AEP Advice and Tips
Provided by Former AEP Participants

Be a sponge! Absorb as much as you can in this environment. You may not have access to this unique opportunity again in your DoD career. For the limited time of your rotation, take advantage of the wealth of knowledge and expertise of the DPAP(CPIC) staff and learn from their experiences and understanding of DoD related issues. Feel free to question, challenge and discuss your view from your home office perspective or based on real life examples you have experienced in your DoD career. Be prepared to hit the ground running, be a quick learner, no one is going to hold your hand here. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Aspire to be a great ambassador/or the agency you represent. Be willing to share your DPAP (CPIC) experience with your peers and management. Let them know more about this unique AEP experience. ~Brian Cassar (AEP CPIC 8/15)

Take the available training, as soon as possible. ~David Ragland (AEP CPF 5/12)

This is a great opportunity. Take advantage of as many meetings and conferences that come up while you are here. The people that you meet at these functions all have great ideas, stories and experiences to share with you. Follow a senior lead for a few days, you’ll get to see how the organization functions from a leaders perspective which can be very different than the workers perspective.-Danielle McAvoy (AEP CPF/PARCA 9/10) I recommend working on a variety of projects during your rotation; ask everyone in the office if they need help with anything in their portfolio. Sometimes something that seems simple has a huge impact on our mission. I also recommend taking advantage of every opportunity offered to you because before you know it the end of your rotation is less than one day away. ~Kathryn Scanlan (AEP CPIC 11/12)

Be sure to brush up on your writing and presentation skills as you will be writing high level papers and presenting to Senior Leadership. ~Kenyada Corley (AEP SA 7/15)

Jump in and go full throttle. You have a limited timeframe to absorb as much as possible. If you are lazy, don’t like challenges or a slacker – stay away. This is not for the uninspired. ~Kathleen Moorman (AEP PDI 9/14)

The best advice I can give them is to extend the duration of the rotation a long as possible because there is a lot to see and do. I would also recommend them to take part in any and all meeting and tours you are invited to like hearings on the hill. These are opportunities that may not easily come your way in the future. ~Luis Camaraza (AEP PDI 4/13)
Go into this exchange program with no expectations. Your involvement will vary depending on what is going on in the organization at the time and how your skills can be best utilized. You are a resource to be utilized and in return you are getting a phenomenal learning and networking experience. Be thankful and don’t complain. ~ Emily Prohaska (AEP PDI 12/14)

The best part of the program was working under Ms. Sumpter and her team. From a personal development perspective, I learned how to benefit from what I would have previously considered a terrifying situation. Throughout this experience, I accredit her generous faith, support, and confidence as the reason I exponentially developed professionally and personally. ~Lara Emmons (AEP PDI 8/15)

Do not come in with the attitude that you are going to save the organization from its mistakes (at least, not when you first arrive) Come in realizing that no matter how knowledgeable and capable you are there are many things that you do not know, and that, especially at first, your primary responsibility is to listen to your supervisors and coworkers and learn from them. ~Judith Rubinstein (AEP DARS 4/15)

Ask for challenging assignments and dive in! Don’t let your previous position or GS-level stifle you-when put in leadership roles, be a leader. ~Carl Schmurr (AEP ARA/EI 3/15)

Stay very engaged and look for opportunities were your skills and abilities can be utilized to the utmost. When you leave, you want to know you made a difference and the knowledge and skills you obtained will be used to further support the acquisition workforce. Discuss the expectations and strive to exceed them. ~Beverly (Mikki) Brooks (AEP HCI 8/15)