a family member who has died overseas
- acquire expertise in local laws, economic conditions, the political situation and the culture in order to make informed and rapid decisions affecting U.S. citizens abroad
- coordinate consular issues with host country officials
- support official visits
- organize and run a Congressional visit, or accompany the Ambassador on a call to the host country leadership.

At the mid-career level (years 4 - 16), you may:

- develop significant leadership and managerial experience by directly overseeing a consular unit or small consular section (six to ten American employees and fifty foreign national employees)
- foster the development of the next generation of Foreign Service Officers
- plan for emergencies and be part of the "country team" that supports the Ambassador in carrying out the Embassy's foreign policy objectives
- respond to inquiries from U.S. and local attorneys, U.S. congressional offices, and law enforcement agencies
- discuss policy issues and implementation with host country officials
- assist with or organize high level visits
- in Washington, oversee the policies and procedures carried out by consular sections abroad, and work on issues such as international child abduction or fraud prevention
- serve in a variety of Department of State positions such as desk officer, press officer or special assistant to Assistant Secretaries and Under Secretaries.

At the senior level (years 16 - 27), you may:

- manage multi-million dollar budgets, set consular policies and train new officers
- serve as mentor, coach and role model for new officers
- negotiate with foreign government officials, and seek the support of host countries to ratify international conventions
- direct emergency operations
- work closely with the U.S. Congress to shape U.S. immigration policy and consult closely on such issues as international adoption and crisis management
- serve as a member of an Embassy's "country team", or as Ambassador, Deputy Chief of Mission or Consul General, or in a top position in Washington such as Deputy Assistant Secretary.